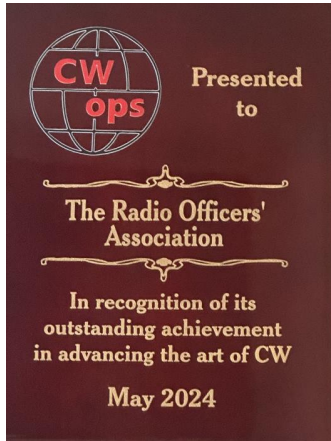


# Solid Copy



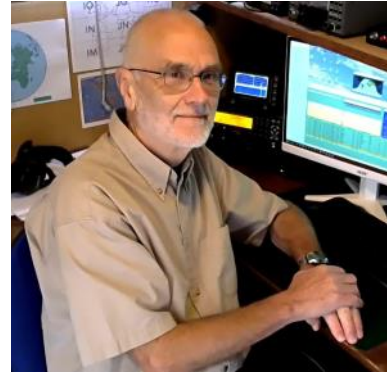
The CW Operators Club Newsletter  
May 2024 — Issue 172



Congratulations to The Radio Officers' Association, the 2024 recipient of the prestigious CWops Advancing the Art of CW award. Pg 13.

## President's Message

There were plenty of good news stories in last month's *Solid Copy*. Impressive amongst those was the 'CW Academy January/February Wrap-up' by Bob WR7Q and Roland K7OJL (page 49).



(Continued on page 2)

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

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

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

### CWops Officers and Directors

President: Stew Rolfe, [GWØETF](#)  
Vice President: Peter Butler, [W1UU](#)  
Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3JT](#)  
Treasurer: Craig Thompson, [K9CT](#)  
Director: Theo Mastakas, [SV2BBK](#)  
Director: Raoul Coetzee, [ZS1C](#)  
Director: James Brooks, [9V1YC](#)  
Director: Bert Banlier, [F6HKA](#)  
Director: Barry Simpson, [VK2BJ](#)  
Director: Riki Kline, [K7NJ](#)  
Director: Ken Tanuma, [JN1THL](#)  
WebGeek: Dan Romanchik [KB6NU](#)  
Newsletter Editor: Dick Strassburger, [N9EEE](#)

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">President's Message</a> .....	1
<a href="#">Editor's Notes: Remember Your First Time?</a> ....	3
<a href="#">News and Notes</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Info: CW Activity Weekend</a> .....	8
<a href="#">How We Were: VE3GFN</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Info: Dayton Hamvention CWops Dinner</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Info: NA CW Weekend</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Advancing the Art of CW: ROA</a> .....	13
<a href="#">VE3GFN: Radio Travel</a> .....	16
<a href="#">K4RLC: Visit to VOA Site B</a> .....	18
<a href="#">VK3QB: Tales &amp; Anecdotes of YJ0VK</a> .....	26
<a href="#">NA6O: Restoring Brown Bros BTL Paddle</a> .....	35
<a href="#">K1RF: CW Wave Shaping</a> .....	37
<a href="#">EA3VN: Experiencing AO75CT</a> .....	39
<a href="#">WC3W: Just Thinking</a> .....	41
<a href="#">New Members</a> .....	42
<a href="#">CWops Tests (CWTs)</a> .....	43
<a href="#">Giving Back</a> .....	44
<a href="#">CW Academy</a> .....	46
<a href="#">CWops Member Awards</a> .....	47
<a href="#">QTX: The Art of Conversational CW</a> .....	51
<a href="#">My Story: New Member Introductions</a> .....	55



*(Continued from previous page)*

The summary at the top indicates how successful our CW Academy continues to be with 369 students graduating over all four levels but the effort made to then list each by name and callsign adds a striking personal touch. A few minutes spent picking off some of the Advanced level calls at random showed a good number having recently progressed to full CWops membership with one at the time on the nominees list. Not only is the Academy bringing folk into CW it's also providing us with a pool of well qualified and committed potential new members via the Advanced level course. Arguably the CW Academy is our 'Jewel in the Crown'; we must thank all those involved and pay note to the comments at the end pointing out the need for more advisors.

At the end of last month I enjoyed a visit to Liverpool on club business. The Radio Officers' Association were holding their Annual General Meeting in the Liner Hotel and I was there to present them with the 2024 CWops Award for Advancing the Art of CW. The award is normally presented at the Dayton CWops dinner in May but given the likelihood of no members being present I suggested I should make the short trip to Liverpool and present it myself at their AGM. I have to thank Riki K7NJ for pulling out all the stops to get the plaque engraved and shipped over in time. The ROA is an interesting mix of active hams and some who aren't licensed but still continue to be involved operating Morse through special events, demonstrations and interacting with interested newcomers, scout groups etc. There were some familiar faces and callsigns and a few CWops members too. All share a past spent operating CW professionally, mostly at sea or at coast radio stations and the hotel was a fitting venue with its sea going décor and pictures of vessels of a past age on the walls. More later in this edition.

These past few weeks I've been giving my Elecraft K2 some air time. It was bought used as an original bare bones 10 watt CW-only version and has that analogue feel with a design that I have a fighting chance of actually understanding. It's often a topic of conversation while using it during QSOs too. I've added some extras and it's now a respectable QRP contesting radio and it's been interesting comparing it in CWT sessions and other contests. I used to be very keen on QRP and you don't forget those tricks of timing your calls and acting as if you are far 'bigger' than you really are. And run when you can or until you get pushed off the frequency - and NEVER let on you're only running 5 watts of course! I also never forget that the heavy lifting in a QRP contact is done by the other side - 2 calls without a response especially in a contest and I move on to avoid becoming an unwelcome liability and disruptor of routines. The 0700 CWTs have been fun with flea power; it's a great time for DX propagation here and the East coast insomniacs have been easy pickings on 20 and 40m but so too can be those far to the West with good ears. The regular VK and KH6 signals are often busy being called by 'big' Europeans but I have worked VK2 and VK6 without too much problem with 5 watts. I've often worked HI at this time using high power but I'll persevere with my quest for what I'm sure will be my first QRP contact. Whatever the power the 0700 CWT is great fun from Europe and I highly recommend it!

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

## Editor's Note:

### Do You Remember Your First Time?

Your first time. It was likely preceded by heightened emotions and perhaps trepidations or anxiousness of what is to come or what you expect. You've been anticipating based on others' stories told, some of greatness some of sorrow. The experience arrives and your head is aswirl taking it all in. And when it's all said and done, an everlasting memory has been made with your own story of greatness, or disappointment. What are those firsts?

But let's focus on amateur radio personal firsts...

First ham radio contact.

First CW contact.

First key.

First DX contact.

First radio.

First license.

First time to Hamvention (aka Dayton).

Well, all those firsts I remember very well since I was licensed as a Novice in 1970 by an Elmer and then re-licensed by the FCC in 1984. All except going to Dayton. Never been there, never cared to, really. I have an HRO nearby; attend several local Swapfests each year; we have a huge outdoor radio flea market each summer; and our local club has ongoing activities that include social opportunities. I don't need "Dayton."

But joining CWops has changed my perspective on this lack of interest. CWops is the first non-local club that I'm truly immersed in, with worldwide members descending on Dayton for Hamvention. Many of those same members I've worked in a CWT or CW Open or ragchewed, who I'll recognize their call sign but not their face. So why not go to Dayton? No good answer to avoid it, so I am finally on my way to the largest Hamfest in North America. Emotions: excitement, anxiousness, and anticipation are all swirling around in my head. And being the planner that I am, I've memorized the Xenia layout, personalized my forum schedule, reserved my seat at CWops dinner and SWODXA DX dinner and made plans to meet up with Bruna, Tony, and Mike who I've either featured or will be featuring in future articles continuing my series about "lustful keys." A photo inventory is being created for next month's *Solid Copy*. I've mapped my travel route and planned a POTA activation at a pre-designated park on my return home. I've left just enough room in my grand plan for the full experience to wash over me. Yeah, this is going to be a ham radio road trip to remember. Do you remember your first trip to Dayton? If we're seated together at the CWops dinner, I'd enjoy hearing about your memory.

Next month's *Solid Copy* will feature a photo essay of Hamvention through the eyes of CWops members. I hope you'll contribute your photos to help tell the story.

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

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

# News and Notes

[Duncan \(Mac\) Fiskien, G3WZD](#)

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

**Claude Wood, W4FKM #1342 on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2024**

**Author (Art) Charette, K6XT #728 on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 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, including a couple of nice reports on the International DX Convention held in Visalia. Do keep the submissions coming and no need to wait until the monthly call for articles or reminder (thank you to those who sent items early). Deadline for the next issue is 1<sup>st</sup> June.*

**Rick, N6XI #4** About 31 CW operators, most of them CWops and/or FOC members, gathered at the Visalia Waffles restaurant on the Saturday morning of the International DX Convention in Visalia, CA on April 13. Here's a picture of a few of us. This used to be an outlet of the Country Waffles chain, therefore the "CW Restaurant" but, alas, they went independent and changed their name. But the food remains good, the service was efficient and friendly, and the company was outstanding.



**Fred, K4IU #507** I was fortunate to attend the 75th International DX Convention held in Visalia, California from April 12th to April 14th. CWops members were well represented at this event as

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attendees, presenters and moderators. This event showcased the latest news in DXing, contesting, and amateur radio technology.

Teams and recent leaders of the DXpeditions many of you have worked presented their expedition highlights. Other well-known speakers from the amateur radio community shared thoughts and debated topics ranging from low power DXing, station automation, FT8 contesting to some basic contest pearls. There were topics for both seasoned operators and newcomers alike.

Friday's DX and Contest Academy forums, and Saturday's awards ceremonies added excitement to the event, celebrating the achievements of top operators, DXpedition teams and fostering friendly competition among participants.

The convention served as an opportunity for industry leaders to showcase cutting-edge equipment and software, offering attendees a glimpse into the future of amateur radio technology. Overall, the 75th International DX Convention at Visalia, California was a fantastic experience, and testament to the passion and innovation driving the amateur radio hobby forward. CWops is a big part of this.



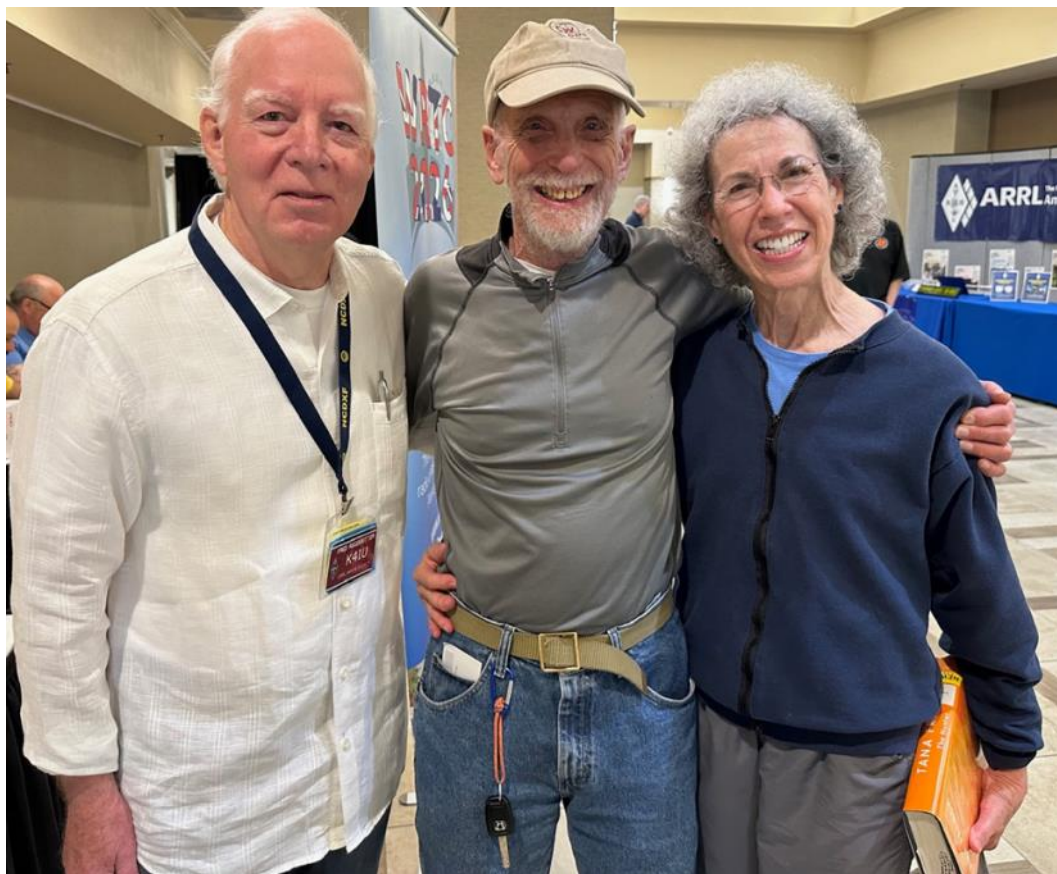
**Contest forum: Left to Right panelists - Doug Grant K1DG (CWops #1556), Bob Wilson N6TV, Scott Wright KØMD (CWops #305) (moderator), Mike Ritz W7VO, Craig Thompson K9CT (CWops #276), Bill Fehring W9KKN**

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**Manning the WRTC booth: Doug K1DG (CWops #1556) and John W2GD (CWops #204)**



**Fred K4IU (CWops #507), Hank W6SX (CWops #61), and XYL Rhonda**

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**Chris, VK3QB #2949** The next Activity Weekend is 18 May 2024 00:00z to 19 May 2024 23:59z

**Pete, W1RM #8** Dave, WJ2O #1093, has announced that he will be on VP6 (Pitcairn) May 30 to June 10. Dave is a life member of CWops. He may also spend time as FO/WJ2O. Keep an ear out if you need either for CWops DXCC.

**Jack, W1WEF #48** On March 8, 2024, the day of the Solar eclipse, a group of CW Ops members were in a ZOOM QSO right around the time the eclipse would peak in our area. Greg, NA8V suggested we get on 1810.5 to see if we can hear each other. Initially the band was as dead as it normally is mid-day, but as the eclipse moved toward its peak in Ct, Greg could hear me. I couldn't hear him until maybe a minute later when Greg's signal appeared, and we exchanged signal reports. Greg's signal built to 10 over 9. Greg and I were each running 1500 W to inverted L's. During the next few minutes, Larry K7SV in VA running 100W was about S7 and Al, W1FJ was a bit louder. Mitch, NW0M in Mo, who was about S5, is around 1400 miles from CT.

**Mike, VE3GFN #1119** has finished installing and testing his 2M FM mobile station, in his new red Hyundai Kona min-SUV, in time to take it down to Falls Church VA in early June. The radio is programmed with a big bunch of repeaters to see us along the way, and Tom, VE3RSA, has been enlisted as chief navigator and radio operator.



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**Stew, GW0ETF #919** To Squeeze, or Not to Squeeze? Way back I used a (Kent) single paddle key. I was happy and comfortable with it. Then I got sucked into the notion that real CW ops use twin paddles with iambic (aka 'squeeze') keying. So, I got myself a Bencher BY-1 twin paddle and taught myself; it took a while and some effort, but I ended up happy and comfortable again. I was a real squeeze keyer.

Then relatively recently, say within the last 5 years or so, I got hooked into the notion that mild arthritis in my fingers was contributing to (more) mistakes and that moving to a single paddle would help. So, I bought a second hand (Kent!) single paddle but boy was it a struggle! I couldn't even send CQ because I couldn't stop myself from squeezing the paddle - instead of a 'C' random gibberish would come out. Initially I gave up but eventually tried again with more determination until I'd cracked it. I'm now once again happy and comfortable and have a couple of Begali singles.

So, to the present day. My wife thinks I need to get out more so I decided some portable operating would be fun. I don't want to risk my expensive and heavy Begali babies so decided to look for some miniature lightweight paddles. Problem is I can only find double paddle models and that made me nervous about going through all that learning torture again. Well, I still had my Bencher in its box on a shelf so I dug it out and hooked it up.....and wow, I could send perfectly! That really surprised me until I analysed what I was doing and realised I was simply using the 2 paddles as a single and not squeezing. My brain had simply bypassed the iambic bit and I can now switch back and forth with ease. In practice iambic mode doesn't add a great deal, and I'm happy to have ditched the squeeze. I've even put an order in for one of GMØEUL's nice looking miniature UMPP-1 paddle keys - Peter was one of my very first CW Academy students, so I'm pleased to see he's still wedded to CW and providing such a welcome service too.

Until the next News and Notes, QAC...

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

NewsAndNotes@CWops.org

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## CWops Activity Weekend – May 2024

**ACTIVITY DATE:** 18 May 2024: 0000z to 19 May 2024: 2359z

**PURPOSE:** The objectives of the CWops Activity Weekends are to generate more on-air conversational QSOs between members, build skills, and foster camaraderie.

**EXCHANGE:** Participants are encouraged to exchange more details than just the traditional "RST, Name, QTH." Share details of station, weather, pets, other hobbies, propagation, or projects.

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**BANDS:** 80 through to 10 meters, around the .028 CWops watering holes.

**SPOTTER:** Use this very handy tool to look for activity from fellow CWops members: <https://rbn.telegraphy.de/>

**CWO CALL SIGNS:** VK1CWO and other “CWO” callsigns may be active.

**PRIZES:** There are no prizes, and this is **not** a contest.

**LOG SUBMISSION:** Members are asked to submit notification of their participation only. <https://forms.gle/FtHCeMEdfQk9ACqm9> .These results will be used to track activity and gauge participation.

**INFO:** Ask me any questions via [email](#) - Chris VK3QB - vk3qb@hotmail.com

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



# How We Were

[Ian Capon](#), GWØKRL

Mike Goldstein, VE3GFN, CWops #1119



"I began ham radio in 1956, back in the pre-computer days, when contesting was all done by hand. I was a VE1 in those days, operating from my parent's home in Halifax NS, with my bedroom papered in QSL cards. Wire antennas adorned our back yard, and who knew anything about SWR?

The photo shows the shack of the day, circa 1958 or so, and the contest certificate just above my head is for winning the old VE/W contest, all CW of course. Note the Vibroplex bug on the LEFT side of the desk, being used backwards (and I still do!), as I'm a lefty.

Almost 70 years later, I'm still pushing those Vibroplex bugs around, here in Toronto."

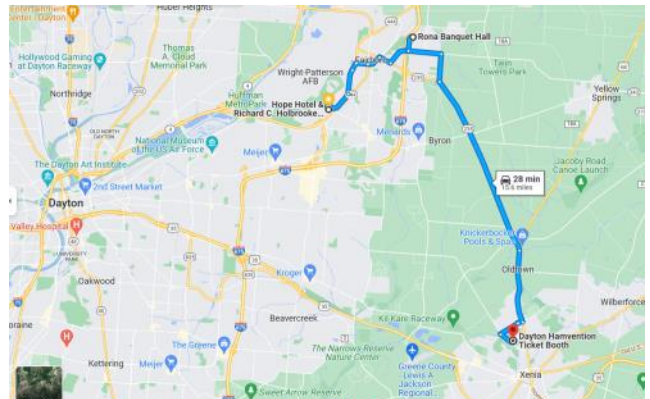
So now it's your turn, do you have a picture to share accompanied by a brief paragraph description, of your early days in radio, experimenting, exploring or just "being a ham". Please send it to [Ian Capon](#).

**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 late 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](mailto: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](#)



# The CWops Award for Advancing The Art of CW

[David Barlow](#), G3PLE CWops #3365



The 2024 CWops Award for advancing the Art of CW was presented to **The Radio Officers' Association** (ROA) at their Annual General Meeting held in Liverpool, England on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April by CWops president Stewart Rolfe GWØETF. Unfortunately, no members were available to travel to Dayton on 16<sup>th</sup> May.



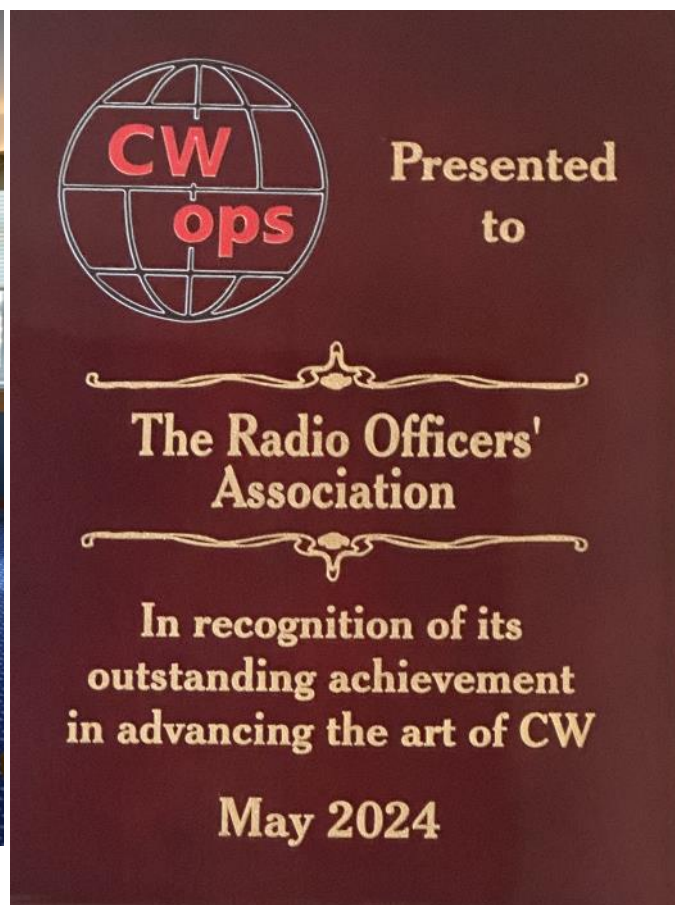
As the official presentation would normally be announced and made at the CWops annual dinner, the Radio Officers' Association was planning a special CW day at the Marconi Centre, Poldhu, Cornwall by kind permission of the Poldhu Amateur Radio Club. The location is of CW importance as it is from the Wireless Field where the club aerials are up on 65 ft masts and is the site where the first transatlantic letter "s" was sent on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1901.

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**L to R: Stew Rolfe, GWØETF, CWops President, presenting award to Bill Cross, GØELZ**



The day saw the Marconi Centre open for CW operators, CWops members, ROA members and Poldhu Club members and those who are interested in CW or learning the art of CW. The call sign for the day was the special call GB2GM and there were two stations on air and on the usual CWops band area. The call sign was also on air for the 0700-0800z CWT, and G3PLE CWops #3365 was operating GB2GM in Run mode on 20m.

The Radio Officer's Association is approaching four hundred members all of whom hold professional certificates for CW either at 20 wpm or in the case of most members 25 wpm. Half of the membership hold amateur licences. It has an active contest group who as individuals achieve good scores especially in CQWW CW contests. Its contest team have achieved second and third places in RSGB 80m Club Call contests.

The ROA has run a quite unique amateur radio net which is listened to by many amateurs as its format is different from the chat type net and has trained CW operators sending good clean CW. The net takes place every Thursday night at 19:00 local on 3507 kHz or 7017 kHz and is run by Mike Carter M6MPC. Each person that calls in will be given a QRY number indicating his/her turn in the queue. The net starts with Mike's local weather followed by a passage from the Maritime Union Magazine in Dutch and English plus a block of mixed 5-digit code groups. Then Mike sends the members three questions pertaining to their time at sea. Each member is then called in turn to give their weather, answers to the questions and any other pertinent information. If condi-

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tions on 3507 kHz/7017 kHz for the weekly Thursday 19:00 net are very poor such as long skip where no UK stations are readable then Mike M6MPC will revert to Top Band 1827 kHz and call there. Band and QRG changes are given in a WhatsApp group.

The ROA produces a 75-page journal quarterly called QSO which includes an amateur section QRZ. This includes pictures and details of Morse keys and the experiences of members using CW on board ships. In addition, details of historic wireless events and early Wireless Operators.

Once a year an event on the amateur bands called Maritime Radio Day takes place in which former Radio Officers, Marconists and Wireless Operators from round the world meet and work each other using CW in the way formally used by ship and coast stations. Instead of RST they exchange QRK (readability) and QSA (signal strength), with ship or coast station name and callsign. It is not a contest so can be followed by old friends meeting for a chat. A handsome certificate of participation is sent to participants. This is run by the ROA amateur section.

Some ROA members on the amateur bands are strictly CW only.



***L to R: Robin Powell, G3OGP and Peter Gavin, MØURL, President of Amateur Radio within ROA***

# Radio Travel

[Mike Goldstein, VE3GFN](#) CWops #1119

I love to travel. Visiting new places, hearing new languages, being exposed to different cultures - that's the exciting stuff of life! To prepare for a trip, most people head for a travel agency or an airline office. They gather brochures, compare schedules and prices, and often put down their money months in advance.

Me, I head for the basement. I simply turn on a radio, spin a globe, and rotate my antenna. No money down, no long lines at the airport, no jet lag. I travel by air, but my carrier is Amateur Radio. I'm a radio ham.



"CQ ENGLAND, CQ ENGLAND ..." My antenna is pointed northeast. I haven't walked the Yorkshire Dales lately, enjoyed lunch in a British pub, or done my shopping in Regent Street. "CQ ENGLAND ... THIS IS VE3GFN CALLING ..."

'VE3GFN' ... My radio callsign is my passport to any country I chose to visit. Like my passport, it identifies me as a Canadian. Unlike my name, it is unique in the world, the only one in the radio hams' telephone book. There is only one 'VE3GFN'.

"VE3GFN, THIS IS G3JMH ..."

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Aha! That didn't take long! The 'G' prefix tells me the calling station is indeed in the U.K. His name, as it happens, is Vin, and he's located in High Wycombe, near London. I explain to him that I'm travelling this afternoon, and he invites me to his favourite pub, in Piccadilly. We pass a few hours drinking Webster's Yorkshire bitter.

Where to, next? The ham radio equivalent of spinning a globe is to spin a dial ... on a radio receiver. Instead of making a call of enquiry, a CQ, I can answer one from another station.

I tune the receiver slowly across the twenty metre band, and hear Finland ... Germany... several of the Russian republics ... European signals are quite loud today.

*"Hola CQ from EA7CEL ..."*

Perfect. Sunny Spain will be just dandy, after London's foggy streets. I close my eyes, mentally walking up to the British Airways counter at Heathrow. Then I press my transmit button. *"EA7CEL from VE3GFN. Cómo está usted, amigo?"* Hamming is a great way to practice my Spanish. Any traveller will tell you that having a bit of the local language makes a trip much more interesting. The same is true for Amateur Radio. *El seZor* Miguel Montavez takes me on a tour of the mosque in Cordoba, his home town. That marvellous Moorish architecture, with its gardens and delicate arches, must be one of the loveliest sights in the world. In the distance can be heard the resonant sounds of a guitar, picking out the chords of Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez".

Fascinating hobby, ham radio. With a radio transceiver and a simple antenna, you can travel the globe from the comfort of your home. The license can be obtained after passing government examinations. I took my exams when I was fifteen, and the effort and time spent on study was well invested. Installed in car, house, or boat, my radio gear lets me talk with my friends around the world. These fellow travellers, whom I rarely meet in person, would welcome me with open arms, should I ever turn up on their doorsteps. In turn, I have entertained many radio amateurs over the years, people from all over the world, and all interesting.

Most radio clubs sponsor licensing courses during the winter, and there are many excellent books to assist you. The local office of Communications Canada can steer you to one of these clubs or courses.

As evening descends outside my basement window, I hear watery Asian signals coming in from the north. With my Judo suit packed, and with visions of climbing Mount Fuji at dawn, I'm soon on the trans-polar flight from Madrid to Tokyo ...

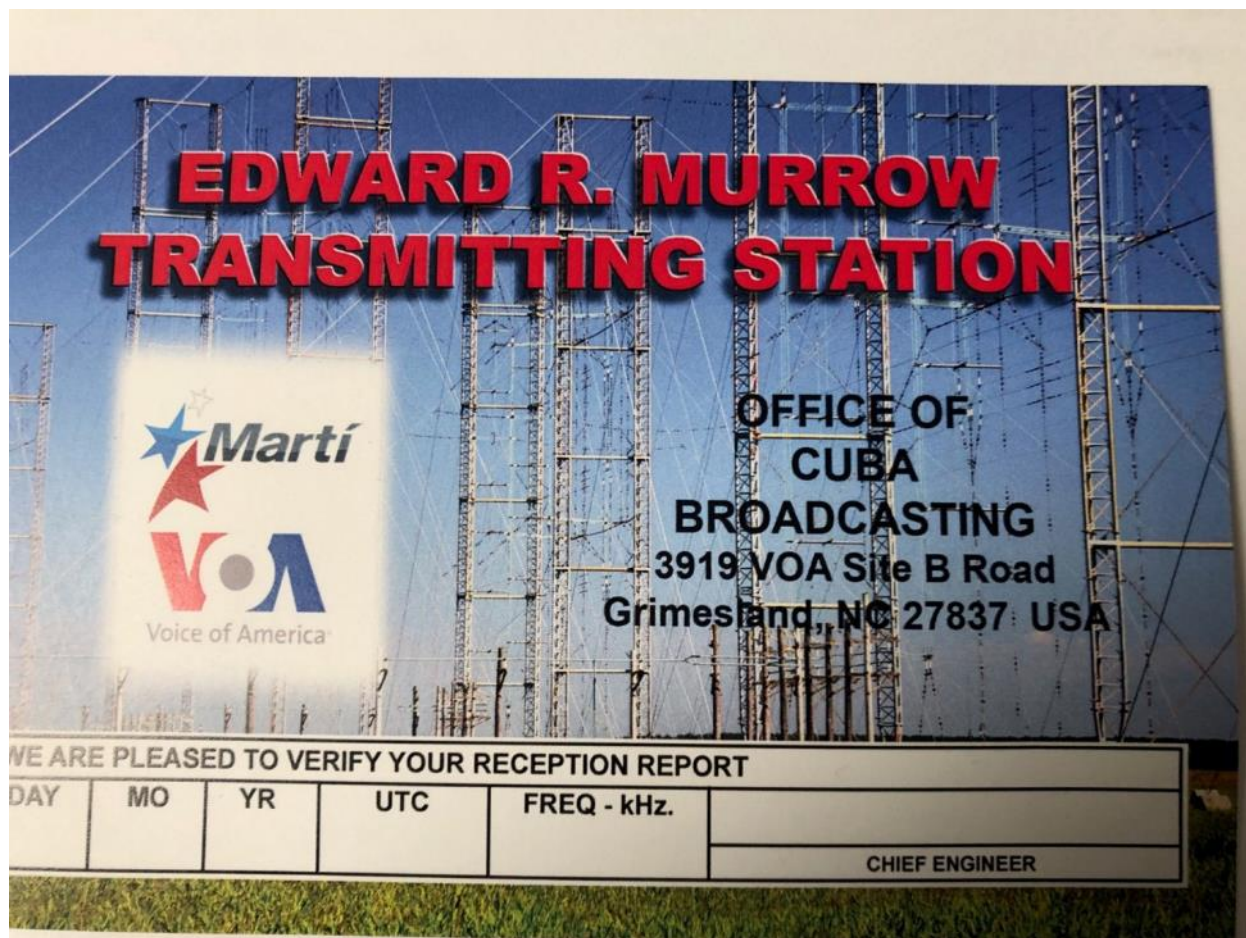
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# Voice of America Site B, the Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station in Grimesland, North Carolina

An Under The Hood Visit by

[Bob Conder](#), K4RLC CWops #3042

Last month, Dale W4AUV and I were treated to a “under the hood” visit to the last remaining Voice of America transmitting station in the United States. It is located in eastern North Carolina, and officially known as the “Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station” part of the “Office of Cuba Broadcasting” in [Grimesland, North Carolina](#). Also, known as “VOA Site B.” This type of shortwave broadcast station is only one of a few remaining worldwide.



**VOA QSL Card showing some of the 38 antennas.**

This VOA site has been on the air continuously (24/7/365) since the 1963 on-site dedication by President John Kennedy, broadcasting up to 8 transmitters at a time on the international short wave bands. There are three 250,000 watt and five 500,000 watt GE, Continental and Telefunken transmitters feeding 38 possible antenna configurations, with an Effective Radiated Power of 2,000,000 watts. (There is also a 39<sup>th</sup> antenna, that is a Dummy Load that will handle 500,000 watts). The antenna field covers over 6,000 acres of flat, coastal plain wetlands, not far from the Atlantic Ocean, so it has a minimal absorption factor and a salt water boost.

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**Front of VOA Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station (Dale on front steps)**



**Wall plaque in lobby explaining the legacy of Edward R. Murrow, who became known while a CBS Radio correspondent in London, broadcasting during the "Blitz" the infamous bombing of London by the Nazis during WW2**

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***TCI "Curtain" antenna made of 4 dipoles wide & 6 dipoles high, pointed at Cuba. It is controllable in both vertical and horizontal azimuth, depending on the configuration has to up 23dB gain at a 4 degree take off angle.***



***Curtain and Rhombic antennas fed from the antenna switching center.***

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The antennas are fed by over 26 miles of 300 Ohm open line "ladder line" rated at 500,000 watts, with a minimal SWR and hardly no signal loss over great distances. The largest antennas are called "Curtain" antennas, given their configuration, of matched horizontal and vertical dipoles suspended between large towers, giving the visual impression of huge curtains. There are also rhombics, each 6 wave lengths long. The rhombics are not used as often, given their narrow bandwidth and narrow beamwidth. The Curtains can bathe a large geographic area (such as part of a continent) with a very strong signal. The primary broadcast areas for this station are Cuba, Central and South America, and Africa (although the antennas could reach out and touch Russia and eastern Europe, when needed).



**Glenn W7GSW showing DaleW4AUV features of the GB-6 500KW transmitter console in the large 8 transmitter control bay.**

**GB-6 Transmitter Monitor & switches.**



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**Glenn & Dale studying the transmitter output in the main control room complex.**



**The antennas are well constructed & fed with minimal-loss open feed line. Note SWR of 1.1:1 at 75,000 watts ! (QRP Power for GB-6)**



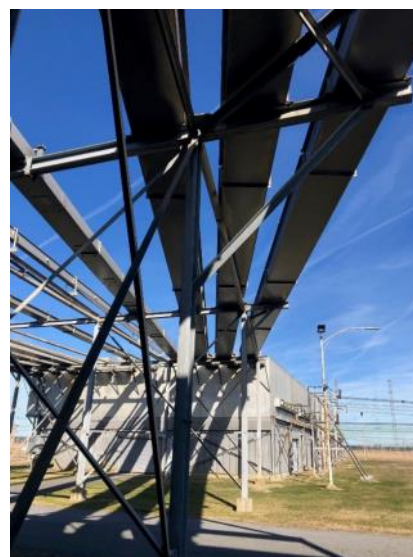
**Larger control panel for each transmitter. Note image of "Casper the Friendly Ghost" over the meters for GB-7: There are current problems with the transmitter and, in technical terms, "it's spooked!"**



**Antenna switch controller for matching the 8 transmitters with 38 antenna configs.**



**Left: Glenn & Dale examining the open feed-line from Switching station to antenna fields-The 8 transmitters can be connected to any of the 38 antennas ; Right: Feed line conduits from Transmitters to Antenna Switching station.**



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Many of the engineers are hams, including Macon, the chief engineer. Gary N2AD transferred to Greenville when the VOA in Bethany, Ohio closed. (The Bethany VOA site operated during WW2 into Germany, and was referred to as the "Ohio Liars" by Hitler !) Glenn W7GSW, a US Navy communications vet, has been at the site many years and conducted much of the tour for Dale and I.

As the transmitters are no longer manufactured, the ham engineers fortunately have the ability to repair components or make them from scratch. When we visited, in the tech Lab, Macon was tweaking a relay switch he made. On another table, was the original "bread board" layout of the switch. In addition to an electronic shop, there is a full mechanical shop with lathes and grinders for fabrication of mechanical components.

The transmitters are so large that you can walk inside them....with care. For one, Glenn made sure the 13,000 plate voltage was cut and the capacitors had been discharged with a "dead man's wand." There were multiple fail safe lock sequences before one could enter the final stage of the transmitter. Here is a photo of one of the technicians crawling inside the transmitter to make repairs. In addition to heavy voltage, the components can weigh a few hundred pounds and require a mechanical lift for disassembly. And, as one can imagine with voltages this high, temperatures are extremely high and require a water cooling system, as well as a very cold transmitter room.



***VOA technician crawling into "guts" of a 500KW transmitter.***

There is also a huge machine shop, as mechanical components have to be repaired or fabricated. Below is a photo of Glenn with a lathe in the well-equipped machine shop.



***Right: Tuning coils for finals - note the entire tube config is on a rotator.***



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External weather in eastern North Carolina adds to problems, given the high temperatures and high humidity levels in the summer. Also, this area has been plagued by hurricanes, but the antenna system has a wind rating of around 250 MPH, and has never been bothered by a hurricane. If the high voltage lines feeding the plant were to come down, there are back up diesel generators that can run the station.



**Old fashioned tubes that will fry you; Note Plate voltage of 13 KV.**



**Glenn pointing at Modulator Cabinet for the GE 250KW transmitter.**

The entire area is a nice RF field, possibly exceeding RF limits, but multiple signs warn of this. Gary has been at the facility since it opened and is not showing adverse signs from RF, nor is Glenn (maybe RF is good for one's health). As a test, the ham operators may have brought in an Elecraft K2 QRP rig and loaded to one of the 15dB gain antennas. Excellent results, as would be imagined. Glenn cautioned that the RF field there is so strong that it would overload popular SDR radios, like the IC-7300.

While our focus was on the technical details of the station, it is worth noting the purpose of the station. In the words of Wilford Owens, station manager, it is to "...provide reliable news and information about America and the world to our foreign audiences." Some question the relevance of shortwave broadcasting in a time of sophisticated technology. Here are some answers: first, radio is a proven medium and still the primary information and entertainment medium in undeveloped parts of the world. In fascist and totalitarian countries, the internet is blocked and those who try to access it are monitored and threatened. Radio has no limits, as it is an electromagnetic wave, transversing oceans and penetrating artificial political boundaries. Finally, the Voice of American Jazz Hour (playing cool, "Blue Note" Jazz) was credited with



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helping bring down the “Iron Curtain” as the Russians loved American Jazz and felt the freedom in this form of music.

After the lengthy visit, we left with great admiration for the engineers and ham-engineers who use their technical expertise to keep this aging behemoth station running 24/7/365. And you can easily tell it’s not just their technical expertise, but their love of the equipment and of radio that keeps it going.

Thanks to Macon WB4PMQ, Gary N2AD and Glenn W7GSW for such a personal and educational tour of the technical complexities of VOA Site B. Thanks to Dale W4AUV for arranging the tour, through his membership in the Society of Broadcast Engineers; Dale is an engineer for WCPE-FM “The Classical Station”.

(PS-I posted a previous article on “Activating the VOA.” Site A was unfortunately decommissioned, and the 24 antennas destroyed. It is now a Game Land area owned by the North Carolina Wildlife Commission, and a POTA Site: K-6964, which I activated. I was also able to “activate” VOA Site C, a receive only “spy” station, with the local Brightleaf Radio Club for the NC QSO Party, about 25 years ago. Site C has 4 massive Rhombic antennas; we loaded up the one that had a name plate at the feed point stating it’s aimed direction as “Moscow.”

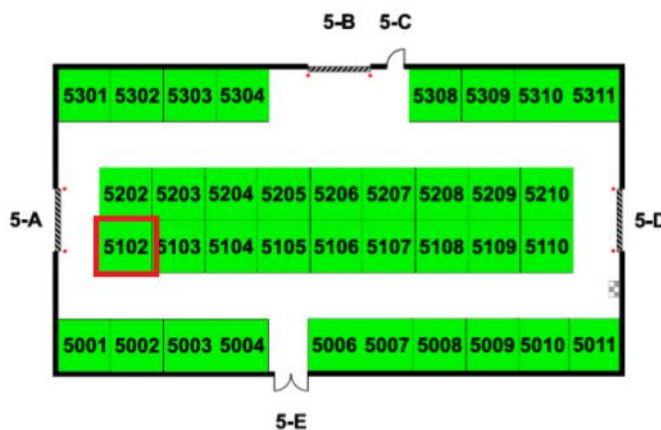


**Macon WB4PMQ (right) VOA Chief Engineer with K4RLC Bob**

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**Going to Hamvention?**  
**Visit us in the “Hertz” Building**  
**Booth #5102**



# The Tropics, the Doldrums, the Cluster, Kava and CW

## Tales and Anecdotes from Tropical Vanuatu - YJ0VK 2024

[Chris Chapman](#), VK3QB CWops #2949



### 28 March – the Departure Lounge and a flooded highway.

Luke VK3HJ and I fly from Melbourne to Port Vila direct. A direct flight these days is a rarity and made for a smooth start to our travels. It is also pretty hard for an airline to lose your bags when it is a direct flight. Two recent DXpeditions to Norfolk Island suffered lost/delayed baggage syndrome, so we were especially pleased with the arrangements this time.

Matt KØBBC (from South Dakota) and Alan VK6CQ (from Perth, Australia) arrived in Vanuatu a couple of days earlier. Matt was to meet us at the airport on arrival at 2200 local time.

Matt messaged me whilst we were in the boarding lounge in Melbourne reporting that heavy rain had damaged the highway (the only sealed road around the island), and that numerous creeks and rivers were over the road. The 47 km drive in the dark to collect us would take at least two hours, each way, and as our plane didn't arrive until 2200 local, he asked that we find accommodation in Port Vila. He'd collect us the next day when the waters receded, and daylight offered safer driving conditions.

Of course, we agreed and found suitable accommodation in Port Vila for the night.

### 29 March

Matt collected us and we made the 47 km trip north. On our last visit to Port Vila (2012) the main highway had only just been sealed. Prior to that it was largely unsealed and quite a pathway to navigate. During our 2010 visit, we had hired a bus to take us around the island – a full day excursion (122 kms). Nonetheless, the torrential rains had left their mark; it was clear where the road had been underwater just 12 hours earlier, and the washouts and potholes made some sections hard going. It took about 90 minutes to cover the 47km.

Brownie was the local guard dog. He was not much of a guard dog but was a regular (and welcome) visitor to our shack.



**Brownie - our mascot**

The photos (next page) do not do the scene justice. We are following the white bus up a very steep incline and as you can see, the other side of the road was washed away by the rain.

The other photo is deceiving. One could never be certain if it was just a puddle of water, or a 30cm deep pothole.

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### **30 March – On-air and Active.**

By mid-day we had all three stations up and running. The main CW station comprised an IC-705 helped along with an SPE amplifier. The SSB station was an IC-7300 with some encouragement from an Elecraft KPA500, and Alan had setup the venerable IC-7000 as the main FT8 station. The Elecraft KX3 was connected to the four-element beam as our six-metre monitoring station and beacon.

Our antennas comprised a 40-metre doublet strung between a couple of coconut trees, not our normal 25-30 metre Norfolk Island pines, but adequate given the task at hand. It was fed with 450 ohm ladder line into a (soon to be collector's item) MFJ-962 antenna matching unit. We also took two DX-Commander Expedition verticals. One was setup on the beach, right at the high tide mark, and about 60 metres from the guesthouse/shack. The other was placed behind the guesthouse.

### **About antennas, band pass filters and interference.**

Seventeen DXpeditions to small islands has taught us a thing or two about reducing cross-station interference and making the best of things when it cannot be avoided. As any DXpeditioner or multi-station contester will attest, the nemesis of a successful operation is interference from the transmitter sitting three metres to your left. Finding a way for all that RF to co-exist without causing unacceptable levels of RFI to receivers is a major planning consideration.

The cross polarisation and physical separation between our two main antennas made a huge difference. By the time band pass filters were inserted between the radios and amplifiers, all but the most stubborn of unwanted RF leakage was suppressed sufficiently. Even the high-duty cycle FT8, renowned for causing unwanted interference to nearby stations, appeared to have been calmed.

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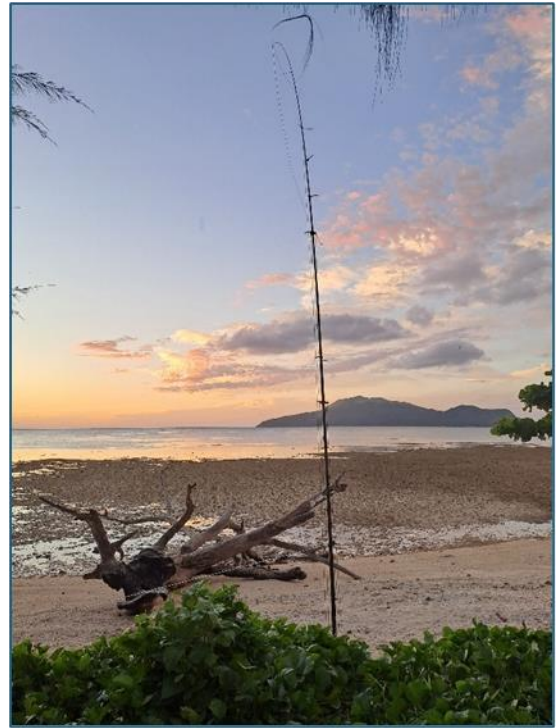
Our additional tactics for dealing with RFI included: to QSY to another band, wind the power back, or in rare but unworkable situations, one of the stations would take a break. However, I would say the latter only occurred on a handful of occasions.

Of course, ferrite rings and clip-on ferrites are also an important part of our RFI-killing arsenal.

Good housekeeping with feedlines and separation in the shack also assisted.

The DX-Commanders did a great job. Nothing beats resonance when you are in a remote location with limited resources. There simply is not much that can go wrong.

About the only thing we will do better next time is to pull the tensioning shock cords tighter on the radiating wires. On occasion the wind gusts were sufficient to dislodge a radiator and upset the SWR.



**DX-Commander on the beach - looking North.**

In addition, when collapsed the Expedition model poles fit nicely in a standard suitcase. These poles are extremely strong and we saw no signs of wear and tear after 14 days on the beach in pretty harsh conditions. These will be a permanent part of our antenna compliment for future DXpeditions. Check them out here.

<https://dxcommander.com/product/dx-commander-expedition-kit/>

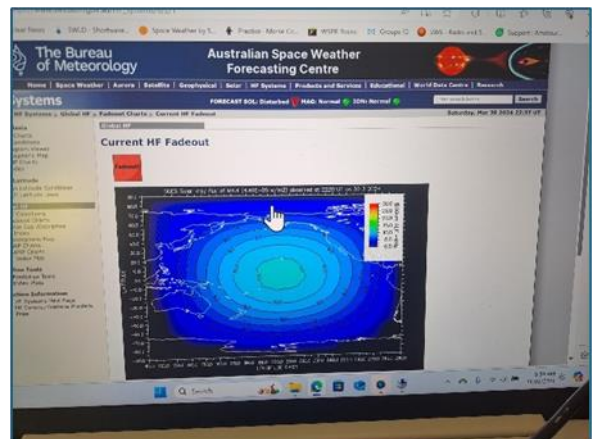
### 31 March – The Doldrums

*"The doldrums is a popular nautical term that refers to the belt around the earth near the equator where sailing ships sometimes get stuck on windless waters."*

Ref: <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/doldrums.html>

It is also a term that refers to the boredom and frustration suffered by Dxpeditioners (and chasers) when the ionised layers around the Earth sometimes get over-energised and absorb our radio signals, resulting in eerily silent bands.

An M-class flare from AR3615 graced us with its presence, producing strong fadeouts on HF. Our 20m FT8 signal was only being decoded in VK4 and ZL. Our CQs on CW were not being heard by the RBN.... not even in VK or ZL.



**IPS Map of HF Fadeout - coming right at us**

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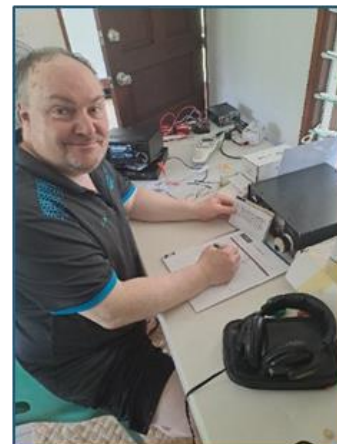
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The higher bands were not much better. FT8 on 12m hobbled along in a lacklustre fashion. By early afternoon the effects of the flare were waning, and we started to see activity again on 15m, 12m and 10m. Nothing remarkable, but worthy of calling CQ with the paddle. 10 and 12 m produced just enough activity to keep things interesting, but certainly not hectic.

Most of the team used the opportunity to grab a midday nap as well as having a fiddle around with radio control software for the new IC-705 and checking some cards for the ARRL DXCC program. On the flip side, conditions were great later in the day and the 31<sup>st</sup> March proved to be our busiest day by QSO count.

ARRL Card Checker Matt KØBBC checks cards for ARRL Card Checker Luke VK3HJ, on-location at YJ0VK. Kinda cool – that is a lot of kilometres to get a card confirmed.

Luke was pretty chuffed.



### About The Cluster...

I use DX-Summit. What can I say, the Cluster provides an endless source of amusement and insight into those on the 'other side'. It really proves the old adage that 'amateur radio is a broad church'.

DXER-@	21000	YJ0VK	05:29 02 Apr 24	having a bubble bath	Vanuatu
H44MS-@	24000	YJ0VK	05:25 02 Apr 24	having a local steak french cook	Vanuatu
SWL-@	24000	YJ0VK	05:15 02 Apr 24	all drunk	Vanuatu
SWL-@	24911	YJ0VK	05:06 02 Apr 24	Please log update	Vanuatu
K1ICU-@	24000	YJ0VK	04:57 02 Apr 24	VK Hangover OFF AIR now 6hrs	Vanuatu
DXEU-@	24911	YJ0VK	04:50 02 Apr 24	pse 12m FT8 today	Vanuatu

Oh, and for the record, having "gud ears" is a compliment, as is "big ears", unlike what we called Billy Smith at school. But, and I'm sure you know this, "cloth ears" is not a compliment. You do not want to be called cloth ears on the cluster. One correspondent scolded me for being too QRS. At the time I was exchanging callsigns at 26 wpm.

It can be very difficult finding the sweet spot when on the pointy end. We try to keep a balance and I use the keyboard function keys rarely. I tend to find that 24-28 wpm achieves the best efficiency with minimal repeats. This also appears, anecdotally, to be a range where I believe most people are able to copy their own callsign, if nothing else. Of course, many operators fire their callsigns at us at higher speeds and after some hours I found I could copy callsigns probably somewhere around 33-35 wpm.

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Much faster than this (say 28 wpm) and error rates tend to increase and the pileup gets frustrated. On more than one occasion a QRQ operator missed a QSO simply because he/she would not QRS when asked.

Having said that, I know some very skilled and experienced CW operators can maintain QSOs rates of 150-180 per hour. But it does rely very much on a well behaved and equally skilled pileup; and well behaved pileups are a rarity. It will come as no surprise to many, but I could rarely fault the excellent operating practices of the JAs. When asked to QRX whilst we worked EU or NA, it was extremely rare to hear a JA calling. 😊

Messages like this one always make it worth the effort. It was our pleasure.

YO5ODT-@	18082	YJ0VK	15:17 03 Apr 24	tnx 73! ATNO	Vanuatu
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## 6 April - The doldrums. Again.

01:50Z: The doldrums. Even with three FT8 stations we worked only five QSOs in one hour.

Rx Frequency					
UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message	
014600	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014630	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014645	-10	-1.4	1066 ~	YJ0VK	ZL1PWD -19
014700	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014715	-11	-1.3	1065 ~	YJ0VK	ZL1PWD -19
014730	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014745	-15	-1.3	1065 ~	YJ0VK	ZL1PWD -19
014800	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014815	-16	-1.3	1065 ~	YJ0VK	ZL1PWD -19
014830	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014845	-7	-1.3	1065 ~	YJ0VK	ZL1PWD -19
014900	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK R-10
014915	-12	-1.3	1065 ~	YJ0VK	ZL1PWD RR73
014930	Tx		500 ~	ZL1PWD	YJ0VK 73

And I can assure you that if FT8 is dead then there will not be any CW or SSB activity.

## Statistics and *That* mode.

It would be remiss (irresponsible?) of any DXpedition article to exclude statistics; it seems the world is addicted to statistics; not to mention real-time logging, personalised sked planning via the Cluster and emails, and arbitrary QSO count milestones.

I still like to spin the dial and listen for new ones, or simply to hear who is on the band. Listening is a learned skill and opens up a lot of interesting and fun experiences for CW operators.

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YJ0VK made 23,739 QSOs. 78% FT8, 19.5% CW, 2.5% SSB.

It was disappointing we did not achieve DXCC on CW.

First QSO: 2024-03-28 05:28:00 Last QSO: 2024-04-11 20:26:35 Number of days: 14.62						Total QSOs: 23,739 Unique Calls: 9,530 Duplicate QSOs: 1,948 (8.21%)				
Band/Mode breakdown						DXCC by Band/Mode breakdown				
Band	CW	FT8	SSB	Total	Total %		CW	FT8	SSB	Total
40	339	1131	0	1470	6.2%	40	31	59	0	62
30	433	1863	0	2296	9.7%	30	44	73	0	78
20	725	3410	22	4157	17.5%	20	51	98	7	103
17	1307	2610	0	3917	16.5%	17	68	91	0	100
15	805	1991	21	2817	11.9%	15	59	87	6	92
12	625	3177	19	3821	16.1%	12	52	89	7	94
10	27	2916	124	3067	12.9%	10	7	97	20	98
6	396	1400	398	2194	9.2%	6	3	19	3	19
Totals	4657	18498	584	23739		Totals	90	130	25	138

Most DXpeditioners want to get you in their log. As many of you as possible. This means efficiency and maximising QSO counts. Nothing can achieve this like FT8. And it can be done with a fraction of the resources required for SSB and to a lesser extent, CW. Our primary FT8 station was a bare-foot IC-7000 running no more than 30-50W on average and radiating from a Terlin Mobile whip sitting on top of 24 ground radials.

This very basic station made over 9,000 FT8 contacts, adding to ATNOs, band slots, IOTA credits and various other award programs. I also recognised a lot of CW callsigns tramping down the FT8 screen when I was on watch. 🙄 Even 'we CW ops' are not immune to **that** mode.

Of course, as all readers of *Solid Copy* will attest, nothing beats the satisfaction of learning, practicing, (mastering?) the **best** mode; CW and Morse Code.

A word about **that** mode (FT8) and SSB. FT8 seems to be the mode that everyone hates, but uses anyway. There is no escaping its popularity and success, and for many, it is the only mode that allows them to remain active in the hobby. Those who use it enjoy it and invest a lot of time and effort in constructing a capable and functional station.

FT8 is supposed to be a weak-signal mode. This does not mean QRP, but some of the signals we saw (and heard) indicated without doubt that amplifiers and many hundreds of watts have become the modus-operandi for some digital operators. This is a shame, it is cluttering the band segment and often splattering other signals. We appear to be caught in some kind of perverse arms race.

On one of our recent trips to the South Pacific, we received an email asking why we were not working a station. He was on the West coast of North America and informed us that he was run-

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ning 1,000 Watts (FT8) into a five-element beam on 28Mhz, and a lot of his buddies were working us, and asking(?) why weren't we working him? Of course we were hearing him. But we set our filtering to exclude any signals greater than +20dB.

You simply do not need hundreds of watts to make QSOs with FT8 under decent band conditions. If everyone committed to run the minimal practical power required to make the QSO we would get more in the log, and those truly 'little guns' would have a fair go. Next time, turn your amplifier off.

### **Magic Band.**

FT8 is a good early warning alert for CW openings – especially on 6m – and it would be remiss of me not to make mention of 6 metres. We had the KX3 monitoring the FT8 channel (50.313MHz) and whenever that familiar warbling graced us with its presence someone would have a look at the action. If the opening looked reasonable - and I'm informed any 6m opening is reasonable - we would swing into action. Action usually started with a run on FT8 and as signals peaked, we would move to SSB or CW. We made 1,400 FT8 QSOs and just shy of 400 for each CW and SSB. Our most remarkable QSO was to Angola, around 15,000 km. In all we worked 19 DXCC entities on 6m.

### **All is not lost.**

The CW pileup - left-most huddle of signals - is larger than the FT8 channel (18.100 MHz). This happens on many DXpeditions. All of us want a slice of the action at the same time.

Of course, it makes sense that we CW operators spread out for the rest of the time.

But there is nothing like a huge pileup lasting for several hours to attest that CW is far from dead.



### **9 April – The Humidity.**

When we planned the trip, we were focussed on avoiding the cyclone season. Sadly, Vanuatu gets its fair share of wild weather in the wet season. We were confident a late March arrival would avoid any straggling cyclonic weather.

Most days were a pleasant 28-30c with humidity in the low 80% range. This was not particularly comfortable, especially for those of us not accustomed to the brutal reality of tropical living, but we managed.



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However, on 9 April the humidity increased and rarely dropped below 90%. This made hard work of just about everything. Even the locals complained. Outside activities were very limited. Antenna maintenance was performed before 0800 local or after 1700 local.

Next time we will leave our visit until September.

The windy and salty environment was not easy on the DX-Commander antennas. Nonetheless, we were extremely impressed with the quality of the product and engineering design. The only lesson we need to apply next time is to really pull the radiating elements' tensioning shock cords more tightly.

On the last day we dismantled the verticals and washed them with clean water prior to packing. Everything was in really good condition; no sign of degradation to the wires, clamps or shock cords after two weeks in a harsh tropical environment.



### **Kava - could this be the answer to pileup fury?**

Kava is a plant native to the Pacific Islands. It has traditional uses as a ceremonial drink, and is a well-known alternative to alcohol in this part of the world. The shrub kava originates from the South Pacific, where Islanders use it to promote psychological and physical relaxation.

Within traditional cultures, the root of the plant is crushed, ground, and then combined with a mixture of water and coconut milk to make it drinkable. It has an earthy taste, and it would be fair to say you don't drink it for the flavour!

Kava bars are commonplace across Vanuatu. Smaller villages offer local Kava bars on the road-side. As there was one about 1km from our QTH we thought we would try it out. Luke, Matt and I ventured out early evening and tried a bowl. Whilst not providing the 'buzz' of alcohol, it certainly created a sense of relaxation, calm and social licence. And I think we all slept better as well.



The evening pileups also seemed to be a little less hectic after a couple of bowls of Kava.

### **In closing....**

Overall, our 14-day trip to Vanuatu was a great success. Had it not been for the high humidity and two or three days impacted by HF fade-outs I think we would have rated it a resounding 10 out of 10! As always, these trips rely on both sides of the QSO to be a success, and 99% operators were just great.

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Sure, there is always the apparent messy and incoherent commotion of the pileup, but that is what makes DXpeditions and 'working that rare one' so much fun for both sides of the QSO. I recognised quite a few CW Ops callsigns in there but, alas, as much as I listened, I did not hear Dick N9EEE; and we had both committed to give it a good go. Next time Dick... for sure.



From the YJØVK team, we thank Roman, RXØF for our first contact, Jan, SP2ESG for the last, and the 23,737 contacts in-between. We hope you got in our log and enjoyed chasing us as much as we enjoyed working you. We hope to hear and work you all again next year.

73, Chris VK3QB (YJØVK team member)

CWops # 2949

***Matt KØBBC, Alan VK6CQ, Chris VK3QB & Luke VK3HJ***

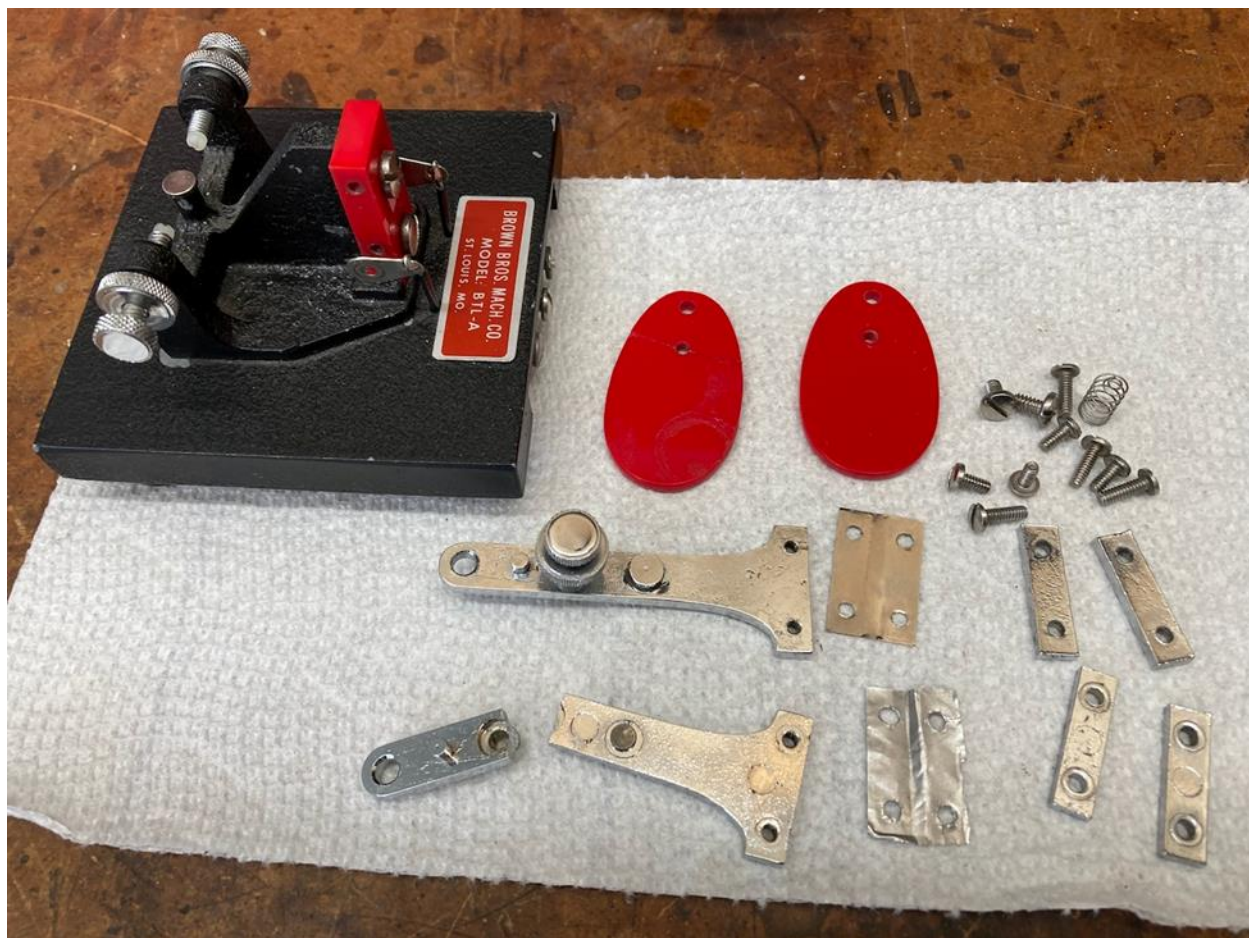


# Restoring a Brown Brothers BTL Paddle

[Gary Johnson](#), NA60 CWops #1345

Many different Morse keys have passed through my shop for restoration and general tune-ups over the years. This month, I received a damaged Brown Brothers model BTL-A iambic paddle. Made in the 1960s through the 70s by a one-man shop, it uses flexures (flexible metal strips) instead of bearings. I actually owned this exact model, purchased in 1975, and as a hardcore CW op, it saw countless hours of use. Information on this company is available at <https://www.qsl.net/n6tt/brown.html>.

This particular key is owned by a blind ham, and from the damage I'm guessing something was dropped on it. There was further damage in shipping. As found: Fractured arm, broken finger piece, and both flexures mangled. The flexures are prone to damage anytime the key is mishandled; I have seen this before. The arms are chrome-plated cast aluminum which is actually pretty strong but something really whacked this one.

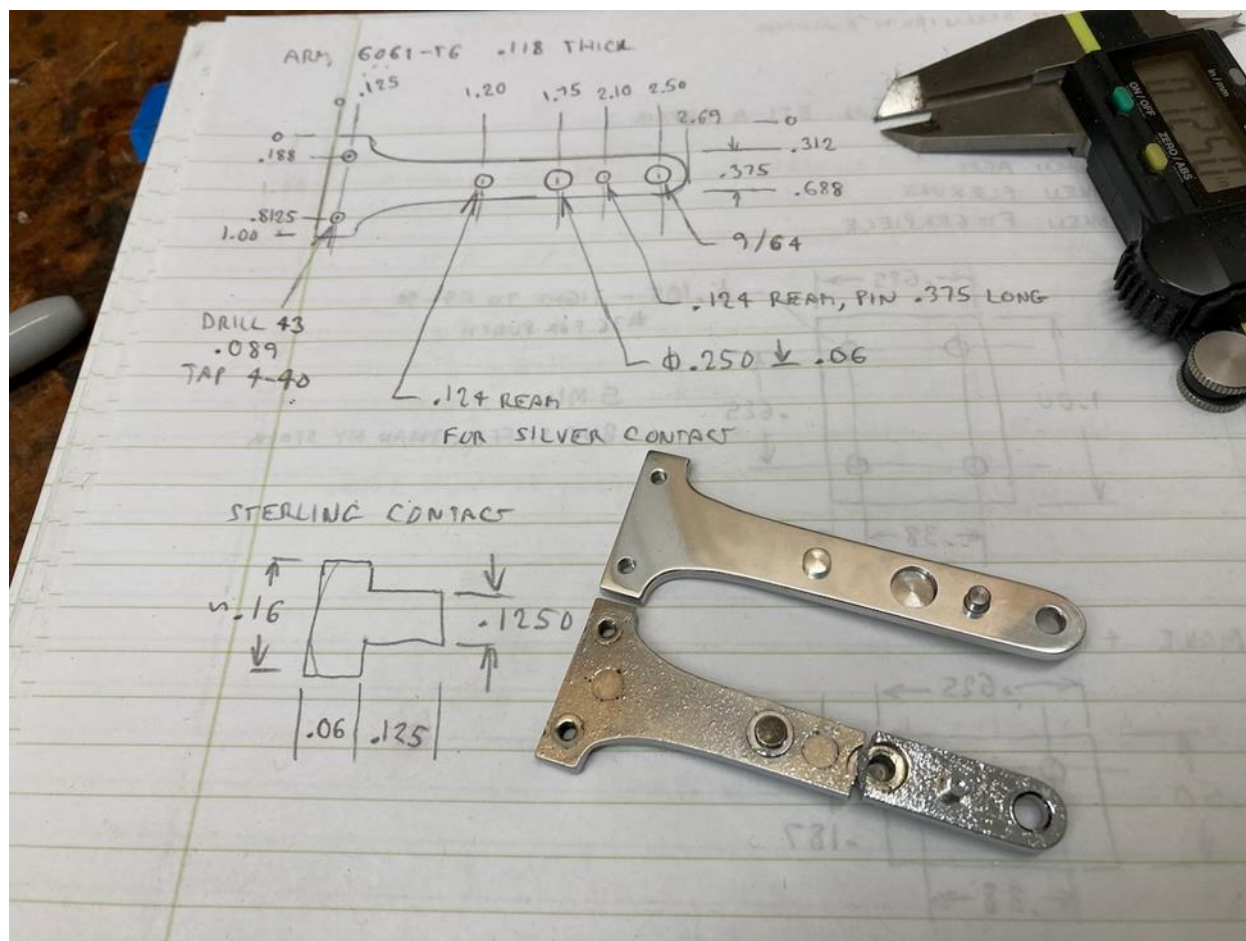


The first thing I did was make a new arm, machined from aluminum and exactly duplicating the original dimension. It was then highly polished and clear coated, making it look almost exactly

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like chrome. In fact the finish looks better than the original, which was fairly rough when plated. A new contact was machined from sterling silver, my standard contact material, then pressed in to place.



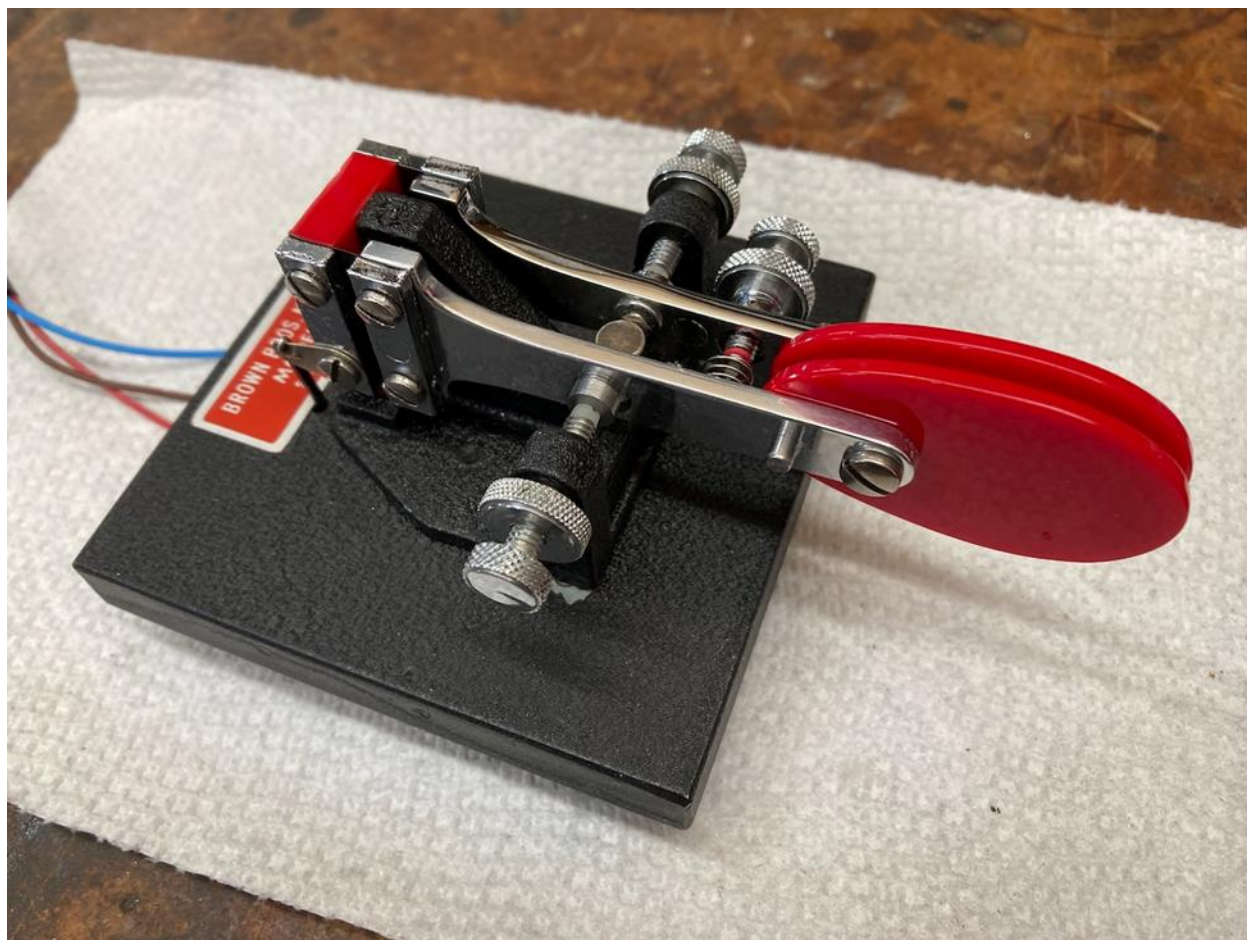
New flexures were made from 6 mil feeler gauge stock. This is nice material, very springy and easily cut to size with tinsnips. A special punch and die had to be machined to punch the holes at precise locations and to achieve clean holes in the hard metal. This method is something I learned from a book by W. R. Smith, W4PAL (SK) called "How to Restore Telegraph Keys" available at <https://wrsmithclocks.com/product/how-to-restore-telegraph-keys/>. New finger pieces were sawn from 1/8 inch red acrylic sheet and then polished to perfection. They look identical to the originals. The final touch was fixing up the cable with proper spade lugs.

To prevent a repeat shipping disaster, I always make custom foam packing inserts for every key that I work on. My favorite packing material is Ethafoam, a medium density polyethylene foam that comes in large sheets. I get it from Bob's Foam Factory in Fremont.

The key came out looking and operating like new, or perhaps a bit better. If you have any kind of Morse key—straight key, bug, or paddle—that needs repair, restoration, or just a tune-up, give me a jingle for advice. [gwj@me.com](mailto:gwj@me.com)

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## CW Wave-shaping Revisited

[Steve Dick](#), K1RF CWops #3003

Which CW op hasn't been bothered by key clicks from some other stations during a busy CWT session? As a retired EE, I have studied this issue over the years. My first homebrewed transmitter used a cathode keyed 6146. I was more concerned with high voltage at the key than generating something called key clicks which I was totally unaware of as a teenager. Commercial rigs improved over the years with attention to wave-shaping of the transmitted CW signal. Key clicks were greatly reduced by generating "smooth" rise and fall shaping on the transmitted RF output signal.

What is really going on? W2AEW<sup>1</sup> [explains it](#).

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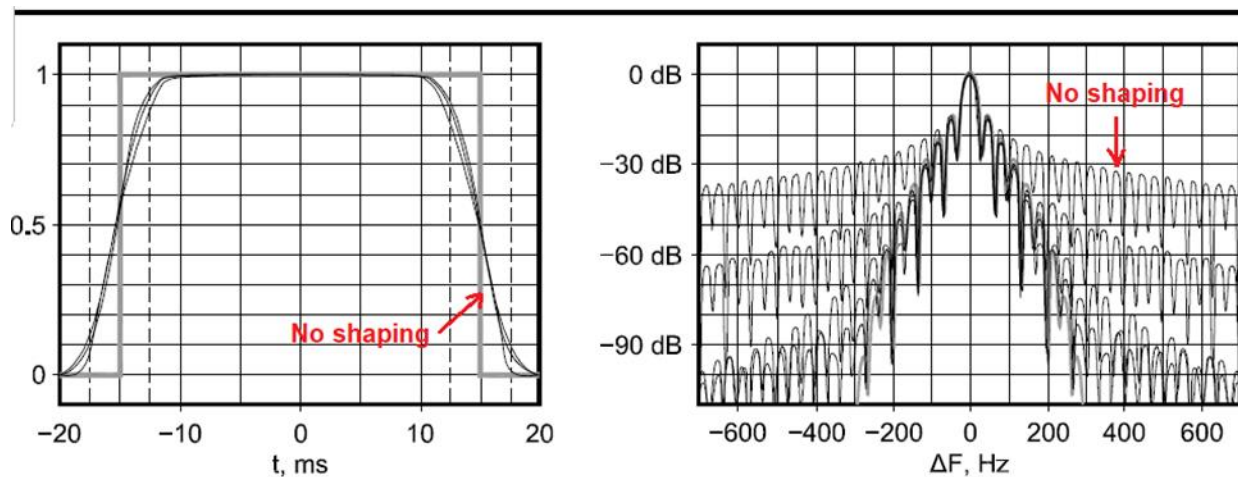
A CW waveform can be thought of as an extreme example of amplitude modulation. A continuous stream of dits is basically square wave amplitude modulation, which includes the fundamental plus odd harmonics which decrease with frequency as  $1/n$  where  $n$  is the harmonic number. In the frequency domain, the distance between harmonics increases with keying speed and thus increases the bandwidth of the transmitted signal.

A simple way to reduce CW signal bandwidth is to use linear rise and fall time instead of the very fast rise and fall time of the square wave. The optimum transition time, and thus bandwidth, depends on keying speed and on propagation conditions. As a compromise, the ARRL recommends a minimum 5 mSec rise/fall time<sup>4</sup>. That value limits the bandwidth to approximately 150 Hz while allowing good copy up to 60 wpm on non-fading channels and 35 wpm on fading channels, which covers most requirements. Many rigs have default rise-times that are too fast. For example, the popular IC-7300 has a default rise-time of 4 milliseconds. It can be set to 2, 4, 6, or 8. Set it to a minimum of 6 mSec on that rig or you will get key clicks.

With the advent of modern transceivers and their digital signal processing capabilities, it is often possible to use improved CW waveforms beyond a simple linear ramp. If we start with a band-pass filter shape, the math simplifies to a CW keying wave-shape which is the integral or area under the curve of the bandpass filter shape. A good band-pass filter for this purpose has both good frequency characteristics and good time response characteristics (no ringing.) Richard Harris, G3ØTK had [good success](#)<sup>3</sup> with an analog "Gaussian to 6dB" dual op amp lowpass filter for CW wave-shaping.

Shape	Spurious emissions at 300 Hz offset
Rectangular	-29 dB
Sin (integral)	-51 dB
Raised Cosine	-70 dB
Truncated Gaussian	-83 dB
Blackman-Harris	-100 dB

[VE3NEA](#)<sup>2</sup> summarizes the characteristics of several wave-shapes at 300 Hz offset. He noted that very small changes in wave-shape can have a huge effect on ultimate spurious rejection (See the following figure for the wave-shapes listed). Barely noticeable differences can improve rejection by 30-50 dB!



All Wave-shapes combined - Courtesy VE3NEA

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There are two ideal methods of applying arbitrary CW wave-shaping:

1. DAC/waveform lookup table amplitude modulating a low level RF signal followed by a high power linear amp. Loss of linearity of the high power amp widens the spectrum.
2. DAC/waveform lookup table modulating a high power linear voltage source powering a non-linear RF output stage. This voltage source dissipates most of its power during the waveform transition periods, and so can be very efficient and does not depend on amplifier linearity for good performance.

In looking at a QRP transceiver, the QMX sold by QRP labs, I realized that it has an arbitrary CW wave-shaping capability using method 2 above. I proposed the idea of using a Blackman-Harris derived wave-shape table, which I computed, to Hans Summers at QRP labs and he incorporated into the QMX radio. My informal comparison of the QMX spectrum to my FTDX10 transceiver's spectrum at 20 wpm showed that the QMX had a visibly narrower spectrum at 5 mSec rise-time than the FTDX10 with a 6 mSec rise-time. I love it when theory and practice come together!

The ARRL is now looking at CW bandwidth criteria with their clean signal initiative<sup>5</sup> - a step in the right direction.

#### References

1. What is the bandwidth of a CW / Morse code signal? (as a function of speed and rise/fall time) - W2AEW Alan E Wolke youtube video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEgrTwjWLf0>
2. CW Shaping in CW Software - Alex Shovkoplyas, VE3NEA  
May-June 2006 QEX pp 3-7  
<https://github.com/pavel-demin/red-pitaya-notes/files/403696/cw-shaping-in-dsp.pdf>
3. Key-clicks and CW Waveform shaping - Richard Harris G3OTK  
[https://www.ivarc.org.uk/uploads/1/2/3/8/12380834/keyclicks\\_version\\_1.pdf](https://www.ivarc.org.uk/uploads/1/2/3/8/12380834/keyclicks_version_1.pdf)
4. ARRL Handbook chapter 8, modulation. Keying speed vs rise and fall times vs bandwidth for fading and non-fading communications circuits.
5. QST Magazine, May 2024. pp 66-67, ARRL's Clean Signal Initiative

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## My Experience As An AO75CT Volunteer

[Enric](#), EA3VN CWops #3493

This month of April the Spanish hams celebrate 75 years of the URE foundation (<https://75aniversario.ure.es/>) and I enrolled from the very beginning as a volunteer. It seemed not an easy task but happily I just had finished the Advanced level at the CW Academy in February and so I felt capable and motivated.



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I spent March training with Morse Runner 1.81, activity 4 and mode Pile-Up. Starting from 25 wpm, at the end of the month I got 32 wpm. Taking note of the results every day helped to keep track of the progress and encouraged.

Another thing that helped a lot is having the skill to use the keyboard with all the fingers looking not too much at it. I learned online in the past and has revealed very convenient in contesting. There are a lot of web sites to learn for free, and is an affordable goal spending some time every day.

On the side of the URE organisation, the people in charge of the servers, web page, database, etc did a great job that allow hams around the world to know bands and modes on air, slots done, and also keep us, the volunteers, connected by regions in order to put only one signal per band and mode (in my case CT from Catalonia).

Well, April the first arrived and, in front of my radio I was sweating. The thrill to be, maybe, at the other end of a pile-up was not a joke. I wanted to make no mistakes and to be good and cordial (a good start, hi hi).

Before I start running, I decided to choose 26 wpm, a balance between fast and slower operators and a safe speed for me. Now, at the end of the activity I feel that was a good choice. Of course, when required I slowed down the necessary to complete the QSO.

That first day was nice and quiet, I think because not too many people know about this event, the website, and so on. From the second day onwards things changed, hams around the world knew about it, and a lot of them were working to cover the different slots, so the pile-up started.

Now, after this experience, I want to share some facts and thoughts.

First, I never used split, to save bandwidth and because the pile-up were not so big. Well but, the mix up of several stations result in a continuous tone and that's not easy to handle. Usually I tried to get a part of a callsign and ask for it, but for my surprise, on many occasions I was able to "filter" one whole callsign. In general a slight difference in sidetone or in the cadence of the sender is enough to get it from the pile-up. That was what my Advisor taught to me, to break a pile-up you've to call slightly apart from the zero-beat.

Another surprise is that on several occasions I saw the callsign written in my log, being not conscious to have typed it (and it was really correct because of the CFM TU of the correspondent) Clearly it was related to the skill of automatic typing and the unconscious that was working with me. 🤔

One funny moment that I remember was one QSO where the transmitter had a chirp so big that it seemed to sweep all the band. I burst to laugh not for the poor guy but for the music that it makes. It was understandable and so, the slot was done.

Finally, 99% of the CW operators were nice people, polite enough to stop when asking for a listened prefix or suffix, and hopefully no DQRM.

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Overall, being a volunteer for the AO75CT event was a great experience. It allowed me to improve my CW skills, learn valuable lessons about pile-up management, the importance of being courteous on the air, and mainly I had the opportunity to interact with fellow ham operators from around the world.

The organization of the event was well done, and it was a privilege to be a part of such a significant milestone for the URE foundation.

The activity ended on April 30th with more than 1.300.000 QSOs and 260 DXCC.

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## Just Thinking

[Mark Wohlschlegel](#), WC3W CWops #3525

I have had a love for the CW mode of operation for the entire 60 years that I have been engaged in this wonderful hobby. It has been and remains my preferred mode of operation particularly when DXing. Even today, the only contests that I engage in are CW contests, and at Field Day, I am 100% CW.

My father and I built my first transmitter right from the ARRL Handbook back in 1960. It was a crystal-controlled 75W CW transmitter, and when complete, I paired this homebrew transmitter with a pre-owned RME 4300 receiver and I was off and running enjoying my new hobby and operating exclusively CW.

As Program Administrator for the DX Marathon Program, I am witnessing a steady decline in CW participation and was just thinking as part a new member of CWops now, is there a way that CW could be “boosted” in terms of participation. In the program, we give our participants an opportunity to operate single mode, or all modes. In 2023, out of the 350,000 plus QSO’s, approximately 14.7% were in CW. In the same year, those who selected to operate exclusively in the CW mode was 3.7%.

The DX Marathon Program is fun, simple, and global. It represents the fastest growing DX program in our hobby having expanded by +47% between 2021 and 2022, and +50% between 2022 and 2023 as measured by the number of participants. The biggest challenge that I have is getting the word out to our ham community and have and continue to do so through zoom meetings with clubs. Over the past 14 months, I have done over 65 zoom meetings.

Today, we are very grateful to CWops as our organization sponsors the top world CW score, the top US score, and the top European score. The award for the winners is a beautiful plaque. I have a desire to expand further the recognition for excellency in CW operation beyond that of

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North America and Europe. I am giving thought for the 2025 year in expanding the awards for the single mode, i.e. CW to include South America, Oceania, and possibly other continents.

Additionally, I would like to engage increased participation among the 3,500 CWOps members. The DX Marathon Program is compatible with any of the other programs out there including contests. Anything worked as part of a contest can be claimed in the DX Marathon Program. The program is simple not requiring any Q verifications. Participants simply log the DX, and at the end of the year, produce an ADIF file, and submit it to our website at [www.dxmarathon.com](http://www.dxmarathon.com).



**Mark Wohlschlegel, WC3W**  
Program Administrator  
(561) 254-5095  
[wc3w@dxmarathon.com](mailto:wc3w@dxmarathon.com)  
[www.dxmarathon.com](http://www.dxmarathon.com)



Direct link to our website

If anyone within CWOps has any questions, I would be happy to answer an email sent to [wc3w@dxmarathon.com](mailto:wc3w@dxmarathon.com).

— **SC** —

## 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
3527	RX6FJ*	Igor	3532	LY2MM*	Al	3537	VA3CWT*	Gabe
3528	W3ASW*	Jim	3533	K0TER*	Mike	3538	7L2VPL*	Hide
3529	DJ4DX*	Andre	3534	K4CUE*	Dick	3539	SP5LST	Kot
3530	WB5YUZ*	Dan	3535	N6CHU*	Bob	3540	KI7KY*	Ben
3531	VE3DZP*	Gary	3536	W5RIF	Dave			

\* Lifetime member

As of May 9, 2024:

**Need Sponsors:** K6SAL

**Invitations Extended:** YB2DX, DK9IP, PP5WX

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](mailto: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



# CWops Tests (CWTs)

[Rich Ferch](#), VE3KI

Participation in the CWTs has continued similarly to previous months. In April, the number of scores reported for the 1300z CWT session ranged from 367 to 386, while at 1900z we had 360 to 378 scores. Participation in the 0300z session was 226 to 247 scores, and at 0700z it was 83 to 102. All of these are in line with recent past history; not as high as at the peak in early 2022, but well above pre-pandemic levels.

There are four members with perfect attendance records for the year so far: G3LDI, K1DJ, K4PQC and KO4VW. That takes real dedication, since for the vast majority of amateurs at least one of the four CWT sessions falls within what would normally be considered sleep time. Nevertheless, there are 28 people who must have participated at least once in each of the four CWT sessions, since they have reported scores in 52 or more CWTs this year. It is not possible to have reached that number without having submitted at least one score in each of the four sessions.

With respect to the number of QSOs reported in each score, there were no new records for high scores reported during the first four months of the year (that will change in May). The median reported number of QSOs for all four sessions is 50 QSOs. For the four sessions individually, the median QSO count is 50, 51, 52 and 34 at 1300z, 1900z, 0300z and 0700z respectively. The most popular single reported count is 20 QSOs, followed by 12, 10, 15 and 25 – round numbers are obviously popular, with other noticeable peaks in the distribution at 30, 40, 50 and 100 reported QSOs.

In total, 19,733 submitted scores with 1,222,896 QSOs have been reported for the CWTs in the first four months of 2024.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

**73, Rich VE3KI** (CWops #783)  
CWT Manager

Did your **CALL SIGN** change recently?

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

Congratulations!

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

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



# Giving Back Update

[Rob Brownstein](#), **K6RB** (CWops #3)

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

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

<b>AAØYY</b>	NI9Y KBØBWY	W5QEP KG5IEE	K4WM	KA2KGP	KØQAG	KØLRQ	N4OI
<b>AF4PX</b>	KØLRQ WA0JLY	AAØYY	AA7TQ	WA4LXU	W5AWS	PP8ZAC	N5URL
<b>GW2CWO</b>	PA3AM G4DNP	PDØRSW EU1AFR	G4NNJ	EA1ASG	EA1FCL	F8NUH	DL9CM
<b>JJ1FXF</b>	JG1BGT JK1MVC	JA1BYY JJ2OXS	JS1QIZ JE1FMZ	JQ3FRX JF0IUN	JK1WCW JH8WWP	JA4IJ(2)	JK7UST
<b>JM4AOA</b>	7L2VPL JA8GAK JM4RRC(2) JR8IUH/1	7N1OEX JA8HAB JN1FAO JS2OVO/7	DS3QOL JFØIUN JQ2NUD JS2OVO/7	DS5TXS JI1CAZ JQ3FRX	HL1MIM(2) JJØSFV JR2AWS	JA4DCS JJ7LGY JR6SBI	JA4IJ JK1MVC
<b>JO1DGE</b>	7L2VPL JE2OUK JJ2OXS JO3VBI JS2OVO/7	DS3QOL (2) JE6XFK JK1MVC JQ3IXG KE7LOY (2)	DS5TXS (2) JG1BGT (8) JK1QYL JR2AWS RØLIQ	HL1MIM (3) JH5FVM (2) JK1WCW (3) JR2JWI	HL5JZ JI2HGD JK6UPC (2) JR2WLQ (2)	JE1FMZ (2) JI7KNV JM4RRC JR6SBI	JAØARF JJ2JVU JN1FAO JS1MRM
<b>K6RB</b>	K5OGX	AF4PX	K3PA	AA6GA	W4EDE		
<b>K7NJ</b>	WØOJW KDØRC NTØQ	NØKKY K4AKC	KE7LOY K1DW	WB2FQL VE3NYZ	KR2Q AG7UN	W8FJ K15VIR	K5RIX WØITT
<b>K8UDH</b>	W5CVK KØOKS	VE3QEE KJ5XF	K2SCH WB6ZFG	K2ZA	N5NLP	WB4ZBI	WB9CHR
<b>KV8Q</b>	N9FGC	K8MPH					
<b>MØWDD</b>	2EØANM GM4KKG M1JSC	DK6JK MØIYP M7GNO	GØCAT MØKCJ MMØIVR	GØLLU MØMCL MWØKAX	G3SHF MØNVQ	G4ZYU MØTJU	G7KSE MØTHY

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<b>N4TMM</b>	K2HT	N5OMK	W4OSS	K2ZDX	AB8MR	KI4DBK	W4FO
<b>W2XS</b>	K4LXY WA3VSO	WB8BIL WN1MB	EA7GWD N5VF	KO4TQF	KT4WA	WQ9H	
<b>W7ZDX</b>	WØFN WB9YZU	WB2AWQ	NØFIH	AAØYY	K6KWV	NØGRA	
<b>7N2XZB</b>	JQ3IXG JH2UNG SD5BXM	DS5TXS JA6BZH JH5QEE	JS1CII JJØSFV JG3QHX	JK1MVC JA7KED(2) JH1SBJ	JA4IJJ(2) JQ3FRX JK1QYL	JG1BGT(4) JK1WCW	JR6SBI
<b>VK1CWO</b>	VK3CGB	JO1LJG					

## 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 UTC-5	CST UTC-6	MST UTC-7	PST UTC-8	Hawaii UTC-10
<b>MON</b>												
VK1CWO	JØ1DGE							W2XS	AAØYY			
<b>TUE</b>												
	JR1WYW	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO		WE5P	K8UDH	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
	7N2XZB										K6RB	
<b>WED</b>												
	JM4AOA								AF4PX			
<b>THURS</b>												
	JJ1VNV			SV2BBK				KV8Q	N5OT	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
<b>FRI</b>												
	JR1WYW			SV2BBK		GW2CWO MØWDD		N2GSL	AAØYY		K6RB	
<b>SAT</b>												
	JJ1FXF											
	JM4AOA JG1UQD											
<b>SUN</b>												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											



# CW Academy

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

**Morse Runner Community Edition ver. 1.84**



We have some of significant improvements to our practice and training software. The first being Morse Runner. This program was initially written and maintained by Alex Shovkoplyas, VE3NEA, there has not been much improvement to it since 2006. As this is an 'open source' program, Michael Grashler W7SST and a few of his associates have spent a good part of the last few years making significant enhancements to this program through the 'Community Edition' group. We have taken considerable time discussing the needs of CW Academy including adding many of the contests in which we 'play': SST, MST, CWT, ARRL Field Day and DX. He has also modified the programs so they are more focused on learning and using Morse Code, rather than the nuance of using your rig. We are incredibly delighted to provide this as another tool in our 'quiver' to use.

Here is a link to the online [Morse Runner CE CWA User Guide](#) and the program [Morse Runner v1.84](#)

## Morse Code World ICR Guidelines

We have also had a lot of discussions about the fact that we are spending too much effort teaching people 'typing' and not enough time 'learning' code...this includes programs like Morse Runner, RufzXP and LCWO.

We have been working a lot with Stephen Phillips, the developer of MorseCode.World. As you may know he made a separate module 'MorseCodeTrainer', specifically for the CW Academy Beginner classes. He has now helped us enhance 'Word List' and 'ICR' allowing the other three levels to take advantage of more functionality.

You may be aware of the 'LCWO ICR Guidelines' under Student Resources, which is a useful 'tool', but it still requires 'typing'.

I have spent considerable time creating a similar document that is for 'listening' not requiring 'typing'. It is called 'MorseCodeWorld ICR Guidelines'. It is now online along with the updated version of the Intermediate curriculum 1.14, which has a number of minor modifications making this new process more useful to the students.

Here is a link to the online [Guideline for MorseCodeWorld ICR](#)

**73, Bob Carter, WR7Q** CWops #1423 - CWA Admin



# CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland](#), WØTG



## Monthly Update

During April, eight additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program is currently 204.

The **ACA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of April 2024 have **KR2Q** in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 240 QSOs. The top ten ACA totals this month are: **(1) KR2Q, (2) AA3B, (3) KY4GS, (4) N5RZ, (5) NA8V, (6) K3WW, (7) KC7V, (8) KG9X, (9) K7QA** and **(10) KO4VW**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 614 QSOs.

The **ACMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of April 2024 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **KR2Q** by 629 QSOs. The top ten ACMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) KR2Q, (3) N5RZ, (4) KY4GS, (5) NA8V, (6) K3WW, (7) KC7V, (8) OM2VL, (9) DL6KVA** and **(10) K7QA**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 1638 QSOs.

The **CMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of April 2024 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **K3WW** by 3154 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 5941 QSOs.

The number of members who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more DXCC entities remained at **82** this month with no new additions.

The number of participants who have accomplished CWops WAS grew to **233** this month with the addition of **N3RTW**.

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 May 5, 2024, we have 204 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

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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/>.

### **CWops Member Awards Program Overview**

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

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

### **Please Join Us!**

Fabian, DJ5CW, who created the website and the tools, made it extremely easy to participate in the awards program.

If you are not among the CWops members who are currently participating, please join us! It adds a lot of friendly competition and fun to your operating.

### **More Information**

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

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

**ACA**

Rank	Call	ACA
1	KR2Q	1578
2	AA3B	1338
3	KY4GS	1272
4	N5RZ	1183
5	NA8V	1121
6	K3WW	1118
7	KC7V	1083
8	KG9X	1046
9	K7QA	1027
10	KO4VW	964
11	DL6KVA	947
12	N7US	938
13	AA2IL	934
14	N5ZO	932
15	F6HKA	923
16	K3QP	916
17	OM2VL	912
18	N5TJ	906
19	K3WJV	886
20	K1VUT	884
21	NJ3K	882
22	W8FN	846
23	W4CMG	845
24	K9WX	843
25	W0UO	839
26	WT9U	807
27	WN7S	798
28	K0WA	787
29	VE3TM	782
30	NA4J	770
31	KW7Q	761
32	KM4FO	759
33	N5KD	744
34	K6NR	740
35	VK2GR	738
36	EA6EJ	732
37	K1AJ	717
38	K1DJ	715
39	VE3KI	707
40	9A1AA	700
41	W9ILY	689
42	KK0U	688
43	EA6BF	681

**ACMA**

Rank	Call	ACMA
1	AA3B	4265
2	KR2Q	3636
3	N5RZ	3383
4	KY4GS	2950
5	NA8V	2779
6	K3WW	2732
7	KC7V	2697
8	OM2VL	2696
9	DL6KVA	2644
10	K7QA	2627
11	N5ZO	2307
12	KG9X	2271
13	KO4VW	2203
14	AA2IL	1992
15	N7US	1971
16	K1VUT	1938
17	K3WJV	1935
18	N5TJ	1874
19	W8FN	1854
20	F6HKA	1815
21	WN7S	1700
22	K9WX	1685
23	NJ3K	1659
24	W0UO	1646
25	WT9U	1632
26	W4CMG	1593
27	KW7Q	1580
28	K6NR	1567
29	K3QP	1560
30	NA4J	1518
31	K0WA	1515
32	KM4FO	1506
33	EA6EJ	1495
34	VE3TM	1489
35	VE3KI	1478
36	OZ3SM	1425
37	PA0INA	1399
38	N5XE	1390
39	EA6BF	1361
40	K1AJ	1353
41	WS7L	1345
42	K1DJ	1340
43	9A1AA	1336

**CMA**

Rank	Call	CMA
1	AA3B	13971
2	K3WW	10817
3	N5RZ	9906
4	N5ZO	9726
5	KR2Q	9409
6	W1RM	9190
7	NA8V	9032
8	DL6KVA	8766
9	F6HKA	8310
10	K3WJV	8030
11	VE3KI	7887
12	OM2VL	7266
13	KG9X	7232
14	K7QA	7203
15	N7US	7057
16	N5AW	7019
17	KC7V	6995
18	W9ILY	6904
19	W0VX	6561
20	WT9U	6527
21	K1VUT	6379
22	K3JT	6355
23	N4DW	6255
24	K9WX	6145
25	K3PP	5902
26	N2UU	5726
27	K6NR	5704
28	K1DJ	5664
29	SM6CUK	5607
30	N1DC	5568
31	W4WF	5408
32	N5TJ	5391
33	9A1AA	5340
34	WN7S	5293
35	G4BUE	5225
36	WT3K	5218
37	W8FN	5056
38	AA5JF	4973
39	W0UO	4919
40	K1SM	4872
41	VE3TM	4824
42	KY4GS	4816
43	AC6ZM	4730

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### ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
43	K3JT	681
44	OZ3SM	669
45	PA0INA	668
46	N9UNX	658
47	F5SGI	656
48	WT3K	646
49	K1SM	644
50	N5XE	643
51	WS7L	625
52	K3ZA	622
53	WS1L	621
54	W1RM	619
55	AF5J	610
56	WA4JUK	598
57	KW1X	596
58	VE3MV	594
59	SP1D	591
60	KV8Q	585
61	W0VX	567
62	N2EIM	565
63	N3CKI	563
64	W0GAS	562
65	N2UU	556
66	W8EWH	551
67	N9FZ	547
68	K4GM	545
69	M0RYB	540
69	WU6P	540
70	AA5JF	538
71	W9CF	534
72	VE3KIU	530
73	N4LSJ	529
74	W2CDO	523
74	W3WHK	523
75	KY0Q	518
76	W2VM	515
77	K1RF	510
78	K4TZ	506
79	W4WF	505
80	VE9KK	497
81	K0TC	494
82	NN4K	482
83	W7LG	481
84	VA4ADM	480
85	W0TG	479
86	N1DC	478
87	HB9ARF	455
88	W0BM	450

### ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
44	N5KD	1307
45	K3JT	1302
46	KK0U	1297
47	W9ILY	1281
48	SP1D	1273
49	WS1L	1271
50	VK2GR	1269
51	VE3MV	1262
52	AF5J	1233
53	F5SGI	1186
54	N2UU	1172
55	W0VX	1170
56	N9UNX	1143
57	W1RM	1134
58	M0RYB	1107
59	W0TG	1085
60	K4GM	1063
61	K1SM	1056
62	WT3K	1055
63	KV8Q	998
64	KW1X	984
65	K1RF	981
66	W2CDO	976
67	K3ZA	972
68	W9CF	957
69	SM0HEV	956
70	WA4JUK	950
71	WU6P	949
71	W3WHK	949
71	KY0Q	949
72	W0GAS	929
73	W8EWH	923
74	N3CKI	917
74	VE3KIU	917
75	N4LSJ	916
76	W2VM	915
77	K4TZ	869
78	W4WF	857
79	AA5JF	853
80	NN4K	849
81	K0TC	847
82	OK1RR	844
83	VE9KK	837
84	GW4MM	833
85	HB9ARF	830
86	F6JOE	822
87	W7LG	810
88	N9FZ	805

### CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
44	F6JOE	4692
45	NJ3K	4659
46	GW0ETF	4625
47	W1AJT	4621
48	NA4J	4492
49	WA4JUK	4463
50	N5XE	4420
51	K4GM	4340
52	OK1RR	4316
53	VE3MV	4199
54	K3QP	4181
55	I2WIJ	4172
56	W6AYC	4150
57	WS7L	4091
58	AA2IL	4079
59	KT5V	4078
60	K1AJ	4035
61	OZ3SM	3966
62	VK2GR	3815
63	KO4VW	3798
64	N1EN	3776
65	KM4FO	3763
66	DJ5CW	3755
67	W0TG	3731
68	DF7TV	3721
69	KY0Q	3712
70	K0TC	3672
71	WS1L	3668
72	W3WHK	3662
73	N5KD	3616
74	AF5J	3521
75	KV8Q	3494
76	K0WA	3485
77	KK0U	3469
78	W2CDO	3468
79	EA6BF	3453
80	G4PVM	3425
81	AF8A	3345
82	AF4T	3339
83	F5SGI	3325
84	K9OZ	3311
85	W0GAS	3249
86	HB9ARF	3231
87	SM0HEV	3216
88	KW7Q	3178
88	K4TZ	3178
89	M0RYB	3148
90	WU6P	3129

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### ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
89	SP4JFR	446
90	KT5V	445
91	SM6CUK	444
92	SM0HEV	439
93	G3LDI	429
94	G4IZZ	421
95	N5ER	420
96	DF7TV	418
97	F6JOE	417
98	OK1RR	413
99	K2YR	411
100	GW4MM	410

### ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
89	G3LDI	803
90	SM6CUK	802
91	W0BM	790
92	G4BUE	762
93	IN3FHE	724
94	SP4JFR	713
95	DJ5CW	712
96	KC8J	688
97	VE3WH	682
98	VA4ADM	673
99	G4IZZ	672
100	N5ER	668

### CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
91	NN4K	3106
92	W4CMG	3073
93	4X6GP	3070
94	K3ZA	3060
95	K2YR	3017
96	N3CKI	2967
97	W2VM	2941
98	G3LDI	2924
99	SP1D	2879
100	CT1DRB	2857

**73, Bill WØTG** (CWops #1873)

CWops Operating Awards



SC

## QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

**Enzo, MØKTZ**

I sometimes receive interesting stories from the frequent participants to the QTX/MQTX programme, and I am glad to report them in this column (or at least a reasonable extract), as they show that our on air Activity is, first and foremost, "human" and "personal."

This time I am even happier to share with you a story sent from one of our ragchewers, who is indeed a new addition to the QTX/MQTX crew. This story comes from Barbara N7BAS, who has just submitted her first QTX/MQTX scores. The story goes as follows:

*"Locally I'm in a group of CW operators practicing CW at varying speeds and fists. We have fun which leads to nowhere, just a weekly good time. Actually getting on the air, real time, sending out a CQ for a QSO was terrifying, until today. At 2:12pm, on 14.040, K3PI answered my CQ. To my surprise the stress I thought I had, disappeared. My CW was nailed down. Feeling good about head copying his good CW, I was on my way. UNTIL, the dog sitting I was doing interrupted the whole thing. My daughter [redacted] and her husband [redacted] were spending a wedding anniversary weekend away leaving me in charge of the house, dog, and 3 cats.*

*My radio station is modest, in an apartment with HOA restrictions for antennas. I had a great opportunity. I got to use their ham shack, 90 feet tower with a 15 element Yagi - able to push power up to*

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*100 watts, was hard to resist. K3PI didn't realize my handicap, as he and I exchanged our QSO, while I let the dog out, ran back to the station, sent my info, got up, let the dog back in, ran back, etc. Great head copy exercises paid off. Finally after 29 minutes of a wonderful QSO, the dog decided it was time to bark at me. She began barking, which sounded like "END IT." What I hope I did, is give credit to my great advisors at the CW Academy for the structure, exercises, and content of the classes, that gave me the CW skill I feel proud of. No fear - I am on my way for what I love to do: RAGCHEW - N7BAS – Barb."*

Great stuff Barbara! But the fascination does not stop there. While I was redacting the callsigns of Barbara's relatives, just for the sake of privacy, I thought "Oh wait a minute! I know that callsign!" and indeed, her daughter Sue is a friend of mine, who had the misfortune of being assigned to one of my CW Academy Intermediate classes last year! So I think I know the dog who interfered with Barbara's QSO, as she peeked into one of our Zoom classes as well HI HI!

This month we also welcome Scott AD4SA, who has started sending his ragchewing logs, and we welcome back Chris N8AI, who has decided to start reporting his QTX/MQTX scores again. They say a house is only as strong as its foundations, and the foundations of the QTX/MQTX programme are all the fellows who enjoy ragchewing on the ham bands. So keep it up, and looking forward to receiving more of your fascinating reports. Do not miss the soapbox, as it is as full as always with great comments.

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



**Total hours ragchewing this year so far:** not less than **1105**.

**N2DA:** Light month, but enjoyed regular sked ragchews with AJ1DM, WA3JJT, and W4TG, plus a nice unscheduled QSO with Darrell, AF4PX.

**KR2Q:** April was a busy work month for me, so my time for radio was more limited than usual. My average QTX QSO length during April was 47 minutes and the longest was 71 minutes. But all Qs were enjoyable, including the MQTXs.

**VE3WH:** I was chatting as I normally do, asking questions and making comments about what the other operator was saying. Then suddenly he expressed that he had never had a QSO this long. We were 20 minutes in to the conversation by then. The QSO ended with both of us learning about our shared interests in amateur radio, motorcycles, and we both had callsigns of close relatives that are silent keys. He was surprised that he could hold a conversation for 60 minutes. That was fun!

**WA4IAR:** Had a good month, so far my best since keeping up with it. Made some new friends that I found had similar interests and hobbies. Most of my QSOs are from 30 to 50 minutes long. I find it easier to get longer QSOs on the lower bands 80 thru 30 meters. I spend enough time to get to know the other operator. 73 Rick

**P4GI:** Closing in on 100 QTX QSO's, hope to get there next month!

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**KG5SSB:** It was great having a long ragchew this month with a relatively new CW operator. Nice to see newer hams learning and using CW.

**N9EEE:** Kinda slacked off this month while chasing DX. Nice couple of DX ragchew QSOs though.

**VK3QB:** April was a busy month. I was on a DXpedition in Vanuatu (YJØVK) for the first 2 weeks of the month. Nonetheless, I managed some fun mQTX QSOs once home... nine in total with the highlights being two with Jorge VE7VE on 40m. And to add to the fun, I've been using my Begali Intrepid bug - it's fun to use and I feel I'm beginning to get the hang of it.

**K8UDH:** It's always fun to have a QSO with someone who has been away from CW for many years and who is now rediscovering the joy of CW ragchewing.

**KG5IEE:** Had a QSO with my former CWA Beginner student, KX4GT, on his first CW QSO which was also his first ever HF QSO! Many other great ragchews including with KJ5BDC who has been a ham only a year and on CW only four months. Great fist.

**N8AI:** After I complimented WA4IAR on his leading QTX total, he convinced me to start reporting my QTX scores again. Despite the N0CAL ragchew article being an April Fool jest, I have observed sporadic examples of all the "tricks" listed:) The one I proudly use myself is to Slow Down. 18 wpm CQs snag a lot more replies, and we can always QRQ if we know each other. There are many interesting ops who are not speed demons, and QRS works wonders for weak signals and QRN.

**WB4IT:** Too busy in the summer months to do much, but I still managed to get a few in. Longest QSO was 44 minutes with K9DX.

**MØMZB:** Several long QSOs across the pond, including with N6NT and K2UV, W4NPX and W1WCC on Cape Cod. A couple of these included experimenting with QSY to other bands. I continued frequent use of my Clansman PRC320, which including taking it out bicycle mobile where I got a short QSO with the 2.8m whip into Minnesota US.

**MMØUMH:** Pleased that two of my QTXs and one of my MQTXs were with my good friend Andre DJ4DX whom I met on the CWops advanced course and whose recent membership it was a privilege to propose. Our rag chews are UFB practice.

**KB6NU:** Missed my goal of one QTX/day by one. Need to do better next month.

**N7HCN:** Enjoyed a full hour chat with Max, VK2ARZ on 20m despite my temporary antenna.

**AAØYY:** W4MCX, Mike. He is a retired firefighter, then worked 16 years at the Post Office. He makes these really cool table top lamps from radio tubes. Check them out on his QRZ page. KØ-LRQ, Ron a fairly new ham and has come a long way on his CW Journey. I have worked him several times now.

**AJ1DM:** As always, rag-chewing is one of my most rewarding activities on the radio. Thanks for all the Qs! 73 de John AJ1DM

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### Awards and Medals for 2024

Gold – 400 QTX QSOs

Silver Medal – 300 QTX QSOs

Bronze – 200 QTX QSOs

### 2024 Total Number of Hours Worked: 1104.5

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

<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
WA4IAR	163	F5IYJ	40	N2DA	16	IU3QEZ	9.3	W3WHK	2.7
KY4GS	87	KB6NU	39	K6DGW	15	K8UDH	9.2	W9EBE	2.3
M0KTZ	77	M0MZB	29	MM0UMH	13	KG5SSB	8.8	AB0WW	2
WB4IT	76	N7HCN	28	DF7TV	13	N1ZX	7.8	G4IIV	1.8
VE3WH	71	KC0VKN	24	MI0WWB	11	N9EEE	7.2	K7VM	1.5
ND4K	68	AF4PX	24	AJ1DM	11	VK3QB	4.3	WT9Q	1.3
KR2Q	55	KG5IEE	19	YL3JD	10	GW0ETF	3.8	N7BAS	1.3
AA0YY	45	PG4I	18	KF6NCX	9.8	KE4I	3.7	AD4SA	1
K9OZ	45	N8AI	17	M0SDB	9.3	N5LB	3		

### QTX for April 2024

<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>
WA4IAR	121	KY4GS	35	N7HCN	18	AJ1DM	8	N9EEE	4
ND4K	49	KB6NU	29	KR2Q	15	M0MZB	7	N7BAS	3
VE3WH	47	K9OZ	28	WB4IT	13	MM0UMH	6	KG5SSB	2
F5IYJ	44	M0KTZ	22	KG5IEE	10	MI0WWB	6	DF7TV	2
N8AI	38	KC0VKN	21	N2DA	8	KF6NCX	5	W3WHK	1
AA0YY	38	AF4PX	19	K8UDH	8	PG4I	4	AD4SA	1

### MQTX for April 2024

<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>
KY4GS	55	KG5IEE	21	VK3QB	9	WB4IT	5	N7BAS	2
M0KTZ	54	AA0YY	21	KG5SSB	9	N9EEE	5	MI0WWB	1
WA4IAR	36	ND4K	20	AF4PX	7	MM0UMH	5	AJ1DM	1
VE3WH	26	PG4I	14	KF6NCX	6	N7HCN	4		
N8AI	24	DF7TV	13	K8UDH	6	W3WHK	3		
KR2Q	21	M0MZB	12	GW0ETF	6	AD4SA	3		

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### QTX Totals for 2024

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
WA4IAR	411	M0KTZ	105	AJ1DM	29	IU3QEZ	12	N7BAS	3
WB4IT	194	AA0YY	90	MI0WWB	27	M0SDB	11	K7VM	3
ND4K	174	N7HCN	78	KG5IEE	27	N1ZX	10	G4IVV	3
VE3WH	168	KC0VKN	73	MM0UMH	26	DF7TV	10	YL3JD	2
KY4GS	134	M0MZB	55	K8UDH	21	N5LB	9	VK3QB	1
K9OZ	134	AF4PX	55	K6DGW	18	KE4I	8	GW0ETF	1
F5IJ	120	N2DA	48	KF6NCX	17	W9EBE	5	AD4SA	1
KB6NU	117	N8AI	38	N9EEE	15	W3WHK	5	AB0WW	1
KR2Q	107	PG4I	34	KG5SSB	13	WT9Q	4		

### MQTX Totals for 2024

Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX
M0KTZ	254	KG5IEE	62	IU3QEZ	32	N9EEE	13	G4IVV	5
KY4GS	252	DF7TV	59	MM0UMH	28	K8UDH	13	AJ1DM	5
WA4IAR	156	ND4K	58	N1ZX	27	N7HCN	11	W9EBE	4
KR2Q	114	YL3JD	57	KG5SSB	27	MI0WWB	11	GW0KRL	4
VE3WH	92	K6DGW	53	KF6NCX	25	AB0WW	10	AD4SA	4
AA0YY	89	PG4I	39	VK3QB	24	W3WHK	6	K7VM	3
WB4IT	68	AF4PX	35	N8AI	24	KE4I	6	N7BAS	2
M0MZB	63	M0SDB	34	GW0ETF	21	JS2AHG	5		

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## My Story: New Member Introductions

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

### Mark Wohlschlegel, WC3W #3525

I am very grateful to have been accepted into this awesome organization and many thanks to my sponsors, in particular my local colleague Bill, W2CQ.

I have been a ham radio operator since the age of 12. My father and I built a 75 watt CW crystal-controlled transmitter right out of the ARRL hand-book from scratch. I used an RME 4300 receiver,



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and I was on the air! My first call in Peoria, IL was WA9JAC. I subsequently obtained a call just after graduating from college of WA4IPS where I secured my first job as an electrical engineer in Raleigh, NC for the Westinghouse Electric Company. My current call of WC3W was secured while in Chadds Ford, PA (Philadelphia area) where I secured my Advanced and Extra tickets. I thoroughly enjoy the hobby, the people, and friendships that I have made over the years.

I now live in Palm Beach Gardens, FL with my wife of 49 years (who also is a ham but not active). I have two adult children (both hams but not active) in Boston and Denver, CO. My daughter has blessed us with three beautiful harmonics.

Like so many communities in Florida, there are HOA antenna restrictions. Therefore, a friend and I decided to look for land to build a remote station.

We built a remote station on a plat of land about 80 miles from my home QTH. We are using a Flexradio 6500, an Expert amp 2K, and we have a 5 band JK Navassa antenna up about 80 feet with a JK 30/40 about ten feet below the Navassa. The tower is a sky needle that we purchased from a ham up in the Chicago area. We recently installed a 1/4 wave vertical on 80 m. We have a 160 end fed long wire that traverses from the ground up a pole, and then over to our tower. We obtained a SAL 20 which is now installed. Lastly, we put up a 60 m inverted V center fed antenna. The station is world class and amazing!

Besides amateur radio, I fly single-engine airplanes. I have been flying since I was 18 years old and hold private, instrument, and commercial ratings. I have flown in about every GA airport south of a line from Tampa to Jacksonville including Key West. I made my sixth motorcycle trip to the Alps riding BMW's a few years ago. I have sailed all my life making two trips in the past couple years to the British Virgin Islands where I was pilot in command of a 45-foot catamaran sailboat. I am a musician playing in a rock group down here in Florida and love making other people happy through music. Life is good!

I retired about 6 years ago from an Executive VP position involved in the power generation business. Retirement is wonderful. I took over the DX Marathon program in January of 2022 and we have doubled in size twice over the last two years. It is a wonderful program and lots of fun (and lots of work). I have four dedicated volunteers that support the program, and our vision is to continue to grow as we engage more and more hams around the world. My further vision is to expand CW participation in the program from the current 15% level.

We all participate in a wonderful hobby. Many of my interest have come and gone all my life but ham radio has been with me through thick and thin. I hope through serving as Program Administrator of the DX Marathon Program that I can give back to others the blessing of enjoyment this hobby has provided to me.

Gud DX'ing and May We Continue to Promote the wonderful world of CW!

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### **Igor Roschupkin, RX6FJ #3527**

First, I would like to say a big "thank you" to Emil I5EFO for nominating me, and also to Thomas DF7TV, Doug KR2Q, Keith K7MOA, Bud AA3B who sponsored my membership. I am indeed proud to be new CWops member #3527.

My first license, UA6EDW, was issued in 1986 Cherkessk city, when I was 16 years old. In those early days, I was seriously and actively involved in High Speed Telegraphy and take part in various HST competitions. However, this did not stop me from going to the HF bands very often and speak the CW language with my friends.



I subsequently with great desire became a member of several European telegraphy clubs such as UQRQC, HSC, VHSC, SHSC, EHSC, AGCW-DL.

Due to various positive changes in my life from 2010 I now sign RX6FJ from Pyatigorsk, North Caucasus. This is a very comfortable and friendly region with a mild climate. Trips with radio to the Caucasus mountains bring a lot of memorable impressions which are remembered for a long time.

For me, the CW is a reliable and priority way of communication. I am always very happy to hear new operators from different parts of our world who, like me, prefer telegraphy QSOs. I will thank you very much if you call me with your key quickly or slowly. Of course, I am in my hobby using high-quality single and double lever, vertical and bug CW keys. Many of them are made by the hands of a professional craftsman Valery Pavlov – RA1AOM. His engineering works are ready to work at any touch of the fingers. I think that many respected CW operators will agree with me. I hope that reliable telegraphy will never die and even increase. I'll try my best to do this.

My primary focus in radio is also DXCC hunting, and my current DXCC CW entity count is 331. At the same time, I try to participate in major CW Contests with "low power" whenever possible and enjoy it.

In my daily life, I work as a communications system design engineer. I have a beloved wife and two adult sons from whom I receive great support in my endeavors.

I'm honored to have been invited to join CWops. Looking forward to meeting other members on the air.

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### **Stefano Chieffi, IK5LSR #3513**

I was born in Firenze, Italy, in 1960. A grandpa's Zenith Transoceanic 1000 was my first approach to radio waves when I was 6 years old, climbing a tree for a better reception (my grandpa screaming after me..hihi). Then I bought, with my first saving moneys, a used CB radio Lafayette. I was 12 years old. When I was 14 years old, I participated in a basic course in electronics made by the local ARI (Italian Amateur Radio Association, the former Associazione Radiotecnica Italiana). The first approach to Morse code was in 1982, doing a basic course with Remo I5ATH, my first tutor. The key was straight, an old postal italian key (I've still got it). The radio operator patent arrived soon, but I waited for my license until 1992, because many others commitments (university, sports....marriage hihi).



The basic knowledge of Morse code, permitted me to do standard and 599 QSOs, but no more. Valerio I5VVA, a very old man, gave me some more recommendations about Morse code in nine-ties.

My main interest was collecting old tube radios, especially Drake. At the same time, I collected also keys, but using them rarely...too bad.

Ham radio was, in different shapes, always part of my life, together with sailing, windsurfing, trail running and backpacking.

But only in 2023, with the arrival of a hip prosthesis (too much sport...hihi), I stopped for a while with my sporting commitments and I finally decided to deepen the Morse code. Then I decided to start off on the right foot, by subscribing to CWA intermediate course (May/June 2023). A real good class, with Enzo MØKTZ as tutor. For me, this course, was like an electrical discharge crossing me. After that, I subscribed to the Advanced class. The second real good tutor, Hanz YL3JD followed me and my friends for other two months.

At the same time, the CW QRS Italian telegram group, collecting many friends loving CW, helped me to improve my skill. Now I use straight key, bug, sideswiper and, of course, paddle too. My preferred keys are Begali, IK1OJM Sal, I2QOD Frattini and old bugs.

I am a medical doctor, specialized in dentistry, married with Paola. We have a daughter, Angelica, 30 years old, already married and Cosmo, a dachshund 1 and half years old.

Now I'm proud to be part of CWops, thanks to my nominator Hanz YL3JD, and the sponsors Enzo

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MØKTZ, Stuart GDØUD and Emil I5EFO. Thank you all.

### **Charles Luther, N8DD #3526**

I have always been driven to understand how things work. As a kid I frequently disassembled machines frustrating my parents. I badly wanted to be able to build and create, too.

This naturally led to a curiosity in radio. How is it that signals travel far and wide and become intelligible music? My uncle, K2BNC in Buffalo, NY introduced me to his Heathkit and Kenwood equipment when I was ten or so. I was hooked! A foray into broadcast college radio was my next adventure. I worked as program director and general manager for seven years at WRUW-FM-Cleveland, a 15 kw station serving all of Northeast Ohio. Our motto? "More Music, Fewer Hits." Shortly after I left WRUW, I applied for my Tech license and quickly got on HF while living in New York City in 2001 as KC8RFV, then N2YF. There I operated an old Ten Tec Argosy with a 20 m dipole mounted on the brownstone roof. This was the peak of cycle 23. Phone never caught on with me, and my CW was so bad I couldn't copy my own call at 25 wpm. CW is the heart of amateur radio, so I stuck with it and CWops has helped my proficiency immensely.



My wife, Tracie, of 23 years still chuckles when I call her "XYL." Our two sons will never forget the time my vanity plate, "N2YF," led some fellow drivers to comment, "Oh so sweet! You're into your wife!" The hobby is filled with adventure. Aside from CW, I enjoy homebrew, vintage rigs, SOTA/POTA, and antenna theory/building. My other interests are astronomy, auto mechanics/tracking, running and fiction. These keep me fresh as I unwind from my work as a physician. One day I hope to join a DXpedition.

Years ago I stumbled upon the late night CWT and was stupefied by the speed. I had to join this club despite my internal Groucho Marx! CWops has been incredibly effective and welcoming. It's a professional operation. I am so grateful for my sponsors and academy Elmers: Ron VE3FXX, Bob WR7Q, Ed K5YZW, George NE5A, Hal AF5J, and Mike K5UV. I hope to see you all on the air and long live CW.

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### **Dan Zabcik, WB5YUZ #3530**

I would like to begin by thanking my sponsors, 4X6GP (Vic), AA3B (Bud), and K7MOA (Key). I am especially grateful to AH7RF (Heather), who nominated me.

I was born in Hobbs, New Mexico, on July 15, 1960. When I was about eight my dad borrowed a Heathkit AR-3 (which I still have) from his brother so that he could monitor 'phone broadcasts of marine weather products on the 2 MHz Marine band. I soon discovered the joys of shortwave radio; but at that age I was just interested in listening to foreign broadcasts.



When I was about fourteen I began to wonder about the "Donald Duck" voice transmissions I would often hear on the 41m band while listening to Moscow and Prague. I began to experiment with the rig's BFO (which I had never used in the intervening six years) and soon learned to zero-beat SSB signals.

Another ham was born.

Today I am retired, my last workplace having been the Distance Education department of the University of Texas (of which I am also a graduate), editing courses - academics are not always the most careful writers!

I live outside Thordale, Texas. My current antenna plant consists of two sets of fan dipoles for 20-15-10 m, with the feedpoints at 32 ft., strung at right angles to each other for greater coverage; a 40 m vertical loop that favors EU/VK; and an 80 m inverted "L" which I also use on 30 m, 17, and 12 m. Right now I am running 100 watts, but hope to have a linear sometime soon.

### **Gary Clifford, VE3DZP #3531**

Who is #3531 ? Well that be me. I would first like thank WB2KAO, VE3EJ and VE3MM for thinking I am capable of joining the ranks of the CWops.

This April had my 77th birthday and of those years have been an active amateur for 58 years . Over my working career I spent three years in the electronic repair shop at the Stelco Steel Mill in Hamilton, Ontario. I was force to move on as calculus was part of the apprentice-



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ship and we did not get along. From there took on being a elevator mechanic apprentice. Yes it had its ups and downs but the money was good and I loved it. In 1979 I was offered a maintenance position in good old Niagara Falls where for 24 years I took care of all the elevators for OTIS that went up (towers), went down (thru the rock) and across the river (Spanish Aero Car).

Retried now for 20 years, I have my dream station all Flex. I am active every day on the air, taking time off to photograph the ships that run the Welland Canal, I have over 2000 photos on [Marinetraffic.com](http://Marinetraffic.com). I also have my garage converted to a small shop where I am able to weld aluminum and stainless steel, so antenna construction is on my list.

I have a great sense of humour which gets me in trouble a lot. I blame Photoshop, but also design QSL cards and just added a laser engraver to my list of toys.

I prefer to use a single lever key for my CW but as member of the SKCC group I have made many novelty straight keys. My last batch of four keys were made from railway spikes. I have a video on my [QRZ of Fred Flintstone's](#) key check it out for a smile.

Everyone stay well and look for you on the bands.

### **Albinas "Al" Staraitis, LY2MM #3532**

First of all, I thank Mark WC3W, who encouraged me to seek membership in CWops. Also thanks to KR2Q, W9TD and F5SGI, who supported my aspirations, all of them I remember from QSOs in the wide variety of CW contests.

My ham radio adventure started in the end of 1965, when I came to school club station. There were lot of boys and girls, that time we worked only in AM mode. Later we started learning code, our group became smaller. No one was to teach us, so I became the teacher. After studies we all started making QSOs, began to participate in contests.

In 1968 I began studying radio engineering in Kaunas Technical University, where I became operator of well-known in that times club station UP2KNP/UK2PAF. These years were decisive in forming me as CW contest operator. In 1970 I got my own license and call UP2PAQ.

During my studies I got married, later 2 sons were born. But it did not stop me being active from my home station as well as from various clubs and achieving some very good results in various contests.



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Before Lithuania regained its independence in 1990, I changed my call sign to LY2PAQ, since 1998 I changed it to LY2MM and have no other plans to make more changes. Since then I had over 300k QSOs and 330 DXCC countries confirmed via LOTW. Living in apartments I have not very much space for my modest antennas, but actively participate in contests till now.

I occasionally work digital modes, but CW is my love forever. Working simple QSOs, ragchewing for me is a real joy and relax from life troubles. Life goes on, my hands still doing well, so, see you on the bands.

### **Jim Kerezsi, W3ASW #3528**

I was first licensed in 1972 as WN8MRU and upgraded to Extra back in the days when you had to be in person at an FCC field office. Glad I knew all about phase angles, those were the days. With my new call and privileges, WB8MRU was on the bands looking for DX and ragchewing on CW now using full power.

Living in Dayton, Ohio was a ham's dream with the Hamvention in my backyard. I've attended this event since being licensed only missing a few. My wife's father W8IMZ (SK) and I spent many weekends doing the CQ WPX contests for which he was the contest director. I sponsor a memorial plaque in his name each year.



Moving to Delaware in 1995 I selected a more CW friendly call, W3ASW. My interests have mainly been CW on HF, CW traffic nets, DX, antennas and portable operations (POTA). Since retiring I have been active in my local club teaching weekly classes on Morse code.

My current station consists of a legacy Drake C line, an Icom 751A and a Yaesu FTDX-10 along with a very high G5RV and ground mounted Butternut. I prefer the 160, 80 and 40 meter bands and spend many nights looking for DX to work. Contest-wise I find that living in Delaware has its advantages, especially during Sweepstakes and the location on the east coast favors QSOs to Europe. Last year I acquired the 40 wpm certification from the ARRL.

Retired in 2023 from Siemens as an electrical engineer, my XYL Lenora and I have been married 38 years. We have two sons, one which has decided to continue the ham tradition and became licensed last year at age 31 living in Montana and is very interested in CW.

Thanks to K3JT, N3JT, WT9U, KR2Q, K5UV, K1VUT & VE6RST for nominating me to join the CWops club.

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### **Mike Stansberry, KØTER #3533**

I was first licensed in 1959 as KØTER. I let the license run out in 5 years and was re-licensed in 1972 as WBØHCK. After about 3 years I retrieved my original call, KØTER, via a special program the FCC had at that time (not the vanity program).

My first interest in Amateur radio has always been CW although I dabbled in RTTY in the mid '70s. I have also been interested in the various sound card digital modes. I have also done some satellite work, CW of course!



I am an electric bass player as well as some guitar. I spent my working career first as a home entertainment service technician and then as electronic technician for a large electronic company. I've always enjoyed building "stuff" for the Ham shack which includes a 1 KW linear amplifier which I've used since 1976.

### **Dick Boswell, K4CUE #3534**

First licensed as KN8NXZ, later K8NXZ (terrible CW call), in 1958, at age 15 in Ohio. Obtained a much better call, K4CUE, upon moving to Lynchburg, VA, to join General Electric Mobile Radio Department as a design engineer in 1968.

First station consisted of a Heathkit DX-40 and a National NC-100XA Receiver. First key was a Speed-X straight key, followed by a built-from-scratch tube-type keyer; as a high school student, I could not afford the Hallicrafters TO Keyer, so I purchased the manual (for 25 cents by mail) and built one. It still works! A "paddle" was a new item in the ham radio arsenal; Vibroplex had just announced one made from the front half of their "bug." With a dipole on my father's TV tower, I obtained WAS, DXCC, collected many paper QSL Cards, etc.

After GE Mobile Radio, I worked as a technical sales manager, selling quartz crystals, oscillators and filters throughout the US and North America. Met a lot of hams in this endeavor and have stayed in touch with several.



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After more than fifty years as a Commissioned Lay Presbyterian Pastor, I recently completed an on-line Master of Divinity Curriculum and am now an ordained minister, which led to a mission trip to Malawi (Africa), serving as the chaplain in a group installing water wells in Malawi. Note the photograph of a young student proudly displaying his school workbook. Much of my service in Malawi consisted of ministering at the Embangwini Medical Hospital there. I also operated 7Q7WW, CW and FT8, at the hospital. A prominent member of the well work team who coordinated much of the trip activities is Bill, KC4D, CWops #419.

I have been pounding brass for more than 66 years and am now proud to have been accepted into CWops.

73 and God's Blessings to all.



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