

Solid Copy



The CW Operators Club Newsletter
May 2025 — Issue 184

President's Message



This time of year can be a lean time for my amateur radio logbook as I get drawn to the great outdoors and away from the confines of my 8x6 foot garden shack in the long-awaited spring weather.



The guy in the middle is not famous like Einstein...but his story is. It begins on page 26.

(Continued on page 2)

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

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

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

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President: Stew Rolfe, [GWØETF](#)
Vice President: John Glover, [W2QL](#)
Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3IT](#)
Treasurer: Craig Thompson, [K9CT](#)
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Newsletter Editor: Dick Strassburger, [N9EEE](#)

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Some extended April sunshine following on the heels of an unusual storm-ridden winter has really impacted my time on the air in the Spring of 2025. Barring the occasional portable excursion in the sun and my Giving Back sessions which I make a special effort for, my operating has been largely restricted to short spells in the late evening and most 0700 CWTs. I've also been having my cataracts fixed and have had periods of poor close vision. This has certainly affected my enthusiasm for spending hours at a time squinting at a computer screen when my quasi touch typing still needs some visual feedback from both keyboard and screen. I wonder how I would react to living in a sun-soaked tropical paradise; presume I'd be just another inhabitant unimpressed by days of unbroken sunshine and enjoy escaping to my air-conditioned shack.

I have also been taking advantage of the settled weather to tidy up some loose ends resulting from the stormy winter. The only remaining antenna problem to fix has been the elevated radials on my 30m ground plane vertical. They've been treated to several iterations of my "quick fixes" but have been awaiting some serious attention and a partial rebuild - just in time for the May QTX-30 event announced in last month's *Solid Copy* (page 43)! It's an interesting band and I'll do my best to log a good few QSOs and get back to enjoying 30m.

A regular highlight of my *Solid Copy* reading is the publication of the names of students who have graduated from the various CW Academy courses. Last month's edition listed those who had successfully completed the January/February semester, and once again it was a very long list! Pleasingly on glancing through the 60 Advanced graduates I recognised several I'd either worked or who have recently become CWops members. Congratulations to all of them and we should salute the team at CW Academy and the small army of tutors who make all this happen three times each year. And a quick note to the mostly Fundamental and Intermediate tutors not to forget the Giving Back sessions at 1900 local time where volunteers will be available to provide taster QSOs at whatever speed and style is needed to practice on air and build up confidence. Please remind your students!

I've also been interested in the recent articles on remote operating and the different ways individual "remoters" have tackled the challenge. Not only is it interesting but also educational though it often requires concentration to digest and understand the details especially when contesting and SO2R is involved. I can fully appreciate the advantages that remote operating brings for many but it is just one example of how the internet has become inextricably tied up with amateur radio now. My local club has many new members who get very excited by utilising their FM handies to talk with folk in "DX" places like VK and ZL at any time of day using D-Star etc. The technology is undoubtedly impressive but it seems strange that you can bypass the challenges of HF propagation to take advantage of unknown transmission modes and unknowable routes across the web and claim it as amateur **radio**. The associated language of rooms, hotspots, etc makes it sound more computer and less like radio too. It's also pervasive: even when I disconnect my web access to run a contest as unassisted or go out bare bones portable I know it's still there when my CW call has been picked up by the Reverse Beacon Network and I've suddenly become very popular! Not complaining - just sayin' ;-)

The world moves on, technology progresses but CW is still here just as it was in the beginning...

73, Stew GWØETF, President (CWops #919)

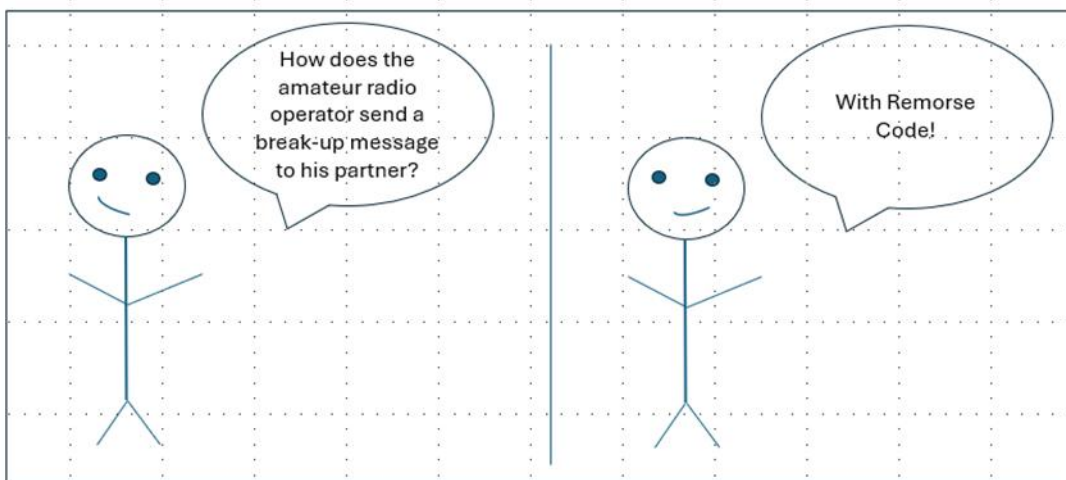
Editor's Note: Help Wanted

Are you an artist with a sharp wit? A graphic designer looking at the world through different eyes? A satirist or humorist that sees the quirky side of amateur radio and wants to share it with the world through drawings?

If you delight in making other people laugh or roll their eyes, you may be who we're looking for.

Solid Copy is looking for a cartoonist to add to its staff of monthly columnists. 1-, 2-, and 3- panel graphic commentary on the whims of our hobby, with a bent towards Morse code and the CW lifestyle is what we are seeking. No prior publishing experience is necessary.

If my attempts at humor below make you cringe...



...then save your favorite publication from being defaced by this stick-figure amateur.

If being the cartoonist for *Solid Copy* sounds like a great marriage of your design/humor/ham radio skills then reply by email telling me a little about your background and cartooning capability. Also, submit a one- or two-panel cartoon addressing any aspect of Hamvention you find amusing. Note: this sample may find its way into the June issue of *Solid Copy*.

Columnists, including cartoonist, are not financially compensated for their efforts. But the accolades are generous.

73, Dick N9EEE, (CWops #3113)

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

Ops News and Notes

[Duncan \(Mac\) Fiskén, G3WZD](#)

Welcome to another [Ops News and Notes](#) and, as always, thanks for the contributions. Please do keep the submissions coming, and there's no need to wait until the Editor's monthly call for articles or my reminder (thank you to those who sent items early). Remember, a significant percentage of our membership do not subscribe to the cwops.io email reflector so, if you post something and think it may be suitable for Ops News and Notes, please copy it to my [email](#) address.

Ed, KR3E #133 I'm excited to report that the second edition of my book **DITS and DAHS: The ABC's of Morse Code Operating** has now been published. It's an update, and expansion, of the book that was first published by CQ Publishing in 2017 and became unavailable when CQ suspended publishing in late 2023. The new paperback version is now available [on Amazon](#). The e-book is still being formatted and should be available in a few weeks.

I hope the book is useful to both CW newcomers and old timers and I want to thank the CWops members who contributed suggestions, photos, and other content to this, and to the earlier edition.

Jim, N3JT #1 CWops gratefully acknowledges the generous donations from Scott, K9MA #1385 and Ian, G0AYN #3729.

Doug, KR2Q #438 Just another day at the KR2Q QTH 35 miles west of Manhattan.



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Mike, VE3GFN #1119 With 70 years of ham radio under my belt, and with certificates/plaques for 5BDXCC, the DXCC Honor Roll, and the DXCC Challenge ... I just received a QSL card from a new Toronto area ham for a contact on the local 2m FM repeater. That's like getting a QSL card for a conversation on the telephone, hi hi!



VE3OTW		<input type="checkbox"/> /QRP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> /M	<input type="checkbox"/> /P
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> via Repeater		
CQ Zone: 4 - ITU Zone: 4 - Loc: FN25DK				
Canada - Province: Ontario - QTH: Ottawa				
Date: D M Y		Universal Time UTC		
16 11 24		21:00		
Frequency MHz		Mode		
444.225		FM		
R S T		73, Jonathan Eluk		
5 9				
<div>Thanks for the QSO on the YRC repeater!</div>				
Canadian QSL Bureau - PO Box 83 RPO Streetsville Mississauga ON L5M 2B7 Canada				
UX5UO print				

To Radio:
VE3GFN

Via:

☒ PSE QSL ☐ TNX QSL

The Invasion of Québec in December 1775 (also called the Siege of Québec) represents a key moment that has shaped Canada's geopolitical history. During a snowstorm on 31 December, the Americans assaulted Québec, which was successfully defended by a garrison of 1,800 British soldiers and militiamen under Guy Carleton.

The Americans attacked from two directions. Benedict Arnold and his men penetrated some distance into Lower Town, but Arnold himself was wounded in the ankle and carried away from the fighting with many casualties including the death of Richard Montgomery. His forces later surrendered to the British under counterattack.

QSL via Bureau Email: ve3otw@myrac.ca

Jim, W6KC #1266 My XYL, JoAnn K6FBI, and I are about three weeks into a two-month, 5,000-mile road trip through the western and Midwestern parts of the U.S. and Canada. This is our third long road trip in the past three years. By the end of this year's journey, we will have driven

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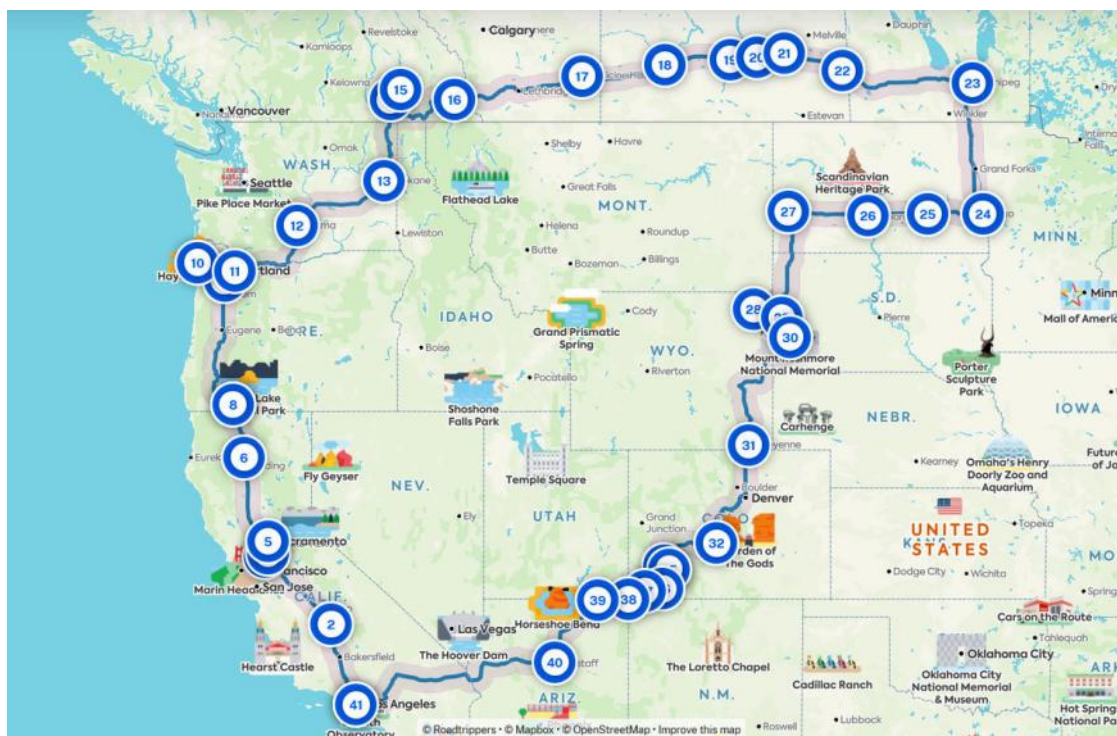
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23,000 miles, visited 40 U.S. states and 9 Canadian provinces, and operated portable in each one.

My goal is to participate in the CWTs while we travel and activate POTA parks in every state and province we pass through. Tonight, we're staying in Portland, OR. After returning from dinner, I had less than 15 minutes to set up and operate in the 0300 CWT. Somehow, I managed to work 10 stations on 40M in just eight minutes to keep my Wednesday CWT streak going.

My portable rig is an FT-991A, and my antenna is usually a 17-ft whip with a mag mount on top of our SUV. I've updated my [W6KC QRZ.com page](http://W6KC.QRZ.com/page) with details about our travels.

I hope to log many of your calls as we continue down the road.



Stew, GW0ETF #919 I wonder if anyone has heard the classic dit-dit-dit dah-dah-dah dit-dit-dit of SOS on the air? Well in the autumn of 1999 I was tuning across 20m when I thought I'd just heard that distinctive rhythm. I tuned back and listened to someone sending SOS and some basic information about being on board a vessel "x miles North East off the Venezuelan coast." I remember thinking it seemed an unusual way of specifying position even for a yacht but the same message was being repeated over and over. There was never any mention of a vessel name. I decided it wasn't genuine and moved on.

It wasn't long before I thought but what if it was genuine?" I decided to ring the local coastguard in Holyhead. I passed on the information and was told they would pass this onto the Coastguard foreign liaison centre in Falmouth on the south coast of England. Some weeks (was it months?) later a letter from Holyhead Coastguard arrived with an attachment from Venezuela. I suspect the Master of the "Liberty" had something to say to one of the trainee wireless ops on board... ;-)

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John, W2GD (P40W & P44W) #204 My sincerest thanks to CWops for sponsoring this and other contest plaques.



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Jack, W1WEF #48 I was asked by KK1W to possibly give a short talk to the Hampden County Radio Club on my recollection of the Field Day fire on Wilbraham Mountain in 1954. I doubted I could remember enough to talk about for more than a couple minutes, but thought I'd see what I could remember from my earliest ham radio Field Days while a member of the club.

I can remember FD that year was in a field somewhere in Hampden. I can remember Hank Baier, W1NY being there, as well as Hal, W1UPH. I probably only operated 3 or 4 Field Days with the club, but I remember going to the home of W1CJK, Bill Werenski one year in Holyoke for a FD planning session.

That brings me to my last FD with the club, the reason I was invited to test my memory. After exchanging a couple emails with Mike, N0HI (now N1TA), Mike mentioned a club QSL with a photo of a fire atop Wilbraham Mountain on a club Field Day. I told Mike I'd love to have one of those cards, because I was at the last one out of the structure that burned!



We were getting set up for FD on Saturday morning in a terrific location atop Wilbraham Mountain. We had the use of a wooden tower structure which at one time probably housed a concession stand on the ground level and had an inside staircase going to an observation room on the top level. As I recall it was maybe 4 or 5 stories high and resembled a Dutch Windmill tower but with a porch all around the first level. It had been closed for some time before the club got permission to use it for FD.

The VHF/UHF station was going to be on top, and the HF stations on the lower level. We would be protected from the weather, as it was all enclosed -- an ideal FD setup. I was on the top level after carrying up some gear, when someone down below yelled "FIRE"!

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I was the only one on top at the time and went flying down the staircase but grabbed a fire extinguisher that was on a landing at the second level. Unfortunately, the fire extinguisher didn't work, but I don't remember how big the fire was at that point. It might not have mattered if it worked because the dust covered wooden structure was doomed to go down fast. Everyone got out in time, and I don't think any of the gear on the first level was lost. All was lost on top however, including some homebrew gear that Bill Rosner, W1RFU had used to set records.

I think it was no more than ten minutes when the tower was burned to the ground. The cause was declared to be spontaneous combustion. Needless to say, the club didn't operate FD that year!

Bruce, N6NT #3281 Recently somebody posted something about a PVRC win of a NCQP plaque. Well, for two years I came in 2nd in my category (SO/HP/CW), most recently just behind fellow PVRC-er NA4J, but this year I did a K4D-K4D hookup to the W4RM station and look at what showed up in my mail.



Until the next News and Notes, QAC.

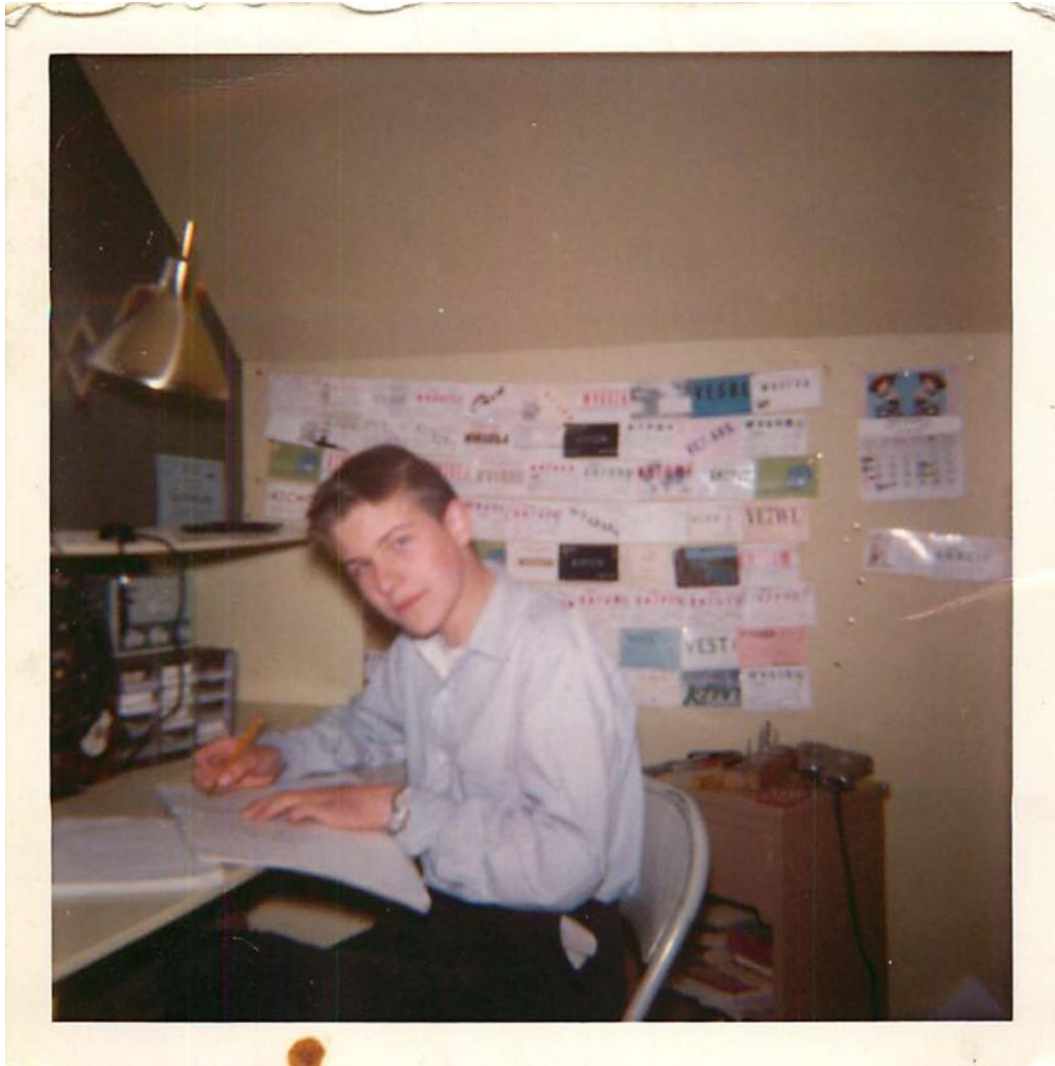
73, Duncan G3WZD (CWops #1979)

NewsAndNotes@CWops.org

How We Were

[Ian Capon](#), GWØKRL

W8LVN, Bill Lederer, CWops #3652



Here is KN7QVF circa 1962 on 40m or 80m CW with Knight Kit T50 and 1927 RCA receiver.

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 2025 North American CW Weekend

June 6 - 8, 2025

Yes, there will be a North American CW Weekend this year!

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 cancellations due to COVID restrictions, we had good get-togethers in 2022, 2023, and 2024. I think we are back on track again. We are delighted to welcome regulars back, and look forward to meeting some new players.

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 at
1517 West Little Neck Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-4717

Questions/Inquiries? Email them to Don at: w4zyt.don@gmail.com

Event Summary:

North American CW Room Block

Start Date: Thursday, June 5, 2024

End Date: Monday, June 9, 2024

Last Day to Book at the Group Rate: Friday, May 16, 2024

Hotel:

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

3111 Fairview Park Drive

Falls Church, VA 22042

Phone: 703-849-9400

Reservations: 888-236-2427 (Event is: North American CW Weekend)

Rate: \$ 124.00 plus taxes/night (Friday/Saturday)

Here is a reservation link. If you have problems with this link, please call the number above. [Book your group rate for North American Room Block](#)

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Here is the program:

There will be a hospitality suite between 1800-2400 on Friday and Saturday with refreshments and snacks available, plus plenty of collegiality and good conversation.

Dinner (Pizza) - Friday Evening (6/6) at 1800

Italian Oven

6852 Old Dominion Dr,

McLean, VA 22101 .

Salad, beverage (non-alcoholic), unlimited pizza. Alcohol available.

Dress casual. Individual checks

Brunch - Saturday (6/7) from 0900 to 1200

Home of Nina Lane and Jim Talens (K4NML and N3JT)

6017 Woodley Road

McLean, VA 22101

Phone 703-241-1144

Dinner - Saturday Evening (6/7) from 1800 until...

Metro 29 Diner

4711 Lee Highway

Arlington, VA 22207

703-528-2454

Don't be put off by the "Diner" moniker. Take a look at the menu at their website at <https://metro29diner.com/> . This is an informal place with a class kitchen and a full selection of meal options which should suit every taste. Cocktails, beer, and wine available. Dress casual. Individual checks.

We are looking forward to a nice weekend and good participation. This is a nice time of year in the DC area, and there are plenty of shopping or other places of interest to visit in your free time.

Please stay safe and well, drive carefully, and come prepared for a good time.

73, Don, W4ZYT, CWops #55

The Making of a Lustful Key: Begali Keys

an interview with [Bruna Begali](#), KI2RTF

Before we make any QSO, our hand instinctively reaches for the key, and our mind forms an emotional impression of the paddle or key that connects us to another human being. In the instant following the first dit or dah, that impression is confirmed -- either with a satisfied “*what a great feeling*” or the realization, “*I need a new key.*” This was the inspiration for this series on Keys We Lust that started a couple of years ago.

Bruna Begali and I started this interview last year before and during Hamvention 2024. It was a perfect time since Begali Keys was celebrating owner, Piero Begali's birthday with a special edition model newly available at Hamvention. Since that time, floods and fires have befallen the manufacturing facility which would normally be disastrous to any other business possibly causing closure. An article promoting the company just didn't seem appropriate. And now, their story is even more celebratory given their determination and resilience to recover and stay in business all the while delivering on their superb engineering, craftsmanship, and customer service that has earned them the reputation of being among the pinnacle of morse key manufacturers. It is my privilege to share this final version of our interviews, concluded this past week as we near Hamvention 2025. (Ed: Dick N9EEE)

Name of Company: BEGALI KEYS

Owner's Name: PIERO BEGALI AND BRUNA BEGALI

HQ Location: BRESCIA, LOMBARDY ITALY



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HISTORY

What year did you start production?

We started in 1954 with our main factory production.

We started building keys and paddles in 1995 – 1996.

How many people work in your business besides you?

We have 4 working in the business.

- *My dad, Pietro Begali, i2RTF (CWops #621). Piero is for friends and Pietro is for the Government*
- *Me, Bruna Begali, Ki2RTF*
- *Our long term male employee (he has been working for us for 30 years). He takes care of converting the drawing made from my dad and from me on draft into the CAD program and later into the CNC machine program . He operates on the Machines (on 4 CNC machines, programming and adjusting tools to produce any part we need for). He assembles the keys with our help too*
- *Another, female employee . She works on the CNC Machine, manage the stock and inventory of the parts we produce, she clean and keep things in order, she helps assembling the small parts to be assembled on the keys.*

How has your business evolved since the first day?

We Started designing and machining some key prototypes just for a few friends who were good CW operators. We - yes we, since almost the entire family was involved in this project due to the difficulties of the Economy of that time - decided to try to start producing some of them for the Ham Market. We started producing the straight keys as Postal Key and Spark.

The first keys made were for the Italian Market. We were not known worldwide since we didn't advertise any keys internationally at that time:

*The **Begali Postal Key** made by Pietro Begali (i2RTF) faithfully interprets an original project from 1861. The same model can be found in a 1901 pictorial document which was on Albert Einstein's work desk in the Patent office of Zurich in Switzerland. This technical masterpiece was taken to Boston to celebrate Guglielmo Marconi's birth date in 1999 where Princess Elettra Marconi kept the Begali Postal key in her hands for the occasion!*



After a while, we were contacted by the MOTOROLA Company who ordered 250 pieces to be sold with their first mobile phone produced at that time . All of the Postal Keys sold to them have Motorola logo printed at the bottom and they had a special serial number engraved . So, the first Begali LIMITED EDITION keys were produced for Motorola Company. Limited Edition "Etere 2002" sold to IMCODE – Switzerland.

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Then we started designing and producing the other models, but things were not so fast at the beginning.

What prompted you to create paddles/keys? What is your motivation for doing this?

As mentioned before, we started creating keys just for friends here in Italy close to 1995. My dad has been the factory owner from 1954 and we had specialized in the micro parts for the knitting machines. We had all the machines and technical experiences to create some quality parts, for big German and US knitting machine companies! We Worked producing punch machines parts for the Olivetti Company .

My father has been a ham radio operator since he was 16 and he always operated CW. After the first keys we produced for friends in 1995-1996 we wanted to start promoting them around the world so we started with the first international advertising:

- *The first advertising cost a lot and didn't result in any order at all*
- *After advertising internationally on CQ (US and Japanese) and QST Magazines as few more around the world (Spanish, French, German, Switzerland, England), we were ready to abandon the possibility of being known outside Italy.*

BUT....

...the first orders came from US from people who today are still good friends of ours. They appreciated the quality of work done on the keys. Some of them wrote the first review on eHam.net in 2004 (we didn't know anything about this website before that).

Pietro Begali, my dad, met them for the first time in 2005 when he decided to fly to US for the first time in his life to attend at the 2005 Dayton Hamvention (Hara Arena). The economy of our family wouldn't permit all our expenses. But, my father flew to US with my uncle and it was a wonderful experience. There was no booth, no reservation...he just got there and asked if anyone had a place for them in the Flea Market. Some hams came forward and offering him a table, a chair and a place where to stay... those hams are still great friends today!

We never stop to thank them for what they did in 2005!

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

I studied at Art Academy and I've always being fascinated by Mechanic (industrial mechanisms).

I remember when I was a kid, after coming back home from school, I just had the time for lunch and I always was with my dad to his previous factory to see how things were made! My dad taught me drawing parts on the draft board and he was very, very, strict with me ; if one line of the drawing was not perfect, he destroyed it till it was perfect!. How many drawings I draw on that draft board to learn how to do it.

In this way, I learned you can't start something and be good at it immediately! You have to be determined and you have to make sacrifices. You have to spend many hours learning and you have to try

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and try again until you are close to perfection. Perfection is a goal we all want to get to, but due to the daily changes and challenges it is always in movement and we can only try to do the best !

I have been working here from 2003. I always wanted to try another job experience before working for my dad just to learn how the others manage their business. I've learned a lot from my past jobs and nowadays I can say I am completely satisfied of what I learned from them! Sure 12 hours per day are not few, but if you wish to realize something in your life, you have to work hard! I am grateful to my dad's excellent training he gave me (in good and bad ways, sometimes)!

Tell us about the floodings and fire in the factory?

- We got 2 floodings last June 2024 which destroyed a part of the factory . Unfortunately we had to keep the factory closed for 2 weeks while we were able to save parts of the machines and let them be repaired as quick as possible to be able to start working again! We were very sad and frustrated no one helped us with this. We worked hard (all the family and workers) to solve the bad situation. Of course, the production started having delays since some machines (since they are very old) again need some services!
- We got a fire last February which didn't help at all...we were not such in a bad situation as after the floodings but the fact was a bad experience!

Is there anything else new since we talked at Hamvention last year?

My father just got from the Italian Republican Government the Honor or "Commendatore of the Italian Republic" which is a higher honor than Knights of Labours for all the years of work he has had until now! The honor Ceremony where he will get the Honor by hand from President Mattarella is on June 2, 2025. This is a very big milestone for him!



PRODUCTS

How would you describe your products?

Our products are made with the engineering quality, and with artistic eyes. I think things you can create need to be functional but also beautiful to your eyes!

I can say we combine our experience of micro-mechanical Engineering and our love for the Italian design and art to produce each key and paddle. My family was been fascinated by art (painting, sculptures, architectonic and industrial design) and when we put some of our passions into the Mechanical Engineering Experience we very special! Really very important to us it is the satisfaction of our customers!

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What is your product line?

We started producing the **Begali Postal Key, Camelback** in 1995-1996 and later the Spark in 1998.

The Begali **Simplex Dual** Paddle – was created in 1998 - then the **Simplex Mono** (spring return keys.

Later, we wished to design and produce a magnetic key and it was the first **Begali Magnetic Classic** key created in 1999 (the first one was completely different on appearance from the one we produce nowadays) .

The **Begali Magnetic Classic dual** paddle was created in 2001 got updated by the **Begali Signature Edition** key dual paddle - was created in 2004 - (it has a hidden mechanism to keep the contacts adjustment fixed which is not more visible as into the magnetic Classic key).

The **Begali Traveler Light** key - dual paddle with magnetic return and solid gold contacts 14 carats) was created for people who want to use a key when they are operating outdoors (POTA – SOTA – DXpeditions). The special design with the “wings” adjustable parts, give the possibility to the finger pieces to stay protected during transportation- traveling (it weights only 600 grams and is wholly built from a bar of aluminum alloy material which is used on the navy for his great quality and proprieties). First one was created in 2005 – one Begali Traveler Light key was used during the trip and expedition to Antarctica (South Pole DXpedition).

The **Begali Adventure dual paddle key** (and **Adventure Mono**) with the magnetic - desktop base and brackets – were created in 2012. This key weights just 60 grams alone so it had been designed for QRP, POTA and outdoors!

The **Begali Graciella** key dual paddle – was created in 2003/2004 to celebrate my mother's ham radio license! It is nowadays built only on reservation since it is very expensive – it is all made by brass).

The **Begali Sculpture** key dual paddle – was designed in 2006 – this key is for us one of the jewels of our production. (made completely from stainless steel AISI 304, has magnetic return, solid gold contacts, it has the possibility to have the OTO - space between the finger pieces – adjusted by turning easily the central oval stop between the contacts without using any special tools.

Later, it had been made also in a single lever mono version **Sculpture Mono** key - designed in 2011.



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The **Begali Stealth** key dual paddle (with the special V-shaped arms and encapsulated design) - designed in 2009 and dismissed in 2022 since the cost of brass and the production was becoming too high. The V-shaped arms anyway can be used on the Begali Sculpture dual paddle nowadays as an option. The Begali Stealth key was a single block of brass completely machined from CNC.

The **Begali Pearl** key dual paddle - created in 2009 (after the Begali Sculpture key experience, includes all the mechanism ratio as the Begali Sculpture has).

The **Begali Contour** key dual paddle - created in 2009 and dismissed in 2025 (after the Begali Sculpture key experience).

The **Begali Expedition** key dual paddle - designed in 2012 (after the Begali Sculpture key experience) to be used during DXpedition, SOTA, POTA and QRP, even if it weighs 1.8 Kg. Its compact design makes it a pleasure to be used and to be a good equipment for outdoors activities!

The **Begali Stradivarius** key dual paddle - designed in 2010 (with special torsion bearings) dismissed in 2020 since it was too complicated - look for another good supplier after COVID.

The **Begali Magnum** key dual paddle - designed in 2012 (a single block of brass which weighs 2.2 Kg) Can you imagine a Monolite? That's the Magnum key, a block of brass with a wonderful weight and such a delicate feeling while using (thin finger pieces give to this key a contrast between the heavy block of brass and very light touch) - solid gold contacts and possibility to adjust the OTO space easily, makes this key a lifetime key!

The **Begali Intrepid Semiautomatic Bug** - designed in 2009 (we took about 7 years to design this key which needed to be completely different and unique from the ones available on the market) this key works in a very unique way than others and nowadays is also available all made from stainless steel (even if the material is very expensive).

The **Begali HST MARK I - II - III** (single lever and sideswiper key) - designed in 2008 and improved during the years. It was made to the HST Worldwide Competition Italian team and nowadays it is used from many champions and teams around the world.

The **Begali Blade Straight** key - created in 2009 - is a modern Swedish pump key and it has such a very soft touch you could play with it for hours with no fatigue.

The **Begali Leonessa** key, dual and single lever - designed in 2012 - no similar design were available at that time and it was designed to be used during the HST Competition too since people could decide if use it as single lever or dual iambic paddle depending on their abilities to send. This can be easily adjusted to be a Mono or as a Dual.

The **Begali Sculpture arrow straight** key - designed in 2014 - no other straight keys had magnets on it (repulsion and attraction magnets are on it and you can adjust the key for a perfect comfort and with a perfect quality with no bounce!)

The **Begali Sculpture Swing Sideswiper** - designed in 2014 - a massive Sideswiper which is hard to be moved from your shack - 2.4 Kg makes this key a rock.

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The **Begali Sculpture Janus (dual paddle and single lever key)** - designed in 2017 – this key is a modern upgrade of the Begali Leonessa and as the Sculpture Janus name says (Janus was Roman God with 2 heads) can be a mono or a dual paddle adjusting the mechanism very easily! The perfect combo between material, quality and function makes this key unique.

Our product line is also made of the LIMITED EDITION KEYS which include:

BEGALI GRACIELLA LTD key made in 30 pieces only - produced in 2008

BEGALI STEALTH LTD key made in 50 pieces only - produced in 2010

BEGALI PEARL LTD key made in 249 pieces only to commemorate the EME Convention - produced in 2016 to commemorate the EME Convention

BEGALI PEARL LTD QSO TODAY made in 21 pieces only to celebrate the first virtual ham expo during COVID - produced in 2021

BEGALI 60th ANNIVERSARY made in 214 pieces only to commemorate my father's 60 years of Activity on his factory - produced in 2014.

BEGALI 70th ANNIVERSARY made in 424 pieces to commemorate my father's 70 years of activity in his factory - produced in February 2024 and we still have some of them available.



Begali 60th Anniversary



Begali 70th Anniversary

BEGALI SCULPTURE GALAXY Semiautomatic Bug produced in 2023 and still in production (the production is limited due to the availability of the material and due to the high price of production.

Do you have any new product released in the past year?

Sculpture Galaxy and by next June the Begali Special key for the WRTC 2026.

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What are your paddles' unique features?

- *We give silver contacts - real silver 925/1000 - on almost of the keys except on the Begali Sculpture, Sculpture Mono, Traveler, Graciella, Sculpture Janus, Sculpture Swing, Adventure and Adventure Mono which they have the special features of solid gold contacts (real 14 carat solid gold material).*
- *Included plastic and aluminum finger pieces depending on the key model (in some keys, also real solid carbon fiber finger pieces as in the Begali Sculpture key)*
- *Plastic dust cover (most of the Begali Keys has one included)*
- *Cable cord (usually we supply the one with stereo jack of 3.5 mm 1/8")*
- *Optical microfiber cleaning cloth to clean the key in the perfect way*
- *Feeler gauge of 0.03 mm for the contacts spacing – to adjust the space between the contacts till a very close space between them*

How long does it take to build a paddle?

We can say about a week. Usually, we produce 50 pieces per time but since we produce everything internally here in the factory (base, turret, screws, columns, finger pieces, arms) we cannot say this with precision since we try to minimize the key production cost producing some per time!

What materials are used in production?

The main material used is stainless steel, Ergal – Aluminum alloy used on the aircraft and naval production – Aluminum, and brass. We use cast iron fusion (designed by us) for the straight key as Camel-back, postal key Blade, Spark, HST and Basic models base.

What is your pricing (range or by product)?

We start from 141 € for the Simplex Basic – the less expensive Begali key available which today is about USD 160 (at this time no tariffs are charged on the keys since we use a HTS Custom Code which has zero tariffs).

To the most expensive (Sculpture Galaxy Semiautomatic Bug) which is 980 € or about USD 1110.

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

We cannot say anything about this since everyone is doing their job and their quality, look and function depends on their experiences, knowledges, and abilities.

We know what's into a Begali key (material quality, production quality and excellence on design + the customer service we give. It's a long time we are on the market nowadays. We can just try to do always better without speaking from the others but just learning from them all if needed. I am sorry if I cannot say more about this, but this question can be best answered in a great way from the users and customers

We usually don't speak about the others. We try to do what the others don't.

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FUTURE

What are your future plans?

- *We are Committed to produce the Special key for WRTC 2026.*
- *Giving the best we can do to serve you all at the best and giving you the possibility to try Begali Quality.*
- *Always ready to new challenges and to improve our quality.*

Thank you for sharing your story.

sc

Apartment Remote Radio

[Mike Cotton](#), K4RUM (CWops #1182)

My adventures in remote operating began in a musty shack in Freeport, Bahamas in the early 2010s. I was in Freeport with my dad Tim Cotton (N4UM/C6ARU) and fellow CWops member Bob Patten (N4BP/C6AKQ). While Bob and I were busy with the pileups, my dad started contemplating remote setups for me. I left the Florida Keys for Manhattan in 2008 when my wife failed retirement and wanted to resume her career in finance. We moved to a high-rise with no balcony and no roof access, and my radio prospects were grim indeed.

Remote Setup #1: Server computer at N4UM running Kenwood proprietary software (I believe the rig was his TS-480HX, but I could be wrong); client computer in Manhattan apartment accessing N4UM's server computer and logging software. This did not work well for two primary reasons. First, N4UM did not like the fact that I was effectively monopolizing his shack. Second, operating was more of a chore than a pleasure because the Kenwood software was very clunky and the internet latency was a hassle. Back to the drawing board.

Remote Setup #2: RemoteRig boxes! My saint of a sister, Gail, and her husband, Scott, allowed me to install a 6-BTV in their otherwise beautiful yard at their home in Jupiter, Florida. One RemoteRig box connected to the internet along with the guts of my TS-480HX lived in Jupiter, and my 480 control head and a second RemoteRig box lived in Manhattan. Since neither I nor anyone in my family is a computer networking expert, getting the boxes set up was a challenge. This worked fairly well -- when the internet in Jupiter deigned to cooperate, which was less frequent than I would have liked.

In 2016 my wife and I bought a house in Bridgehampton, NY (about 90 miles east of Manhattan). Antennas were installed and a move to Elecraft transceivers followed. In the summer of 2021, my wife accepted a job offer in Dallas. Yikes. Luckily for my remote operating adventures, we did

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not sell our Bridgehampton house when we moved to Dallas. Our first Dallas QTH was in a noise-filled high-rise apartment building, so remoting into my NY station was the best option.

Remote Setup #3: Win4K3Suite. A godsend. Server computer in NY running Win4K3Suite software connected to my K3; client computer in Dallas remoting into the server computer using Chrome Remote Desktop. My first QSOs while in Dallas were in the 2021 CW Open, and I was awfully glad to be able to participate!

Remote Setup #4: Win4K4Suite. Essentially the same as above, with a new K4 subbed for the K3.

Remote Setup #5: K4 to K4 Remote. This was a gamechanger. Especially to our bank account. NY K4 acts as a server; Dallas K4 connects to the NY K4 via the internet. This was extremely easy to get up and running and there were virtually none of the RemoteRig-associated computer networking issues to solve. I access my KPA1500 amp through my NY desktop computer using Chrome Remote Desktop. I run all of my logging software and digital mode operating software on my NY computer; this works for me since I am the only operator accessing my NY K4 remotely. I power on the NY K4 using N6TV's K-ON.

K4 to K4 remote operating is very satisfying because, for the most part, it allows me to forget that I'm operating remotely. Most of the knobs, buttons and dials of the client K4 work exactly as though I was sitting in front of the server K4. The only material limitation is the fact that operating remotely means that I am subject to the vagaries of the internet connection between Dallas and



NY. I've learned to live with that, for the most part.

I do try arrange my schedule to return to NY for those contests in which I have the most interest - not surprisingly, including the CQ WW and ARRL CW contests, along with the New York QSO Party.

Remote operating is fun! Give it a try.

A Ham Radio Station for Jenna

[Gary Johnson](#), NA6O, (CWops #1345)

[Jim Ewing](#), N4TMM (CWops #1791)

We hams are famous for helping one another in many ways such as education, setting up equipment, or group operating events such as Field Day and emergency communications. Our team recently had a very successful experience helping a young CW op who was in need.

Twenty year old Jenna Hurley, N4JEH, (CWops #3202) is a blind student at the E.H. Gentry Facility, a component of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB). Adopted from an orphanage in China along with five siblings by her parents in Alabama, Jenna received excellent home schooling from her father, David. They even learned Braille together. David eventually discovered ham radio and started learning Morse code. That caught Jenna's ear and together they used online resources to study and obtain their licenses when she was 17.

They had a station set up at home, so Jenna was able to get on the air. CW was (and is) her passion and she quickly became highly skilled at it. So skilled and active in fact, that she was soon invited into both CWops and FOC, which is an honor for any telegrapher especially someone so new to the hobby. This led to numerous friendships worldwide.

After moving into the dorms at E.H. Gentry, Jenna was left without her own station to operate. With some difficulty due to poor blind accessibility, she was able to access some RemoteHams stations, and also did some POTA operating with her boyfriend, Gunner, KK7DEU. But every active ham really needs a proper station with a good radio and antenna. This is when those ham radio friendships really paid off.

There are many blind hams just like Jenna who may not be able to fully enjoy their hobby for various reasons, often financial. Gary, NA6O, started making friends with blind hams several years ago after realizing this need [Ref 1]. Specific radio models are of value to blind operators because they have a built-in voice guide and relatively easy-to-use controls. This is known as accessibility. The Kenwood TS-590S is perhaps the most accessible and popular. Gary started buying these radios on the second-hand market, outfitting them with the speech module, and then donating them to needy blind hams. One of his beneficiaries, Dave, W4CI (who is also an FOC member), mentioned that Jenna was a good candidate for a radio. That started the ball rolling.

Gary and Dave started working with Fred, KT5X (FOC of course!), who already knew Jenna, and in turn he recruited Jim, N4TMM, who turned out to be the key player in our success. Jim, who lives in Atlanta, would be in Sylacauga, Alabama the first week of April to participate as a stone sculptor in the Alabama Marble Festival. Sylacauga is only a few miles down the road from Talladega, the location of E.H. Gentry and AIDB. So Jim was in perfect position to help set up Jenna's station.

Jim approached the president of AIDB, Dr. Dennis Gilliam, and also Ms. Jessica Edmiston, who offered their full support. Meanwhile, Gary had sent Jim a power supply for the TS-590S that Dave was sending Jim. And Jim ordered a MyAntennas end fed halfwave wire antenna, a proven commercial design that will typically tune acceptably on several bands.

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On Thursday, April 3, Jim met with EH Gentry maintenance people Joe Hutto, Don Llewellyn, and Tony Adams. Tony was there with his truck full of tools, ladders and other maintenance equipment, and Jim brought his radio toolbox and all the equipment for Jenna's station that he had collected. After surveying the surroundings, Jim and Tony concluded that the best option was to lay the wire antenna, about 140 ft long, on the roof of the three-story dormitory where Jenna lives. So Tony got out his ladder and he and Jim installed the antenna on the roof and connected it to the radio in Jenna's room. Thankfully they allowed a wall penetration for the coax, something that had been a concern for a long time.

At that point, Jim got on the phone with Gary, who was listening on his radio in California and also watching the Reverse Beacon network, gave feedback while Jim tuned and transmitted on various bands. The antenna and the station turned out to be excellent performers on 40 through 10m, tuning fine and getting reports from NA as well as DX. The roof where the antenna is located is the highest point around, and the dorm is on a hill. The antenna lies generally in a North-east to Southwest direction, and it propagates well in all directions. As a bonus, her noise floor is very low. We should all be so lucky in our modern age of rampant RFI.

In all of this, Jim was amazed and gratified at the support and assistance from AIDB and E.H. Gentry people in helping their student Jenna get on the air from her dorm and continue her excellent trajectory as a well-known CW operator. Jenna, in turn, takes great joy in operating from E.H. Gentry, thus adding to the fame and furthering the cause of this well known and highly regarded institute for the deaf and blind.

Jenna's first contact with her new station was George, NE5A, who was also her advisor in the CWops CW Academy when she was starting out. A delightful coincidence! Since then, she's been on the air every day, making contacts worldwide and is now a CWops advisor herself. And she is indeed a first-class operator, including QRQ, something that many hams only dream of achieving. Check out her YouTube channel, QRQ Maniacs [Ref 2].

Jenna has a bright future ahead. She's currently taking classes at Central Alabama Community College, focusing on computer science. She then plans to attend a university to obtain her BSCS degree, and has a particular interest in assistive technologies. Jenna wishes to thank some of her Elmers, particularly CWops advisors NE5A and AJ1DM, and her dad, KO4WSU. We in the ham radio community are glad to have helped her along in some small way.



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sc

The Endeavour Of CW

Ciemon Dunville GØTRT (CWops #3429)

It's quite a journey, learning the language of Morse code. After graduating from the CW Academy, reaching the pinnacle of competency, able to have a QSO at 25 wpm the achievement had been unlocked.. hadn't it? It had taken some time and a lot of daily effort to get to that point. But then like most newly "qualified" people you realise pretty quickly that the achieved level of competency is just the beginning of the life-long endeavour.

We all have our different journeys, there are a lot of people that have the most amazing skill in sending and receiving CW, equally there are a great many that find it really hard. But the common theme is that we embrace the endeavour. That initial academic pursuit of learning the characters quickly morphs into a pursuit of improvement, an increase in accuracy, speed, duration, and all the different uses of CW, each with their uniqueness. The rubber-stamp, the POTA, the QSO party, the contest, the DX chase, the ragchew; all using CW but all completely different ways of communicating with the code.

And then there are the tools. So you've "mastered" CW on your paddle, but if you swap that Kent out for a UR5CDX, or even a Begali, you'll need an amount of time endeavouring to get your speed and accuracy back whilst you adjust to your new tool. Then of course you get bitten by the bug (pun intended) and then there's a Vibroplex that you have to re-learn sending on because it's semi-automatic, you only get a stream of dits, not dahs. Of course, that means your lambic keying is now useless... You learned how to use lambic keying didn't you? Well as we're going old school, why not invest in a straight key? Oh the angst of your completely manual CW sounding truly awful because there really is no help sending good code with a straight key (other than more practise). Let's not mention single blade paddles, they just start an argument.



The final CW tool is the keyboard. I know, I know, I can hear the haters yelling about it not being

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CW, but using a keyboard for sending CW is absolutely part of the journey and endeavour of the art and language of communicating using the code. Hearing call signs and having them accurately appear in your log through your fingers is as much a skill as sending with a straight key, or that blasted bug. It's just different.

But of course, having learned the code, bought all the morse keys, and connected it to your radio the endeavour continues, frequent sending and receiving practise is a must just to maintain that 25 wpm barrier we set ourselves back in the day. Obviously, getting on the air is the best way to enjoying CW in our own way -- be that short sharp and fast, or over 30 minutes or more, our endeavour continues.

After my question to our email group, I had some great feedback about all aspects of what I've written -- the long journey over 70 years from straight key to iambic keying on a paddle, and using all the other types in between, some of them homemade! There are some strong opinions about what's right, and what people shouldn't be doing in their journey which is kinda odd; shouldn't we all be just encouraging each other, even if it's whilst watching people paddle into the same mistakes we did? Those single blade paddles came up; apparently they really are faster, and serious cw operators really must make the shift. Dual paddles without iambic keying is also a thing; who knew!? And the final point was that we're all getting older, and some people are fighting through their failing ears or arthritic joints to keep their CW alive; that transition to a keyboard isn't for everyone. So if the person you're having a QSO with sends something that isn't the best CW, it is quite likely that they are doing their best in their endeavour to keep their code alive. Enjoy that QSO.

CW operators are quite the bunch, we know how vast this simple part of our hobby is. We tend to talk about it a lot, wear the t-shirt and the "dit dit" hat. It's our passion and we can't help but ooze our love of Morse code. But what about you? Have you considered what powers your CW endeavours?

sc

The \$1 Screw That Cost \$10,000

[Bruce Campbell, W8HW](#) (CWops #958)

You've probably heard the old tale about the engineer who charged \$10,000 to fix a machine:

\$1 for turning the right screw and \$9,999 for knowing which screw to turn.

I found this story (the original published in *Life Magazine* in 1925 - 100 years ago?) and copied it below for you. May it be an inspiration to all of us to wish to know and learn. What a story!

Bruce Campbell, W8HW

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You've probably heard the old tale about the engineer who charged \$10,000 to fix a machine:

\$1 for turning the right screw and \$9,999 for knowing which screw to turn. Well, it's not just a legend — the engineer was real. His name was Charles Proteus Steinmetz (1865–1923), a brilliant mind in electrical engineering.

One day, at Henry Ford's River Rouge plant, a massive generator broke down. None of Ford's own engineers could figure out the problem. So, Ford called in Steinmetz. When he arrived, Steinmetz asked for only three things: a notebook, a pencil, and a cot. He spent two days and nights listening to the machine, jotting down calculations. Finally, Steinmetz requested a ladder, a tape measure, and a piece of chalk. He climbed up the generator, took a few measurements, and marked a spot with an X.

Turning to Ford's engineers, he said: "Remove this panel, unwind the coil exactly here, and take out 16 turns of wire." They did — and the generator roared back to life.

A few days later, Henry Ford received a bill from Steinmetz: \$10,000. Ford, surprised by the amount, asked for an itemized invoice. Steinmetz replied:

- ⇒ Marking the spot with chalk: \$1
- ⇒ Knowing where to mark: \$9,999

Without a second thought, Ford paid the bill.

This story was later documented by Jack B. Scott, the son of one of Ford's employees, in *Life* magazine in 1965.

Steinmetz was only about 4 feet tall, with a hunched back and uneven gait — but behind his unusual appearance lived one of the greatest scientific minds of the era, a friend to Albert Einstein, Nikola Tesla, and Thomas Edison.

From [Smithsonian Magazine](#):

In 1922, Thomas Edison came to visit Steinmetz. By then, Edison was nearly deaf, and Steinmetz tapped out a message on Edison's knee in [Morse Code](#). Edison beamed, and the two continued their silent conversation in front of bewildered reporters.



Hamfest Exhibiting: Lessons Learned

[Christian Herter](#), KF7WX (CWops #3040)

Dear fellow CW enthusiasts,

Let me share my experiences representing CWops at a local ham radio convention. Frequent CWops exhibitors will likely find this summary of events to be a stinging example of failure to take advantage of the experience of others. I will not dispute this. All the misery you are about to read could have been avoided had I been better prepared.

Now some background.

In my modest corner of the world, CWops is largely unknown. A small group of our club members have stations here, but outside of those, few local operators would recognize the CWops logo. This needed to change. I decided it was time for our club to join the other exhibitors who regularly attend. I conferred with CWops leadership who endorsed my plan.

In an email to the conference director, I indicated my intent to attend as the sole CWops representative. He was thrilled and confirmed that club tables were provided free of charge.

After careful consideration, I compiled a list of items necessary for a good display table (extension cord, computer, handouts, etc.). I did not have a banner, and that was critical. I inquired about the availability of our official CWops banner. It was available.

A week before the conference, I learned that the official CWops banner was, in fact, not available, which left me scrambling to find an alternative. Local print shops are expensive. A small 2 ft by 3 ft banner costs an astounding \$100 to \$200, and there were no guarantees it would arrive before my deadline. However, online stores offered much more competitive pricing and did guarantee on-time delivery.

"Signs, Signs, Signs¹" was one of the shops suggested by several AI search engines, and it had excellent reviews on Yelp. They seemed desperate for my business. Perhaps they could sense I was also desperate. Their quote was an astounding \$23, which included expedited shipping. This is where I learned that shipping guarantees are a fuzzy business. On conference day, I was still bannerless. Careful study of the sales agreement led to more frustration as I discovered a sentence buried in the fine print explaining that delivery times were only rough estimates. There was no other option available for a professional banner, which left me with the final, unprofessional option. I used my laptop to generate a very small banner that was slightly better than nothing. With the ink still drying, I loaded up my truck and drove to the convention.

Arriving early, I found only heartbreak. There was no table space. I located the conference coordinator, who had completely forgotten about our email discussion. Annoyed, he explained that it was my responsibility to confirm table reservations, turned and vanished. He reappeared a few minutes later, grabbed me by the arm and dragged me up to the second floor of the exhibition hall. Hardly stopping to breath, he tugged me, not so gently, toward a single dusty table against a distant wall. "Yours." He pointed, turned, and again vanished. I never saw him again.

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Let me explain how bad this situation is. The first floor is exciting. There is continuous vibrant activity, and people are laughing and smiling. All are happy. Some are dancing. This is where the results of the prize drawings happen. You can get brand new Anderson Powerpoles® at unbeatable prices and “buy-one-get-one-free” ferrite ring bundles. There are once-in-a-lifetime deals around every corner.

Compared with this, the second floor is asleep. By the time attendees have seen everything on the busy and bright first floor, they are exhausted and broke. Few have the energy or inclination to drag themselves upstairs. Those who do look lost and dazed as they pass my grim, joyless aisle. They show no emotion and avoid eye contact. Their bodies are here, but they are not.

It was not fate that positioned me here, in a location that was only marginally better than not being there at all. Fortune favors the prepared, and I had not been prepared.

Most other people were well prepared. I saw that the other club tables were also located on the second floor, but very far from my solitary corner. They were all positioned right off the central staircase, and their flashy displays were the first thing guests from below would see. I noticed attendees stopping at those tables. There is laughter, handshakes, head nods. They turn to see what else is interesting on the second floor and quickly run back downstairs.

The atmosphere darkened further as many of my fellow, exiled exhibitors, realizing the futility of their lot, sighed, packed up and left. A tumbleweed rolled by as they disappeared. I decided capitulation was the best strategy for me as well. I prepared to abandon my post and join the fun downstairs, where I could drown my sorrows in trays of delicious, gently used electrical components.

Then something wonderful happened. After lunch, traffic through the dim second floor aisles started to pick up. Rejuvenated by vile, low fiber convention snacks, and relieved of their burdens from the morning, operators began to fill the aisles. They found their way to me.

I was experiencing a phenomenon invisible to attendees but well known by exhibitors. Exposure to excessive stimulation often leads to an unsustainable state of euphoria. This is likely an effect of increased central nervous system dopamine. Dopamine reserves are finite, however, and when they run dry, there is a rapid loss of energy, motivation and interest in anything, except napping. However, this is a temporary state and quickly resolves with food, rest and naps. It was happening before my eyes. Suddenly and unexpectedly, my lost, gray, and dusty, aisle was awake with enthusiastic amateur radio operators. Reanimated hams, along with late arriving attendees, were quickly ascending the steps, sometimes two at a time. And suddenly, I am busy.

I enticed visitors with the challenge of RufzXP, and provided philosophical arguments on the dangers of FT8. I introduced and explained the mission of our CW Academy and demonstrated proper CWT exchanges. I led a lively round table discussion that focused on illustrating the importance of CW as a vital operational mode. In the final hours of the convention, I had given away all the handouts and contact cards.

I left smiling.

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That night, as my voice recovered, I made an action item list for next year:

- Get an elaborate banner. Order it now. Make it bigger
- Send several reminder emails to the convention organizer prior to the conference, confirming the location of our table. Confirm it again the day before the doors open
- Recruit local CWops personnel to staff the booth with me. One person can't do it all and look good.
- Provide a few extra chairs at the booth for weary operators
- Design a simple but bold phrase, print it on 8 x 11 sheets, tape them conspicuously in highly visible locations everywhere. Be prepared to deploy again when the coordinator rips them down
- RufzXP becomes a *contest*. Brand new Anderson Powerpole® packs go to the winners.

It will be a different game next year.

Reference

¹Completely made up to protect the identity of the supplier.



SC

Going To Hamvention 2025?

Watch for photos of Hamvention in the June issue of Solid Copy.

But...I need your help:

- **Take photos at the CWops Dinner**
- **CW Academy Advisors...meet after dinner for a group photo**
- **Take photos of our CWops Exhibit (Hertz Building, #5102)**
- **"Did you see that at Hamvention?" Take that pic and share it with us. Serious, crazy, or um, questionable (hi hi)**

New Members

Trung Nguyen, W6TN

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

<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>
3720	5Z4VJ*	Andy	3724	K3UZ*	Bill	3728	AI5IN*	Martin
3721	K9EZ*	Ken	3725	VK6VZ	Steve	3729	GØAYN*	Ian
3722	WS4K*	Eric	3726	W1NV*	Mike	3730	KN6RDC*	Chris
3723	W2ANZ*	Jon	3727	WA8YWG*	John			

* Lifetime member

As of May 6, 2025:

Need Sponsors: VA3ICC, N2EC

Invitations Extended:

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

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

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

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 2025 results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

GW2CWO	ON5CFT DK3IV	2E0GUK OH6CW	G9AOE I5ECW	M0MCL	EU1TN	G0CZE	MM0NJC
JG1UQD	R1FVW	JO1UFB					
JJ1FXF	JG1BGT(3) ZL2JU KE7LOY	JJ0SFV(3) JQ3FRX JE1TRV	JA4IJ N6RO JP1JZR/1	JL2SQK(3) 7L2VPL JR3FOX	JG7FYG(2) VK2DVA JO1UFB	JA4MRL VK4BGR	JQ1QHL JA1DVD
JK1QYL	JQ7CWD JQ1QHL	JJ0SFV(3) JG1BGT(2) JM1MKH	JN1MET JH5ASR JR3FOX	7L2VPL(2) JQ3FRX JL2SQK	JA4IJ 7K1TSV JR0DKG	JA5FGC JL2SQK JK1WCW	JL2SQK(3) J11CJJ
JM4AOA	7K1TSV JJ0SFV	JA4IJ JK1WCW(2)	JA5FGC JN1FAO	JA5IVG JO4FER	JA6TSJ JQ3FRX(2)	JF1OLT JQ6EQD	JH2VEP JR2BOE
JO1DGE	7K1TSV JJ0SFV(3) JR2AWS	7L2VPL(3) JK1PWT JR4TAG	JA4OIN JK1WCW N6TI	JA5FGC(2) 7K1TSV	JA5IVG 7L2VPL(3)	JG1BGT(6) JA4OIN	J13VMM JA5FGC(2)
K8UDH	AE5ES	NU0I	K7LDB	K7RO	VE2GDI		
KV8Q	K4NU						
M0WDD	DL4SST G4JKO	EA3BV HA5AEK	G0EQC M0IYP	G0UBE MM0NJC	G3SES MW0AXD	G4BMH OZ1LUQ	G4FOC PA0Y
W2XS	VE1AXJ OE3IAK	K8MPH WA3VSO	NX3V	WK3A	G3MCK	KR2Q	N2WJW
W5DT	KB9CC	KC1VAS	WD8BIL	AK0Z	N0DNR	WB9UDL	
W7IY	KC3LUC	N4GEB	KK4RF	WA4ALK	G3XKQ		
W8OV	N7IKM	W2TP	NN0D	AA5AD	W5CBP	K0WTL	W0JCB
7N2XZB	JM2LOF(2) JF2EVE JR0DKG	JH1USR JS2OVO JH4WUI	BG2IAC HL5JZ JP3TWV	JH1LRO JS2RLB JAUYP	N6TI HL1MIM JN1MET	JJ0SFV JS2NFB JR2BOE	JG1BGT JA4IJ

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Giving Back Operating Schedule - 7 PM Local												
October - April: 40m & 80m May - September: 40m & 20m												
Frequencies: 7.035 - 7.039, 3.535 - 3.539, 14.035 - 14.039 MHz JA - 7.028 +/-												
UTC+10	UTC+9	UTC+7	UTC+3	UTC+2	UTC+1	UTC/BST	UTC-1	New York	Chicago UTC-5	Denver UTC-6	Los Angeles	Hawaii UTC-10
MON												
VK1CWO	JØ1DGE							W2XS				
TUE												
	JR1WYW	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO		WE5P	K8UDH	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
	7N2XZB								W8OV			
WED												
	7J1ATG							N8DD				
THURS												
	JJ1VNV			SV2BBK				KV8Q	N5OT	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
								W7IY				
FRI												
	JK1QYL			SV2BBK		GW2CWO		N2GSL	AAØYY		K6RB	
						MØWDD						
SAT												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											
	JG1UQD											
SUN												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											



CW Academy

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

Bob and Roland are focusing on updating the Fundamental and Intermedia curricula, and are turning over this column to the Advisers this month.



What is your motivation for being a CW Academy Advisor?

NM5M, Eric #974: I'm motivated to be an advisor because I want to share the joy of being a CW operator with other amateur radio enthusiasts. Over the years, I've had many students demonstrate their proficiency on the air after attending sessions I've led. Ultimately, the goal is to get students making contacts, and I've seen many become successful in doing so after completing the beginner course.

I encourage all members of CWops to be ambassadors for the CWA program. Please ensure your local clubs are aware of the organization, the training methods, and the guidance provided by advisors in the CW Academy.

K8XCO, Char #3543: I knew that I wanted to teach CW almost from the beginning. It was such a fun, amazing way to communicate and I wanted to share it with everyone. I started out by co-advising in a Fundamental class to get my feet wet and then took on my own class. I love the Fundamental level because it seems like that is when the passion for CW really takes hold and the students are given the tools that give them a solid foundation for learning. Advising is a fun and incredibly rewarding experience. I highly recommend it.

VE3INE, Mary #3588: *"Teaching and learning promote and enhance each other."* — quote from an ancient Chinese essay on education and teaching. Teaching gives me the opportunity to learn how people learn. Besides the aspect of mutual benefit, I like the advisors' group where advisors exchange their teaching ideas and share their files.

PE2V, Vin #3594: My CW journey is just started (June 2023) but since one year I struggle a lot with tinnitus so the whole CW world collapsed for a certain period for me. Leaving the CW speed 'as is' and become a CWA Advisor to give back what CWops gave me, is how I keep the fun of doing CW. I like to spread the word and the fun, and to help enthusiastic OPs to learn morse code and to get on-air with it.

My first semester as Advisor was Beginner in Jan/Feb 2025 and this May/Jun the second for Fundamental. I really enjoy it. It gives me a lot of energy to help other OPs.

WA3AER, Ted #1879: I became a CWA Advisor to give back to the organization that got me solidly entrenched in using CW and inducted me into the CWops ranks. Initially I advised Intermediate classes when there was a crying need for Intermediate advisors. Another CWA student and I both volunteered to be advisors and were accepted. After running my first semester's classes I felt it important to conduct an online meeting of Intermediate advisors to share their

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experiences and to coordinate/improve the course materials. What this led to was the development of the Fundamental level course, because students were coming into Intermediate lacking head copy skills. I ultimately switch over to doing Beginner level classes to expose students early on to ICR and have them ready for the Fundamentals course.

AJ1DM, John #1973: I originally signed up to be an Advisor because being a CWA student had enhanced my enjoyment of CW so profoundly. After I initially congratulated myself on generosity in "giving back," I soon learned I was receiving far more than I was giving. Helping others become better CW ops has made me a better CW op. Helping others obtain more joy from the hobby has helped me enjoy the hobby more. After 18 semesters I remain every bit as excited about advising as ever.

MØKTZ, Enzo #3206: I started advising to help fellow CW learners going through the same hurdles I had bumped into while I was trying to make sense of the Code. I have advised Intermediate and Advanced students, focusing primarily on conversational CW (guess why? HI). I have really nothing to teach them, but I always insist on pushing and pulling advisees out of their comfort zone, in every possible way. And they are amazed at what they manage to do if they just dare to try. The most rewarding feeling is being there when their brain 'clicks' and the Code magically makes so much more sense to them. Having a chat with a past advisee is the best type of QSO you can have.

N9EEE, Dick #3113: I teach the Beginners session because I enjoy the raw enthusiasm and energy that new students bring as they discover a new aspect of the hobby. It's exciting to see them embrace the practice and skills necessary to learn Morse code for amateur radio, and to witness the early stages of a lifelong passion. Nurturing growth in others is deeply rewarding, as it allows me to give back what I once received from my own CWA advisors.

SC

CW Academy

Session Dates

January / February

May / June

September / October

Learning Levels

Beginner

Fundamental

Intermediate

Advanced

<https://cwops.org/cw-academy/cw-academy-options/>



CWops Tests (CWTs)

[Rich Ferch, VE3KI](#)

As of May 1, we had completed 72 of this year's 210 CWT sessions. There are three members who have reported scores in all 72 CWTs so far: K4PQC, KO4VW and WF4I.

In total, there have been 17,879 claimed CWT scores reported to 3830scores.com this year, with a total of 1,075,461 reported QSOs (of course, most QSOs were reported twice, so the actual total number of QSOs that took place is about half this number). The median score is 49 QSOs, while the arithmetic average of all submitted scores is 60 QSOs, both down slightly from last month.

As usual, the most popular of the four CWT sessions has been the 1900z session, with an average of 355 participants in each 1900z CWT. The 1300z session is next with an average so far this year of 328 participants. The 0300z session is considerably less popular, with an average of 229 participants, while the 0700z session has had an average participation so far this year of 81.

The trend of decreasing participation continues. The monthly average numbers for the first four months for each session are tabulated below (the April numbers include the 0330z and 0700z sessions on May 1). The numbers in parentheses are the year-over-year percentage changes from last year's numbers.

	1300z	1900z	0300z	0700z
January 2025	326 (-9%)	360 (-11%)	256 (-9%)	80 (-13%)
February 2025	340 (-5%)	384 (-1%)	253 (-5%)	83 (-12%)
March 2025	335 (-10%)	356 (-8%)	215 (-8%)	82 (-14%)
April 2025	316 (-16%)	327 (-12%)	194 (-17%)	80 (-14%)

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich VE3KI (CWops #783)
CWT Manager



CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland](#), WØTG



Monthly Update

During April, 14 additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program is currently 205.

The **ACA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of April 2025 have **KR2Q** in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 220 QSOs. The top ten ACA totals this month are: **(1) KR2Q, (2) AA3B, (3) KY4GS, (4) K3WW, (5) N5RZ, (6) KO4VW, (7) N5TJ, (8) KC7V, (9) K7QA, and (10) NA8V**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 535 QSOs.

The **ACMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of April 2025 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **KR2Q** by 364 QSOs. The top ten ACMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) KR2Q, (3) N5RZ, (4) K3WW, (5) KY4GS, (6) OM2VL, (7) K7QA, (8) N5TJ, (9) KC7V and (10) NA8V**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 1732 QSOs.

The **CMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of April 2025 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **K3WW** by 3486 QSOs. The top ten CMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) K3WW, (3) N5RZ, (4) KR2Q, (5) N5ZO, (6) DL6KVA, (7) NA8V, (8) W1RM, (9) F6HKA and (10) VE3KI**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 6558 QSOs.

The number of participants who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more DXCC entities remained unchanged this month at **92**.

The number of participants who have accomplished CWops WAS grew to **269** this month with the addition of **ND9M**.

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

CWops Award Tools Participation

At the end of 2024 we had 280 active participants in the Member Awards Program. As of May 1, 2025, we have 205 active participants. If you have not yet submitted any logs for 2025, 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 2024 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.

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All scores categories on the page will then show the final scores and standings for the end of the selected year.

The Searchable and Sortable Table can graph your current year's ACA scores by date and allows you to compare your progression to that of others. Check the Plot button for the calls you wish to see plotted and they will all appear on the same graph.

The CWops Award Tools website main page provides a means of printing your CWT Participation Certificate. You may request a downloadable certificate by clicking the "CWT certificate download" selection at the top of the page. For more information about CWT Participation Awards, please go to <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/>.

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.

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Here are the Top 100 ACA, ACMA and CMA QSO totals as of January 1, 2025.

ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
1	KR2Q	1526
2	AA3B	1306
3	KY4GS	1248
4	K3WW	1141
5	N5RZ	1112
6	KO4VW	1041
7	N5TJ	1017
8	KC7V	1004
9	K7QA	998
10	NA8V	991
11	KG9X	957
12	AA2IL	921
12	K1VUT	921
13	W4CMG	910
14	OM2VL	895
15	WT9U	851
16	F6HKA	823
17	K9WX	794
18	W9ILY	782
19	DL6KVA	779
20	NJ3K	776
21	N7US	767
22	W8FN	761
23	EA6BF	741
24	N5KD	739
25	N4DW	717
26	KC3M	707
27	K1AJ	697
27	KW1X	697
28	KM4FO	677
29	VE3TM	676
30	W0UO	668
31	K1SM	663
32	K3QP	648
32	WN7S	648
33	WT3K	644
34	K1DJ	643
35	W5AL	634
36	N9FZ	626
37	K3ZA	624
38	K0WA	618
39	N5XE	617
40	KW7Q	616

ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
1	AA3B	4187
2	KR2Q	3823
3	N5RZ	3185
4	K3WW	2961
5	KY4GS	2907
6	OM2VL	2678
7	K7QA	2579
8	N5TJ	2538
9	KC7V	2474
10	NA8V	2455
11	KO4VW	2402
12	K1VUT	2069
13	KG9X	2062
14	DL6KVA	2007
15	WT9U	1895
16	AA2IL	1831
17	W4CMG	1810
18	EA6BF	1629
19	K9WX	1627
20	F6HKA	1600
21	W8FN	1590
22	K1AJ	1498
23	N7US	1496
24	N4DW	1482
25	W9ILY	1458
26	N5KD	1452
27	NJ3K	1430
28	N5XE	1418
29	WS7L	1333
30	KW1X	1331
31	KM4FO	1290
32	KC3M	1275
33	WN7S	1270
34	N2UU	1242
35	EA6EJ	1222
36	SM6CUK	1217
37	VE3TM	1211
38	W5AL	1210
39	KW7Q	1207
40	K1DJ	1201
41	W0UO	1189
42	W0VX	1182
43	AF5J	1156

CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
1	AA3B	14810
2	K3WW	11324
3	N5RZ	10508
4	KR2Q	10326
5	N5ZO	10203
6	DL6KVA	9623
7	NA8V	9605
8	W1RM	9439
9	F6HKA	8949
10	VE3KI	8252
11	K3WJV	8228
12	OM2VL	7966
13	K7QA	7852
14	KG9X	7779
15	KC7V	7686
16	N7US	7595
17	W9ILY	7413
18	WT9U	7041
19	K1VUT	6959
20	W0VX	6861
21	N4DW	6855
22	K3JT	6695
23	K9WX	6633
24	KY4GS	6478
25	N5TJ	6349
26	K6NR	6130
27	SM6CUK	6055
28	K1DJ	6053
29	N2UU	6014
30	W4WF	6001
31	N1DC	5995
32	K4IU	5947
33	WT3K	5929
34	WN7S	5781
35	9A1AA	5640
36	AA5JF	5488
37	W8FN	5483
38	G4BUE	5457
39	W0UO	5347
40	AC6ZM	5295
41	KO4VW	5269
42	VE3TM	5255
43	K1SM	5235

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ACA

41	EA6EJ	615
42	F5SGI	610
43	WU6P	608
44	ND9M	607
44	W1RM	607
45	N9UNX	603
46	AA5JF	598
47	WS7L	595
48	VK2GR	594
49	AF5J	593
50	N3CKI	585
51	K3JT	584
52	VE3KI	577
53	N2UU	573
54	KV8Q	567
55	K6NR	562
55	W4WF	562
56	WE4AUB	555
57	DL5XL	553
58	K4TZ	545
59	SM6CUK	538
60	N2EIM	529
61	W0VX	528
62	K4IU	521
63	VE9KK	519
64	AC6ZM	511
65	W9CF	510
66	K4GM	495
67	VE3MV	493
68	NE5A	491
69	M0RYB	476
70	G4PVM	470
71	KT4XN	465
72	OZ3SM	462
73	DF7TV	460
73	KB8GAE	460
74	W3WHK	459
75	K1RF	448
75	VE3KIU	448
76	AF4T	443
77	KT5V	440
78	W0TG	439
79	DM6EE	437
80	N1DC	433
81	G3NKC	432
82	GW0ETF	430
83	KY0Q	422
84	NA4J	421
85	G3LDI	407

ACMA

44	K1SM	1119
45	WU6P	1106
46	ND9M	1097
46	W4WF	1097
47	VE3KI	1095
48	W1RM	1082
48	DL5XL	1082
49	AA5JF	1074
50	F5SGI	1066
50	K3JT	1066
51	WT3K	1029
52	K6NR	1009
53	N9UNX	1005
53	M0RYB	1005
54	K3ZA	1000
55	VE3MV	976
56	K4IU	974
57	N3CKI	966
58	G3NKC	960
59	W9CF	959
59	OZ3SM	959
60	VK2GR	958
61	W0TG	951
62	KV8Q	950
63	WE4AUB	945
64	N9FZ	944
65	G4PVM	938
66	K3QP	935
67	K4GM	923
68	K4TZ	910
69	AC6ZM	852
70	K0WA	837
71	W3WHK	826
72	VE9KK	821
73	DM6EE	817
74	KY0Q	809
75	AF4T	807
76	K1RF	794
77	K9CW	776
78	WS1L	758
79	N5ER	755
80	KT4XN	729
81	NE5A	728
82	G3LDI	724
83	KB8GAE	715
84	DF7TV	711
85	HB9ARF	700
86	VE3KIU	683
87	WB5N	681

CMA

44	NJ3K	5189
45	GW0ETF	5072
46	N5XE	5042
47	AA2IL	4911
48	NA4J	4892
49	F6JOE	4874
50	WA4JUK	4775
51	OK1RR	4742
52	K4GM	4693
53	K3QP	4674
54	WS7L	4673
55	K1AJ	4577
56	KT5V	4546
57	VE3MV	4481
58	VK2GR	4413
59	I2WIJ	4406
60	OZ3SM	4402
61	EA6BF	4370
62	DJ5CW	4280
63	W6AYC	4276
64	K0WA	4244
65	KM4FO	4202
66	N5KD	4180
67	KY0Q	4098
68	DF7TV	4089
69	DM6EE	4057
70	W0TG	4022
71	F5SGI	4018
72	W4CMG	4001
73	WS1L	3984
74	G4PVM	3969
75	AF5J	3957
76	NE5A	3945
77	N1EN	3944
78	K0TC	3939
79	W3WHK	3933
80	KV8Q	3888
81	WU6P	3869
82	ND9M	3841
83	KK0U	3824
84	W2CDO	3785
85	M0RYB	3774
86	KW7Q	3688
87	AF4T	3665
88	SM0HEV	3577
89	EA6EJ	3565
90	HB9ARF	3561
91	K4TZ	3550
92	N3CKI	3436

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ACA

86	K9CW	402
87	W2VM	401
88	N5ER	395
89	KK0U	394
90	HB9ARF	389
91	WB5N	386
92	KE4CR	376
93	K2YR	374
94	K9CPO	371
94	WV4AM	371
95	N5ZO	370
96	AC3RA	366
97	KQ4E	364
97	NB7O	364
98	WA5PFJ	362
99	W8EWH	355
100	LY2MM	352

ACMA

88	N1DC	671
89	OK1RR	666
90	NA4J	653
91	LY2MM	645
92	NB7O	631
93	GW0ETF	618
94	W2VM	616
95	W8OV	609
96	N5ZO	607
97	SP7OGP	603
98	KK0U	600
99	K2YR	596
100	SP4JFR	592

CMA

93	K3ZA	3376
94	4X6GP	3274
95	NN4K	3234
96	K2YR	3220
97	G3LDI	3199
98	KR3E	3198
99	W2VM	3092
100	W7GF	3090

73, Bill WØTG (CWops #1873)

CWops Operating Awards

SC

QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

Enzo, MØKTZ

May is the month of **QTX-30**, the CWops event focusing on ragchewing on the great 30m band. I am sure many of our fellows are getting this opportunity to re-discover this band: a 50 kHz chunk reserved for CW and narrow-band digital modes; context-free by design, that is often underutilised, but it is actually a great place for consistent continental ragchewing activity. And is also very good for some good DX, as on the long path between Europe and Oceania, early morning UTC, all year long!

Remember that all the 30m QTX/mQTX QSOs will count double towards your May total, and all the ops who get at least 30 combined QTX/mQTX QSOs on 30m during May will get a special commemorative certificate. So let's crack on and make 30m alive with some great CW music.

Some of the comments we read more often in the QTX/mQTX Soapbox are focused on our fellows trying new keys, or new keying methods. Indeed, there seems to be some kind of renewed interest towards some aspects of manual keying, and many of the QTX/mQTX contributors report on the joy of learning to use, or keep using, a bug or a sideswiper as their key of choice. Far too many of us tend to use almost exclusively one type of key, or even one single key specimen, for

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their entire CW life. Without doubt, sticking with the same key allows you to really master THAT precise type of key brilliantly. But I am sure everybody would be surprised at seeing what we can achieve by challenging ourselves with something new, something we haven't tried yet, something that forces us out of our "comfort zone".

And what can drag you out of that cosy comfort zone more effectively than being "strongly encouraged" to use a different type of key every Thursday over ten weeks, for a lot of pleasant conversational CW sessions? This is exactly the aim of a nifty activity promoted by the CW QRS Italy Telegram group (<https://cwqrs.it/en/welcome/>). The event is called "1-Key Nights". It happens on Thursdays, unfolds over ten weeks, and aims at fostering CW ragchewing skills and experimentation with all the five "canonical" types of keys: straight keys, sideswipers (cooties), bugs, single- and dual-lever paddles (the latter two attached to electronic keyers, obviously!).

The rules are simple: you have to use a specific type of key in turn every Thursday, make conversational contacts between 1800-2400 Italian local time, and then report your score for the week. So if the selected key for that week is the sideswiper, any QSO made with a sideswiper in the set interval of time will score 4 points (independently of the key used by your correspondent, or of whether the correspondent participates to the activity or not), while QSOs made with other keys will score 1 point. Each QSO counts if you have exchanged at least some information about the key you are using, e.g., including its make/model, year of construction, technical characteristics, or anything interesting you have tried doing with it. Obviously, honest reporting is left to the honourable behaviour of the participants, as nobody will check what kind of information you exchanged in a given QSO. Additionally, a valid QSO must not begin less than 10 minutes before the previous one started, as a way of ensuring that participants spend some quality time in each QSO, and avoid "rushing through it" in a contest-style run. The good news is that scoring is made super-easy by an online submission system: you put the ADIF file for your current week, and your score is computed automatically.

I believe this kind of activities are not just an incredible amount of fun. They actually are of fundamental importance to guarantee that diversified key mastery is pursued and attained by as many operators as possible.

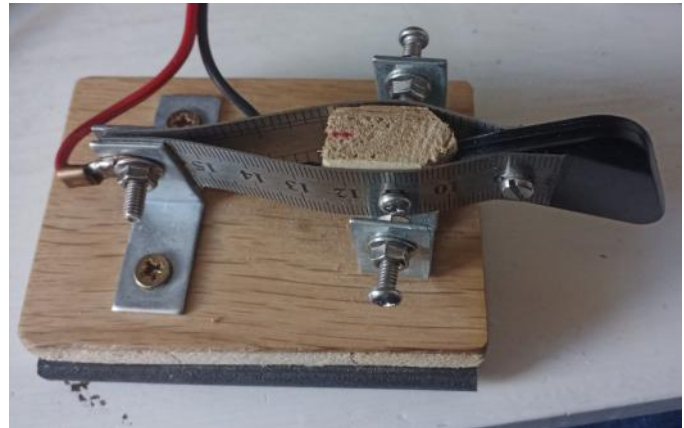
I know, some of you will object that owning many keys is an expensive way of ploughing through this hobby (and our XYLs and OM's will agree wholeheartedly). However, you don't necessarily need hundreds of different keys: you just need a "canonical collection" consisting of five of them. Obviously, if you decide to go for the complete "Sculpture" line plus the Intrepid bug by Piero Begali, or for a full set of keys by Alberto Frattini, then you will be talking about a few thousands quid in total (and there is no doubt you'd get a wonderful set of great-quality everlasting keys, but still...). If instead you opt for postponing that commitment until you know better what kind of key you would like to own (or how much pension you'd get upon retirement, if any HI), then nowadays it is very easy to find good-quality new and second-hand keys on that international auction website. And more often than not, it is quite possible to get very good bargains as well, for a small fraction of the few thousands quid we mentioned above.

A good straight key (a J-38 or a Kent or a Czech military, or similar) can be found for anything between 30 and 70 quid; a passable single- or dual-lever paddle can be obtained for as little as 50-

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70 quid; and a good sideswiper can be built from scratch with simple materials for about 10 quid or less (see pictures).



A cheap bug in good conditions is admittedly much harder to find, but it is not unusual to see auctions for a Vibroplex Original or a Champion closing off around 100 quid. I got my Lionel J-36 from a friend for 50 GBP, and it works great. If you take into account that you already own and use at least one of the keys mentioned above, then you can have a “canonical set of five CW keys” on your desk for less than 200 quid. It might look like a sizeable amount of money (and it is, indeed), but if you spread the cost over several months/years and you manage to consistently keep your name off the naughty-list, Santa might get you exactly the key you need to complete your canonical collection and practice some new skills HI.

This month we welcome to the QTX/mQTX family Felix DL5XL, who has been noting down his QTX/mQTX scores since January, but has only recently discovered that we don't do automatic reporting from the web tool. So his totals so far appear as his April's entry. A shout out goes to Les MMØUMH, who had nothing to report this month, but nevertheless took the effort to let us know. Really hope to see you soon on the bands, Les!

Enjoy the bands.

72/73 de Enzo, MØKTZ (CWops #3206)

2025 Total Number of Hours Worked: 1096

(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	113.2	KC0VKN	45.7	K8UDH	15.7	GW0ETF	5.3	DF7TV	2.7
KY4GS	101.2	AA0YY	43.5	F5IJ	10.3	AB0WW	5.3	KB4DE	2.5
WS1L	94.8	K9OZ	37	DL5XL	10	M0SDB	5	MM0UMH	2.3
VE3WH	86.7	KG5IEE	35	N9FZ	9.7	W8OV	4.5	W6QX	1
M0KTZ	67.2	G0FOZ	34.8	N0BM	8	KE4I	3.8	W3WHK	1
N8AI	65.3	M0MZB	34.5	AE4GS	7	K4LFL	3.8		
KB6NU	50.8	DK9HE	31.5	VK3QB	6.8	PE2V	3.5		
KR2Q	47.8	N2DA	17.3	N9EEE	6.7	PG4I	3.3		
N7HCN	46.5	AJ1DM	16.7	SV2BBK	5.3	N5LB	3		

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WS1L: I had a nice chat this month with Craig, GØKVL. We were both using bugs and discussed I1QOD, Alberto's fine examples. Also a very nice chat with K3AQ, Luke on QSL cards and QSLing.

N9EEE: It's always fun and interesting to ragchew with a DX station. I'm looking forward to the QTX-30 to learn more about the 30-meter band propagation and the dynamics of its operators.

AAØYY: had a QSO with AA8SH/M and he was using the microphones up/down buttons to key his radio. He was mobile but also left handed. He said he couldn't use the doors arm rest to support a normal key so this is what he used. I never would have guessed one could have such a good fist with this method of keying. Good job Clark!

DL5XL: I enjoyed a few good ragchews last month, including four on 60m - a band which I have not really paid much attention to in the past. Highlight was a 40m contact that lasted over an hour with Enzo, MØKTZ, in which we touched on a variety of topics.

N7HCN: Enjoyed catching up with Phil NEØS, also DX QTX with JH1VIG, Kaz in Ibaraki. I'm fortunate to use CW as a main way of keeping up with several friends like W6JL and WA6MCL, as well as my father in law K6YUF.

W6QX: Still trying to improve ragchewing skills thanks for the 4 hams who worked me last month. Work travel should be slowing and I have a goal for more QTX QSO in May.

K4LFL: Caught the POTA Babe calling CQ from her home station - got into a nice chat with her.

KG5IEE: Many fun QSOs discussing pictures from our QRZ pages. Really nice rag chew with Dave AI6QZ who was operating portable from the shore of San Francisco Bay. He lives on a sailboat on the bay.

NØBM: Another handful of nice QSOs. Highlight of the month was a half-hour QSO with a ham just beginning his CW adventures. I was surprised to see that the RCC Certificate could still be downloaded from ARRL, so I downloaded, copied and mailed one out. Encourage others to do the same.

WA4IAR: Been busy with projects around the house. Been doing a lot of flying and was gone on a short vacation.

N2DA: Very nice QSO with new CWops member Eric, WS4K. Also, FB ragchews with sked buddies John AJ1DM, Steve WA3JJT, Frank W4TG and Mike WA3PYU.

N8AI: N6TI educated me that he was using Japanese Morse code in his previous QSO with JAØKSB. No wonder I could not copy it! The Japanese military used it until 1960.

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DK9HE: it simply makes much fun even to explore the more on the bands.

GØFOZ: Managed a few great chats this month on topics ranging from antennas to motorbikes; even logged a QTX with the QTX manager :-) 73 GØFOZ.

KR2Q: April was a busy month at work and not enough time for radio or QTX fun. It happens. Thanks for the great QTX and mQTX Qs this month.

AJ1DM: As always, ragchewing with my friends is fun. This month I had the extra pleasure of a nice ragchew with my friend and CWA co-advisor Eric WS4K, who subsequently went on to become a member of CWops. FB Eric!!73 de John AJ1DM

VK3QB: Moved QTH so no QSOs for the first 3 weeks of the month. It's very nice to be back on air - now to improve the antennas.

MØMZB: All of my QTX QSOs this month were held with a bug key. I started learning to use a bug in March, so it has been an interesting month trying to get to grips with a new keying method. Learning to use a bug has been great fun though. Longer QSOs, combined with checking myself with PCW-FistCheck have been great for helping me develop ability with a bug.

MM0UMH: Sorry, nothing to report this month.

KCOVKN: Spring has sprung, and, cut into operating time! But have enjoyed some nice ragchews on 40 all month.

QTX Certificates

Upon reaching the 100, 500, and 1000 QTX levels, members can download and fill out one of the certificates below.



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QTX - April 2025

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
VE3WH	50	KB6NU	25	DL5XL	14	N5LB	5	ABØWW	2
N8AI	41	MØKTZ	22	N2DA	12	N9EEE	4	GWØETF	1
WS1L	40	DK9HE	20	KG5IEE	11	NØBM	3		
N7HCN	36	MØMZB	19	AJ1DM	11	W8OV	2		
KY4GS	36	AAØYY	18	GØFOZ	10	W6QX	2		
WA4IAR	33	KR2Q	14	K8UDH	6	PE2V	2		
KCØVKN	25	F5IYJ	14	AE4GS	6	K4LFL	2		

mQTX - April 2025

Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX
MØKTZ	54	MØMZB	22	DK9HE	12	N7HCN	6	NØBM	3
KY4GS	46	KR2Q	21	VE3WH	9	PE2V	5	ABØWW	3
N8AI	33	AAØYY	19	GWØETF	9	AE4GS	5	W6QX	2
GØFOZ	32	WA4IAR	14	K8UDH	8	W8OV	4	VK3QB	2
DL5XL	32	KG5IEE	14	PG4I	7	KB4DE	4	K4LFL	1
WS1L	25	KB6NU	12	AJ1DM	7	N9EEE	3		

QTX - Total 2025

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
WA4IAR	281	K9OZ	111	GØFOZ	44	NØBM	13	VK3QB	5
WS1L	218	MØKTZ	102	AJ1DM	39	N5LB	9	SV2BBK	3
VE3WH	215	KR2Q	92	K8UDH	35	W8OV	8	GWØETF	3
KY4GS	168	AAØYY	88	F5IYJ	31	MØSDB	8	W6QX	2
N8AI	143	DK9HE	84	N9FZ	19	KE4I	8	W3WHK	2
KCØVKN	137	KG5IEE	68	N9EEE	15	K4LFL	7	PG4I	1
N7HCN	132	MØMZB	64	DL5XL	14	ABØWW	7	MMØUMH	1
KB6NU	112	N2DA	52	AE4GS	14	PE2V	6	DF7TV	1

mQTX - Total 2025

Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX
KY4GS	271	AAØYY	85	K8UDH	24	KB4DE	15	K4LFL	9
MØKTZ	199	KB6NU	81	NØBM	22	MØSDB	14	KE4I	7
WS1L	133	MØMZB	79	AJ1DM	22	DF7TV	14	W6QX	2
GØFOZ	121	KG5IEE	74	DK9HE	21	AE4GS	14	W3WHK	2
WA4IAR	117	DL5XL	32	N9FZ	20	MMØUMH	12		
N8AI	106	VK3QB	31	PG4I	18	W8OV	11		
KR2Q	103	SV2BBK	26	ABØWW	18	N9EEE	10		
VE3WH	90	GWØETF	26	N7HCN	15	PE2V	9		



My Story: New Member Introductions

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

Bill Kuzio, K3UZ CWops #3724

I want to give a big thank you to John N3WT for nominating me to CWops and JJ WA3NZR, Dave N4IN, and Pierre VE2PID for sponsoring me for this membership. I am grateful and very appreciate.

I got interested in short wave radio at age 11. My father had a short wave radio and worked on electronics as a hobby, repairing TVs and radios.

I was introduced to amateur radio at age 12 by a neighbor, Paul Eck, K3UWJ (SK), and then got my Novice license at age 13 in 1965. WN3EFJ was my first callsign.

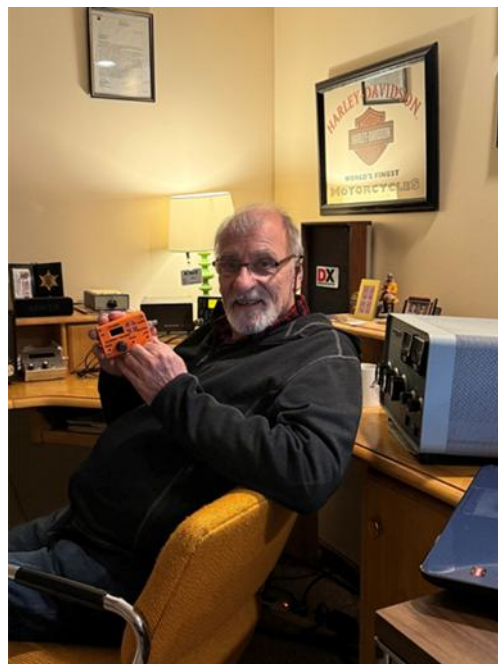
I loved doing projects building transmitters, using parts my dad had. I took my general exam in 1966 and then treated myself to a Vibroplex original bug at the cost of \$30, which was a lot for me at that age. I did CW as a Novice on 80 and 40m and was extremely excited to get my first QSL card in the mail.

I attended Votech school for 3 years for electronics, and after graduation got my 1st Class Radiotelephone license. I then landed a job as a part time engineer at a local radio station and upgraded to Amateur Extra and obtained a 2nd Class Radiotelegraph license. I also worked at a 2-way radio shop installing and repairing commercial 2-way FM radios.

I retired at age 55 from Penn State University as a Senior electronics technician, and continue to live nearby in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania with my wife, Barbara.

I am a member of DXCC, and worked over 200 countries on CW, my favorite mode. I check into ECARS occasionally, and also the local VHF net. I like to tinker with and am interested in QRP radio. It's enjoyable seeing how many miles you can go on the least amount of power. My latest purchase was a truSDX XCVR also known as the little orange box.

The biggest project I have ever tackled was rewinding a HV PLATE XFMR out of my Globe King 500C, 40 years ago, by hand!



David Vale, SV1RUX CWops #3679

Born Southend-on-Sea, UK in 1950, attended Riversdale Technical College, Liverpool, 1965 - 1967, qualified as Merchant Navy Radio Officer and began a 25-year career at sea.

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All ship/shore communications were done with Morse code. I later worked as a Marine Superintendent for 5 years before settling down ashore to a job in IT with a large engineering company in Greece.

From 2008, till I retired in 2015, I worked for NATO as civilian technician in Italy and the UK maintaining HF transmitters & receivers. I became interested in Amateur Radio while working in Italy and, in 2011, sat the ARRL exams for Technician, General & Extra Class and passed all three in one sitting. I was issued the callsign AB3NJ that I later changed to N3GZ. While working in the UK I was issued with callsign MØHJR and in 2016, received my current Greek callsign SV1RUX.

Since September 2016 I have made more than 44,000 QSOs, worked 308 DXCC, 99.9% CW, and all that with a very modest 100 watts and a small Delta Loop. I live in the northern suburbs of Athens about 25 km from the city centre. Our house is surrounded by tall pine trees, not ideal for DX. I have been married to my wife, Aiki, for over 30 years.



Eric Kennard, WS4K CWops #3722

I am very honored and excited to be a member of CWops, 3722!

I became interested in radio in the 1970s. Sanford School in Hockessin, Delaware had an FM Broadcast station, WZZE. I obtained my third-class commercial license and operated the station. My first amateur license was KA3GVI. I operated as a Novice using a Viking II transmitter that was made the year I was born, and a Heathkit receiver. I belonged to the Chesapeake Bay Amateur Radio Club. I got my bachelor's degree at Wilmington University and my graduate degrees from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.



My next upgrade was to Technician as N3BRT. I moved to Florida permanently in 1979. Living in Groveland, FL, I joined the Hams of Green Swamp (HOGS), the Lake Amateur Repeater Associa-

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tion (now the Lake Amateur Radio Association) and the Orlando Amateur Radio Club. I developed an interest in CW operation. I learned CW incorrectly and couldn't break 10 wpm. I took the 13 wpm test for General 8 times at FCC offices.

In the early 1980s I joined the Navy/Marine Corps Military Affiliate Radio System. Callsign was NNNØZEU. Many retired Navy operators took an interest in helping me learn Morse code differently. Instead of 10 wpm characters, they were using 21~25 wpm characters. With a few months of daily net operations, I quickly learned Morse code and soon could operate at 25~30 wpm. When I went to test for the Extra license, I passed with 100% copy. July 1983, I received the call sign WS4K, so I am an original! I bought a new Ten Tec Corsair because all my mentors were running Ten Tec and I was operating QSK all the time.

My wife and I met through amateur radio. In 1984 Bob Weaver N4WX (SK) introduced me to my future wife, Cynthia. Bob was a minister and married us in 1985. Cindy obliged my radio habit by earning her Novice license, KC4HPI. Her favorite QST article was written about an amateur whose wife made him take boxes of radio parts to hamfests where he carefully left them on others' tables when they were not looking. She read me that article several times. I guess that was a hint. We lived and operated in Cocoa, Florida for several years. I was a deputy sheriff and Cindy taught Self Contained Ed in elementary school.

In the year 2000 we moved to the beach to get our children into Satellite High School, a premier high school. Unfortunately, we moved into an antenna free HOA neighborhood.

Once the children were grown up and moved away, we retired and moved to Palm Bay, Florida. This time I got property with no amateur radio tower restrictions. I am running an Elecraft K4D and a KPA1500 amplifier. I am using a My Antennas EFHW. I have installed a 40-foot tower with a multiband Mosley Pro67-B3 Yagi on top. I currently belong to the Platinum Coast Amateur Radio Society. This is the club that puts on the Melbourne Hamfest, an event I have gone to since 1980. I am a Florida Contest Group member. I am new at contesting, but I enjoy it.

My interest in CW never waned. I joined the Long Island CW Club in 2020. I was drafted as an instructor after a few months. I will send a QSL card if requested. I can be contacted at ericskenard@msn.com or WS4K@arrl.net.



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