



Solid Copy

The International CWops Newsletter

February

2012

Issue No. 25



CWops "CWT"

8, 22 February 2012

Start time:

- 1300Z
- 1900Z
- 0300Z (9/23 Feb.)

1-hour each session

Exchange name/number (members)

Exchange name/SPC (non-members)

CWops "ragchew bash"

Immediately following each CWT at 1400Z, 2000Z and 0400Z

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

CWops Officers and Director

Officers

President: Pete Chamalian, [W1RM](#)

Vice President: Art Suberbielle, [KZ5D](#)

Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3JT](#)

Treasurer: Craig Thompson, [K9CT](#)

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Bert Donn, [G3XSN](#)

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Webmaster: John Miller, [K6MM](#)

Editor/Publisher: Rob Brownstein, [K6RB](#)



From the president...

Membership and Dues:

I want to thank you for renewing your membership in CWops. If you haven't done so already, please take a minute and go to <http://www.cwops.org/paydues.html>, where you can do so quickly. Take advantage of the extended membership dues structure and pay for 5 years, or become a life member and never worry about it again.

Your CWops team is committed to doing everything it can to meet the needs of the members and to continue the stated mission of promoting and furthering CW. We know we can't be all things to all people but we hope you feel that your membership has value.

We are always looking for new opportunities to support CW operating and teaching. If you have an idea that you would like to share, please do. As an example, the QTX Activity Award was born out of the discussion about more ragchewing.

Your dues help CWops continue the effort of supporting CW through grants made to clubs and individuals via the ARRL Foundation and through direct gifts to groups that teach CW.

It also help us promote CW activities such as the CWT and CW Open. We are always on the lookout for opportunities both domestic and international, to offer our support. We are especially eager to know about opportunities outside the US. If you know of one, please let Jim, N3JT (n3jt@cwops.org) or Don ,N1DG (don@aurumtel.com), know about it.

Events and Activities

Don't forget the CWT's set for February 8 and 28. If you have never tried one, come join the fun. Each is a quick, one-hour event in which you will find plenty of your fellow CWops members. Here's a great opportunity to meet members you haven't worked, test a new antenna, try your hand at QRP or just about anything else. How many can you work in an hour? How many can you work on one band?

After the CWT has finished, stick around and find a fellow member for a rag chew. Do it for 20 or more minutes, and the QSO will qualify for the QTX Activity Award. Details and results submittal can be found here: <http://www.cwops.org/members/qtx.html>

Gatherings:

This May will bring not one but two opportunities to meet fellow CWops members and other CW enthusiasts. First, we will have the North American CW Weekend, May 4-6, 2012. A special rate has been arranged at the Fairview Park Marriott Hotel near Washington, DC. More details to follow, but this event is typically a relaxed, fun time for CW enthusiasts and their significant others to get together and have some fun. Of course, May in Washington is a wonderful time of year and there's plenty to do and see.

The other event is the Dayton Hamvention (May 18-20, 2012). CWops will have a booth again this year so plan to come and enjoy all the fun that comes with an event like this. As an aside, I will be there - the first time I've been to Dayton since 1965, and I hope to meet many of you.

Look to Better Weather

February in the Northeast US is snowy, cold and not much fun if you aren't a winter-sports enthusiast. But now is the time to get serious about planning your new antenna, or that antenna project you've been putting off. Better antennas will result in only one thing - more CW QSOs!

See you on the bands!

73,

Pete, W1RM

From the VP:

ACA/CMA Report

It's a new year, so we start from zero with the ACAs while we continue to accumulate in the CMAs.

73,

Art, KZ5D

CALL	ACA	CMA
N5RR*	188	2132
KZ5D*	168	1931
AA3B*	152	2735
W5ASP*	132	638
K6RB*	122	1394
N2UU*	117	1176
W1RM*	96	1825
NN6T*	56	510
K6DGW*	46	674

From the treasurer

Financial Report

2011 Financial Status

Income:

Dues: \$28,846.77

Expenses:

Administrative: \$1200.16

Promotion/Marketing: Dayton and Visalia: \$1,050.03

Donations (CW Projects): \$1,250.00

Net funds: \$ \$25,346.58

Balance in account: \$ \$31,460.47 (as of Dec. 31, 2011)

Debts: \$0

73,

Craig, K9CT

From the secretary

NEW MEMBERS REPORT

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to our Club. Those with asterisks are LIFE members! Congratulations to all!

995	OD5NJ	Gaby
996	KB2ADB	Art
997	K7EK	Gary
998	SM0BYD	Hans
999	SM6FKF	Fredy
1000	N4DD	Dennis
1001	N7UN	Guy
1002	NC7M*	Marc
1003	K5JX	Rene
1004	K7SV	Lar
1005	W2LJ	Larry
1006	AA9K*	Bob
1007	KF6T	Jack
1008	W2CS	Gary
1009	SV0XCC/9	Pol
1010	JA1LZR*	Joe
1011	N4PJ*	Art
1012	KK3F	Pat
1013	NQ6N	Matt
1014	JA1GZV*	Motoaki
1015	K4GMH	Mike
1016	K9VP	Roger
1017	K2TQC	Bill
1018	JF1TTN	Masa

Fellow Members

Our first two years have seen an array of CW-based initiatives that rival any other club's efforts and successes. We can all be proud that our volunteers and treasury have worked in concert to create the Academy, supported ARRL grants for CW purposes, given money to WRTC efforts, contributed to rebuilding a CW station destroyed by floods in Thailand, underwritten awards for CW achievement, etc.

Our broad financial goal is to secure sufficient funds to be able to generate revenue for grants. But we do have money available for achieving our multi-faceted mission of fostering CW activity and training. To do that now and going forward, we need your help. Do you know of a club that needs funding for CW training? Do you know of a school that teaches ham radio and needs money for CW learning materials? Do you know of enough young (or older!) hams or want-to-be hams who would take a course in CW? If you had the materials in hand to support such an effort would you undertake it?

For these kinds of needs, CWops is there to help. We can handle the awards, the activities, the preparation of materials like the CD (nearing completion) that "sells" CW, and other forms of CW activity support. But we need our members to help us identify CW training funding beneficiaries. If CW is to continue, we need young CW operators. It's up to us to find them and do what we can to train them.

73,

Jim, N3JT

From the editor



Starting a ham-radio club is tough. Most local clubs, like the one in my town of Santa Cruz, try to be all things to all people and end up as jacks of all trades but masters of none. That's because among the ham population in Santa Cruz there are four contesters who are also the sum total of CW skilled operators. The rest are shack-on-the-belt types.

In California there are two contest clubs – Northern California Contest Club (NCCC) and Southern California Contest Club (SCCC). But for some reason, NCCC is the one you read about. That's not to say the SCCC has no contesters. It does. But most are in contesting for personal glory and the club just can't seem to generate a core of team players they way that NCCC does.

I've been in NCCC since 1997 and it's a great club. It's also focused on a single purpose – contesting. It nurtures hams who want to be contesters, pulls together teams of hams to compete with other contest clubs in contests where teams can play. The dues are twice what CWops collects but a fair portion is used for awards and trophies.

When the small group of CW operators got together to create CWops, we too had a singular focus. This club would be of CW operators, for CW operators, and by CW operators. Exclusively phone or digital operators need not apply. But we weren't willing to limit it to CW contesters, or CW DXers, or CW ragchewers. CW was the common denominator, and how you liked to use CW was your choice.

Almost from day one, we established CWT – a mid-week, one-hour, contest-like event. It has now taken on a life of its own. Last year, we also launched CW Open, a truly unique, worldwide, CW contest. Also last year, we came up with the QTX program to foster CW ragchewing. But, perhaps, our most important program, created last year, is the CW Academy. If we’re going to be “bridge builders” and leave a legacy behind to hams of the 21st Century, then we all know what has to be done. We’ve got to somehow interest new hams, wannabe hams, and hams who are rediscovering CW to acquire the skills necessary to have a great time on the air.

CW Academy is still a newborn. It has a core of advisors (we can always use more!) and a growing list of those who want help getting their CW ‘sea legs.’ While we’re grinding out the Qs in a contest, or piling up on the latest DXpedition, we are having great fun. And, that’s important. But, imagine a time when there are no more CW operators. The OTs have moved on to that station in the sky, and the hams who got licenses when CW was no longer required are still playing around with HTs.

There’s a logical reason to embrace CW. It requires skill and it’s fun. But as with so many things today, there are a zillion different messages vying for one’s attention. If we’re going to grow that new group of CW operators, we’ve got to tell them why CW is so satisfying, and we’ve got to show them – by example! – what we’re talking about.

My hat is off to our advisors who have begun working one-on-one with CW aspirants. But think back to what it was like when you first started in the 1950s or 1960s. There was a novice band. If you listened to QSOs on the novice band, you heard ragchews. If you listened to QSOs on the general bands, you heard ragchews. What do you hear today? If it’s a contest weekend for a popular CW contest, you hear lots of snappy Morse with staccato QSOs. If there are one of more ‘rare’ DX stations on you hear mayhem. When do you hear ragchews?

If our hopes and aspirations for CW Academy are to bear fruit, then the band segments from x.050 and up have to become the new novice band. People have to learn their CW skills while engaging in ragchew QSOs that help them achieve those skills. Why do I say “ragchew?” Because DXpedition Morse is a cacophony of calls signs and an occasional “5nn tu.” Contest QSOs are call signs and anticipated exchanges. With contest pre-fills, all you have to do is get the call right and make sure nothing else has changed. In a ragchew, after the opening niceties, you have no idea what’s coming. And that’s precisely why ragchewing is a great way to develop solid Morse skills.

Our treasury is growing to a point where we have the resources to get the message out, to provide grants, to develop unique tools. But what’s needed also is something that money cannot buy – your presence, on the bands, doing more than contesting or DXing. Think about it.

73,

Rob, K6RB

CW Academy

The New Year has added about eight new students to the ranks, so there must be some out there with CW on their new year's resolutions.

We are now having some issues with advisors. Not only are we running low, but we are getting more than a few registered advisors declining to take on a student. This creates a delay when we have to continue to search for a willing mentor. It is also becoming more of an issue pairing advisors and students up according to preferred days, times, and band capabilities.

We still need advisors from EU land and we are starting to receive more students from that area. So, this is a call to the thousand-plus members out there to go to the CW Ops webpage and fill out the advisor form listed on the CW Academy link.

Thanks to those of you that have signed up and are currently mentoring students. And if you are registered and chomping at the bit to help one of our students and we haven't yet assigned one to you, give me a nudge with an email; jtemple@pcisys.net.

We still need more activity in the novice sub-bands that we are promoting for the Academy. I have been hearing more activity up there this month. So remember, if you work someone that's trying to learn or get back into the mode, tell them about the Academy and send them to our website.

Jay, W5JQ

Rob, K6RB

My Story

Glenn Killam, VE3GNA, CWops #457



I guess my first recollection of ham radio interest actually predates my actual involvement with the hobby. When I was a young lad of about seven or eight my dad would take me to the barber shop once per month to have my ears lowered. Next door to the barber's was the shop of Robbins' Radio/TV owned by Clyde Robbins, VE1DW (now SK).

One day I was waiting for dad to come back from somewhere and I wandered into the shop to see just what there was to be seen. Clyde was sitting behind his bench, soldering iron in hand, deep into the bowels of an old Philco or some such radio. You know the kind with the big burnished wooden cabinet and huge electromagnetic speaker. Anyhow he and

I got chatting about this and that and he mentioned the fact that he was a ham radio buff. I asked him what that meant, so he proceeded to tell me a bit about the hobby. Then my dad showed up and, lo and behold, it turned out that he and Clyde were old buddies.

The next time I went to the barber's I went on my own and my dad kind of figured that I would probably wind up in Clyde's shop, which I did. I think it was after about the 3rd visit that Clyde asked me if I would like to see his "shack." The only thing I remember was the desk with the big radios on it with lots of dials and knobs. He tried to explain them to me, but at first I was really overwhelmed. As time went on, he even let me listen in when he talked with other hams in the area. I found out that one of his best friends also had a TV shop a couple of blocks away, and one day I was introduced to him. His name was Prim McKay and his call was VE1LN.

When our family outgrew the little house in town, my dad bought an old house a few miles out in the country with a barn and about 15 acres of mainly swamp. My brother Gary and I were by that time experimenting with all sorts of stuff. We figured out that we could hook up the output of his 45 rpm record player to the pentagrid convertor tube in a BCB radio and broadcast music to the neighborhood.

When I started high school, I joined the Air Cadets and we did a tour of the local Amateur Radio Club facility. I met other chaps in cadets who also shared my enthusiasm for the hobby. One night a friend and I sneaked into the club building and fired up the old Valiant transmitter, not really realizing that we could be in serious trouble for operating without a proper license. One of the members heard us on the air and showed up a short time later with fire in his eyes. That ended that.

After leaving high school I enlisted in the RCAF and went off to basic training. After basic it was off to career training. You guessed it – communications. I learned all about the various forms of communications of the era, CW, RTTY, and even AM voice. My CW speed eventually got up to about 45 wpm on receive using a Model 19 keyboard and two fingers. Today I can still copy close to that, but only in my head.

After a less than stellar career in the air force which was cut short by an incident which will not be discussed, I returned home. A few months later, while attending school at the CNR headquarters in Moncton NB, I decided one Friday afternoon to write for my ham ticket. I walked into the licensing office and asked what was involved. The examiner said I would have a written test followed by a five minute code test – receive only. The written test consisted of questions on theory and regulations along with drawing simple circuit schematics. With my background in Electronics from school, coupled with my CW from the Air Force the test was to say the least, a breeze.

I was informed on the spot that I had passed, and was asked if I had a preference for a callsign. I scanned the list of available ones and chose the call VE1IJ. Short, simple and easy on CW. You see, for the first six months at least, we were to stick to CW on the amateur bands. After six months, and with proof of operating skills, one could be granted voice privileges above 28 Mhz. Even though I

was granted the right to use voice, it was not until many years later, in 2000, when Industry Canada amended its policies, that I actually even considered using voice. To tell the truth, I was a little mike-shy.

My first rig was a surplus AN/ARC-5 with a 1625 and a 1626 in it. It put out maybe 15 watts on 40 meters with a little tweaking. My receiver was a Hallicrafters S120 AC/DC SW receiver without a BFO. To get a beat note I used the local oscillator in a second BCB radio to provide the beat note. Not stylish but it worked. The only thing was the radios drifted like crazy. When I moved to Ontario and had my first real job, I could afford a better receiver. I purchased a Trio-Kenwood communications receiver with an RF stage and real BFO. I was in ham heaven. I also was using a Knightkit T60 transmitter with a 6DQ6B as a final tube. 35 watts on all bands. With that setup I worked the world. I logged several VK stations on 20 meter CW from downtown Toronto using a vertical dipole strung up the chimney of the house. The T60 and I were together for a very long time. It wasn't until I had been married for some time that I got an upgrade – a DX40.

In 2000, any Canadian hams who had never upgraded to Advanced were grandfathered into the rank by Industry Canada. I finally had full privileges on all bands. My brother Gary passed away that year and I inherited his 2 meter radio. I began talking to some other local hams on 2 meters and found out about a chap who had a spare FT101E which he was willing to part with. That radio became my base.

Around that time I discovered traffic handling and ARES. I began as a liaison between the local VHF net and the Ontario Phone Net. Later I got involved with NTS at the area level and today I am also a TCC station. My priority is now, as it has always been, CW. I have both a bug and an old straight key mounted on a piece of plywood which I can take anywhere and operate. I get a kick out of Field Day and an occasional contest. I no longer chase DX but if I hear a rare one, I will sometimes try my luck.\

Well that's my story. I hope a few of you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

CW FOREVER.

John Laney, K4BAI, CWops #76



I learned Morse code at an early age in the Boy Scouts. Just before Christmas 1953, when I was eleven, my father took me with him to deliver a fruit cake to one of his fellow salesmen when he worked for a wholesale electric supply house. My father's co-worker, turned out to be Dick French, W4WXW, and Dick was actually using his WWII surplus radio on 75 Meters AM talking to another ham in Marietta, GA when we arrived. Dick offered to let me talk on the radio, but I had a

classic case of “mike fright” and refused. I did leave with an ARRL license manual and other radio publications. About two weeks later, my father borrowed a war surplus BC342-N receiver from a friend and put it in my room. I listened to the foreign broadcasters some, but was drawn to the radio amateurs that I could hear on 80, 40, and 20 meters. I listened to a lot of CW, both commercial and amateur. My father also got a hand key and hooked it up with a buzzer so I could practice sending CW. I visited a neighbor, John Webb, W4DDQ, and again refused to actually talk on the radio. Another visit was to Jerome Layfield, W4GIO, a cousin of one of my first cousins who worked a station in Tripoli, Libya on 20M AM while we 12-year old boys listened fascinated. Jerome had a huge wire beam (wires attached to a wooden elements on a wooden boom). That cousin later became K4FRP and now is W0NSZ.

In the fall of 1954, W4WXW asked if I wasn't ready to take my Novice test, so I did and passed it. A week before the license came in the mail, I met for the first time a second cousin who was about three years older and had also just passed his novice test. We lived only a few blocks apart. In November, 1954, my cousin Dick Black received his ticket as KN4AYC (now AA4RF) and I got mine a week later as KN4BAI. My Elmers, W4DDQ, and Gene Grant, W4RWB, loaned me a home built Novice transmitter and a 40 meter folded dipole and I spent most of the rest of November working people in town on the 40M novice band (then 7175 to 7200 kHz). Finally, it was determined that one of the wires on the folded dipole had been broken the whole time and that was the reason that nobody out of town could hear me. That antenna repaired and an 80M dipole built and erected, I had a ball as a Novice working many Novices that I still work today, including WN5GZR (now W5ZR) and Abe, W3DA (then WN4FRO). One lifelong local friend from those days was KN4ADU who became KR4M before he passed away.

While I was still twelve, I studied for and passed the Conditional Exam (same as General, but given by volunteer examiners when the applicant resided more than 100 miles from an FCC examining point). That test was given by another Elmer, Jimmy Walker, W4VX. He made a CW QSO on the 80M Novice band and, while taking the exam, I copied the QSO information in my head better than he copied it himself. But, one very valuable tip came from that experience. I noticed that Jimmy was writing his notes (copying) in long hand. It had never occurred to me that you could copy CW any way but in block letters like the Army CW course book showed. Jimmy said that you needed to use cursive in order to copy on paper at a significant speed. I started doing that right then and eventually won a CW copying contest at an Atlanta hamfest at 55 WPM. Of course, it wasn't a very long message, but I could never have come close to that speed while printing. Eventually, I copied messages on a mill (military type typewriter), but made too many typing mistakes to use one in competitions.

Of course, I could hardly wait for arrival of the license without the “N” in it so I could get on AM phone and talk to those hams I had been listening to for the past two years. It arrived on April 13, 1955, and I did make a lot of friends among the phone operators, but didn't long find AM to be very satisfying and returned largely to CW operation. My father bought me a homemade CW/AM

transmitter that a local ham (Cicero Bryan, W4INZ) had constructed and I used it with the BC342N for about six months. During that time, while on 75 meters AM talking to W4RWB, we were called by Jack Bramlett, W4PIM, who was trying to recruit members for the GA State Net (GSN) that met nightly at 7 PM on 3595 kHz. We both agreed to start checking in. Jack also needed a NCS on one night and I volunteered to take that assignment. Unwisely, I didn't check into GSN until it was my night to be NCS. I made a real mess of that net, but listened to the older hands and learned how to do it right by the next week. I still check in to that net (now 7 and 10 PM ET on 3549 kHz) today. I got really active in traffic handling, going to the 4RN, the Eastern Area Net (EAN), and even eventually becoming the Monday night NCS for EAN. That led naturally into activity in the ARRL CD Parties, quarterly weekend contests (on CW and phone) for hams with ARRL "appointments" such as OO, Official Relay Station, Official Bulletin Station, Emergency Coordinator, etc. I held all of those appointments at one time or another including the section Route Manager (manager of GSN) and Assistant SCM. I was also active in CW nets on Air Force MARS for years.

I had participated as a Novice in the ARRL Novice Round Up in January 1955 coming in second in GA to an XYL WN4HYV. I always suspected that her OM, Al Corey, W4OCG, the net manager of GSN, might have helped her just a bit to beat me. But, I was just looking for an excuse. My CD Party career started in July 1955 and continued until they were discontinued. One of the real big CD Party winners at that time was Ken, K2EIU (now N6RO), but I was occasionally able to come in first in the country in CW CD Parties. Other Elmers from those early days were Homer Connell, W4DDY and General Leland Smith, then W4YE/W4AGI and later W5KL and the father of the present W4YE.

My first ARRL SS was in November 1955. In those days, they were over two weekends and you could work, I believe, 40 hours. By that time, my father had bought the ham gear of W4WWF, who was leaving the hobby for a while, and I had a rack mounted home brew KW rig driven by a pretty unstable old Hallicrafters HT18 exciter and the receiver was a SP400X. I had heard the well known GA contester, Bill Ley, W4FGH, working AM Phone in the 1954 ARRL SS, so I elected to work my first SS on phone. At least at first. I soon grew tired of Phone and changed to CW. I submitted an entry for both modes, neither being of any great consequence. From that time on until the SS weekends were separated by mode, I worked CW until I had my 40 hours in and then a little phone.

I enjoyed operating in any contest I could find and looked forward to the contest column each month in CQ Magazine. In 1962, one of my high school friends, Rusty Epps, K4BVD (now W6OAT) got our local radio club to sponsor the first Georgia QSO Party. Rusty ran it for two years and turned it over to me when he went off to MIT (and later Harvard) for college. But, before either of us finished high school, Rusty and I went to Atlanta and passed our General Class tests (in lieu of the Conditional class licenses that we had previously). From the time we had Conditional tickets, we had all privileges of frequencies, power, and modes available to any amateur. I attended Mercer University in Macon, GA from 1960 to 1966, obtaining undergraduate and law degrees. In my first quarter, I met another ham who was a freshman and, after that first quarter, we became

roommates. We set up a small station first in his room and then in our room using primarily a Globe Scout and for antennas, bed springs, window screens, and small end fed wires. We kept up with GSN, MARS some ragchews and weekend contests in a very small way. The roommate was Jim Jordan, K4QPL, still very active in CW and contest activities in Raleigh, N.C. and a regular at the N4AF/NY4A contest station. In February 2010, Jim and I operated together at Howie's station M/M for ARRL DX CW, operating a contest together for the first time since May 1968. Interestingly, Howie's original call was K4PQL. While in college, my local Elmer was Hack Treadwell, K4DKJ, who introduced me to the wonders of 160 Meters and gave me my first transmitter for that band.

My biggest Elmer was my father, J.T. Laney, K4VGI. He didn't get his ham ticket until about four years after I did, but he was always supportive of my interest. He and my mother (also a very supportive non-ham) passed away in 2001. They never made a lot of money, but worked hard and put me and my younger brother through college and law school.

During high school and college, I had been in ROTC and transferred to the Army JAGC Corps after graduation. I was lucky to be stationed at home (Fort Benning is next to my home of Columbus, GA) for a while. I had always participated to some degree in DX Contests, but not on a full time basis and not with a group. I had been mostly full time in CD Parties, ARRL SS, and the GA QSO Parties. In the fall of 1966, one of my on-the-air buddies, Dick Bentley, K2UFT, invited me to be part of a PVRC M/M station for CQ WW DX CW at the home of Dick Phelps, W4KXV. I was to be a 20M operator, replacing K3EST who had moved on to W3MSK or W4BVV. I flew up for that contest and have been serious about the big DX contests ever since. In the fall of 1967, Paul Newberry, W4YWX (now N4PN) asked me to go with him to Guatemala to work CQ WW CW M/S as TG0AA. That was a wonderful experience. The Army sent me to Korea from May 1968 to June 1969, where I was licensed as HL9KQ. I operated from my BOQ room and made 13,000 QSOs and worked the ARRL DX Contests and the original CQ WPX (then only SSB) contest in 1969 and the All Asia DX Contest and California QSO Parties in 1968. My Elmer there was Tom, HL9KD (K6QPH), who died a few years in an airplane crash while trying to search out a location for a two-meter repeater.

When I returned home from Korea, I was invited to join N4PN and others for CQ WW CW in 1969 from Curacao. I operated many times from the Coral Cliff Hotel and once from John Thompson's house on Curacao for DX contests off and on from 1969 until 1982, becoming friends with Chet Brandon, PJ2CC/PJ9EE, John Thompson, W1BIH, Dale Strieter, W4QM, the late Vic Clark, W4KFC, and many others.

After operating twice from Haiti (thanks N4XR and HH2MC), I started sub-leasing a cottage with antennas and rigs on Barbados from my friends Steve, K4FJ, and Jack, K3KG in 1987 and worked most CQWW CW contests from there single op all bands high power 48-straight hours until 2001 when the station was sold to W2SC. K1XM took me to Dominica for J77J in 1995 and then in 2004 Fred Dennin, WW4LL, took me to Bonaire for an ARRL 10M contest and I have been back to the

PJ4G station many times since, often with Jeff Clarke, KU8E and other friends. I try to go there twice a year these days, once for CQ WW CW and once for another contest, some times single op, but usually with a small group. I will observe my 70th birthday this year while returning home from the CQ WPX SSB contest there M/2 as PJ4Z with WW4LL, NA4BW, and W4DXX.

I didn't apply for the Good Will Games contest operation in Seattle in 1990, but, at the suggestion of my high school friend, W6OAT, did apply for and was selected for WRTC 2006 in San Francisco. My partner was Bill Fisher, then KM9P and later W4AN. We came in second. Our referee was to become our good friend Chas, W6UM. In 2000, I was again selected for WRTC-2000 in Slovenia and took as partner Dave, K6LL. Dave had been part of the third place team in 1996. We came in slightly below the middle of the pack. In 2002 for WRTC in Helsinki, Finland, W4AN was selected and I was his partner. We finished in the top half. In 2006, by a strange turn of coincidences, I was selected for WRTC in Brazil and my partner was KU8E. We slightly improved on the finish in Finland. Each WRTC was a wonderful experience to meet and get to know great ham contesters.

I had never gone to Dayton until 2000. I guess I was waiting for some one to say, "Come on, let's go." So, in 2000, Jimmy Walker, WA4ILO, said that and I went and had a wonderful time. Since then, I have tried to go every year that I didn't have a conflict. I enjoy meeting all the hams I have worked on the air and usually end up hoarse from talking too much. I especially enjoy the CW pile up competition in the KCDXC suite. I seem to have some ability and have brought home some nice prizes.

Over the years, I have been privileged to operate from other multi op stations in contests, including Hugh Valentine, N4RJ, Bill Fisher, KM9P/W4AN, Rick Dougherty, NQ4I, Tom Rauch, W8JI, Paul Newberry, N4PN, Fred Dennin, WW4LL, Dan Street, K1TO and the fabulous 6Y1V station on Jamaica.

I have also enjoyed the association of other hams in the local Columbus Amateur Radio Club, GSN, the Georgia Cracker Radio Club, the former Dixie Dxers Contest Club, the Southeastern DX Club, the South East Contest Club, and the Alabama Contest Club. And also the larger organizations of ARRL, FOC, QCWA, OOTC, CWOps, QRPARI, FP, NAQCC, SKCC 10-10 International and others. I always try to support their on-the-air activities. I serve as custodian of the SECC Bill Fisher Memorial Club Call, W4AN.

Jeff, KU8E, and I have done many (mostly CW) mobile contest operations in the AL, FL, GA, and TN QSO parties. I have been QRV mostly with my local club (W4NGS/W4CVY) in nearly every Field Day since 1955.

I was in the Army in Korea when incentive licensing was implemented and got busy with a law practice and raising a family and wasn't ever able to learn enough technical stuff to pass the Advanced or the Extra Class license tests until 2009. At Dayton that year, KU8E and WA4ILO insisted that I try a new computer based license study program for the Extra by

www.hamtestonline.com (K1RV). Thanks to that program, I was able to pass the Extra test at the Huntsville Hamfest in August 2009 after having been an appliance operator (as I still am, of course) for almost 55 years. I am really enjoying the use of those frequencies that I was unable to use all those years. Maybe I could have set a few records in something had I passed the Extra earlier.

My present equipment consists principally of two FT1000MPs, an Alpha 78 and an Alpha 91b, full power QSK CW, a TH6DXX at 55', wires, and a five element 6M beam at about 60' with the IC736 used on 6M. I use NA and CT for contest logging and rig control and key with a Kent paddle (thanks K5AB and KO4RR) with an MFJ Grandmaster Memory Keyer and a Vibroplex Deluxe Chrome Base Hand Key. K1TO is my tower man and KU8E is my local technical support staff.

I should mention that Dan, K1TO, Vic, N4TO and I set two CQ WW CW Continental records together in the multi single class. The first was from 8P9Z in 1999 for North America and the second was from PJ4A in 2006 for South America and the World. Both records have now been broken. Several times over the years, I held the North America single op high power record as 8P9HT or 8P9Z.

Any success I have had is due largely to the Elmers I have mentioned in this article and others who should have been named. I thank them all.

Tom Taormina, K5RC, CWops #108



I presume that I qualify as a CW enthusiast since I recently had to have the pivot and bearings replaced in my El Key paddle that I bought new in 1960. I was indoctrinated into CW by my Elmer's K2LVP and W2OBE, who would not let me use their stations on phone until I got my first ARRL Code Proficiency Certificate endorsement at 15WPM in March of 1960. At the same time, I was fortunate to be president of the Walt Whitman High School Radio Club (Huntington Station, NY) that included members who played burnout CW on 40M every afternoon instead of baseball. The only one that is still active besides me is K3KO and we both still suffer from the CW bug (pardon the pun).

Since 1958, my life has been inextricably interwoven with ham radio. (Now) K4WSB was my next door neighbor and we were both licensed on June 15, 1959. Jack and I still exchange emails almost daily. From working high speed CW on 6 Meters with K2MUB, I met K5LZO who put 6M CW on the air from FP8CB. Chuck and I became the first Americans to operate from Tahiti in 1964 as FP8CB/FO8. We both then moved to Houston, he was best man at my wedding and we both made contesting history until his untimely death. I still get daily Facebook posts from his daughter, my goddaughter, KD5RGH.

Before leaving for Tahiti, I took K5LZO to meet my "real" Elmer, Sam Harris, W1FZJ. WA2EVX (W4AAU) and I spent many weekends and summer days at the Rhododendron Swamp VHF Society

(W1BU), where Sam not only taught us radio and antenna theory, but many life lessons that are still with me today. The first of the indelible lessons is: "If it stayed up last winter, it wasn't big enough." Second: "If you can't see it from the highway, it isn't high enough." Perhaps the most critical lesson I learned from Sam, however, is that if you can dream it you can do it. Sam's antennas were so effective, during the month we were at FO8, we worked an occasional W6 on 75M, but could work W1BU nearly every night with our KWM-2 and a trap dipole.

In Houston, I went to work for Madison Electronics while I attended the University of Houston. The owners of Madison Electronics, the Busick Family (W5GJ, K5AAD, W5MBB, N5JJ), became another part of my life story as they invited me into their ham family. During those formative years, I met Danny Weil, VP2VB; Don Miller, W9WNV; Gus Browning, W4BPD; Rush Drake, W7RM; Lloyd and Iris Colvin and a host of other DXer's and contesters who would visit the store. From those introductions, W5IGJ turned over the reins of the West Gulf DX Bulletin to me and I became a Board Member of the YASME Foundation. It was great to be working at a place where it was part of my job description was to chase DX, get on the Honor Roll and win contests!

Also at the store, I met K4DAD who would become my roommate during college. It was tough going through university days with a Collins S Line, NCL-2000 and 6 element 20M beam. I would "study" while tuning 20M CW and exchange phone calls with the Busick family when rare DX was on. Doug would tutor me in math and later help me get my job with Philco at the Mission Control Center in Houston.

At Philco, I worked my way through the ranks from building the electronics that we installed in the Mission Control Center, including those green consoles you saw on TV and in the movie Apollo 13. Working next to me was a non-ham named Grady Ferguson. He would go on to become NA5R and now W5FU. Grady is the principal in the current-day Comstock Memorial Station, but that story is yet to be revealed.

I eventually became a Quality Control Engineer and spent 14 years pioneering that discipline. W1FZJ's teachings came in handy when we decided to go to the moon and then did it. After NASA, I ran three different manufacturing companies and then launched a 20+ year career in management consulting. For the last decade I have also been an expert witness in products liability and organizational negligence. My 11th book, *Foreseeable Risk*, was published in 2011. Next year I will publish #12 with my memoirs and experiences entitled *It WAS Rocket Science*®. I continue to build my business, The Taormina Group and hope never to retire. Oh, yes. W5FU is also the CEO of The Taormina Group.

Back to the 1960's where K5LZO and I began our career dominating multioperator SS. We developed an interlock system so that we were both at separate radios at the same time while only transmitting on one. The octopus, as it became known, was ultimately outlawed by the ARRL, placing us at the leading edge of instigating change in contesting paradigms. Chuck and I went on to

influence the introduction of Multi-Two and we ultimately were co-founders (with K8CC and K7BV) of the North American QSO Party.

In 1967, I also was asked to take over the burgeoning National Contest Journal (NCJ). I ultimately went on to do three tours as editor and, until recently, held the record for tenure. During those adventures, I helped influence the evolution of contesting and hopefully became an early advocate of working within the rules, but pushing the envelope. I once wrote an article suggesting that computers might one day be a significant part of contesting. I won SS CW in 1977 using one of those newfangled electronic keyers. I helped popularize multi-single and went on to (pre-computer) develop a log checking system for band change time verification during my tenure on the CQ Contest Committee. My tenure at NCJ also introduced me to another host of testers who would become longtime friends such as W6OAT, K0DQ, W5WMU, K7JA/KL7MF, K6NA and NK7U.

In 1973 I joined the Texas DX Society and did a number of stints as President and editor of the Bullshead, the newsletter that is still published monthly present day. During the TDXS years, we continually set records in Field Day and in ARRL DX from XE2FU. We sponsored the Great Armadillo Runs of 1983 through 1986. In the first three years, we activated every county in the W5 call area during the MARAC CW contest. In 1986, the Texas Sesquicentennial, we attempted to activate every county in the USA in two weekends. While we fell short of our goal, the Great Armadillo Runs became another part of my legacy in ham radio. Also, in 1986, W5FU, K7BV, K2TNO and I petitioned the Governor of Texas for a new county to commemorate the Sesquicentennial. We managed to invent Armadillo County, TX, which existed for 9 months of 1986 and is now a deleted county.

My radio challenge from W1FZJ also became manifest when I first started building multiop contest stations in 1973. It started with 3 towers on a city lot. Then, in 1976, I leased 5 acres behind out subdivision and K5GA and I built a station that dominated Multi-Single in CQ WW DX for several years. K5ZD, K5GN and N5JJ were fixtures at the second station as they all were in college and came "home" on the weekends. It helped having N5JJ on the team because much of the hardware for the station was "requisitioned" from Madison Electronics. The saying we developed was: "Max out the back door, towers and equipment out the front door." It was at this point that my pragmatic creativity became apparent. We ultimately had four stations, Collins S Lines and Drake "4" lines, Alpha 76 amps and seven towers. Not bad for a fellow raising two sons in a 1,100' square foot subdivision house, working for a stipend on a government contract. If you can dream it, you can do it.

In the middle of building stations and coaching little league baseball, a group of us (K5MA, K7BV, K5KG) put together the one and only Texas Association of Contest Operators (TACO) conventions in Houston in 1976. It was a rousing success, but it became obvious that we would not be able to fund such an undertaking on a regular basis with just testers. That led us to form Houston Ham Conventions. From 1977 to 1983 we ran general interest conventions that were heavily weighted toward DXing and contesting. Many famous hams found their way to Houston

each October, including 9N1MM, TI2CF, KH6IJ, W4KFC and K1ZZ. This insanity culminated with the 1983 ARRL National Convention, which is still cited as a benchmark in ham radio conventions.

In the late 1970's, NA5R(W5FU) joined the Texas DX Society and we resumed the friendship we had started at Philco in 1966. He became infatuated with contesting and wanted to build the next generation of contest station in South Texas. He purchased a 5 acre parcel and we began building Radio Manvel. We had five towers up when Hurricane Alicia hit in 1983 and wiped out the K5RC/K5GA station and the new NA5R station all in one night. We started to rebuild, but divorces and business issues forced us to shut down the NA5R operation and sell all of the assets to NR5M.

Midge (now K7AFO) and I were married in 1989. We honeymooned at the International DX Convention in Visalia and at the Dayton Hamvention in 1990. She attended TDXS meetings and encouraged me to get back into contesting. I am pretty sure she has regretted that encouragement at times over the last 22 years. We bought a small ranch in Bellville, Texas and began raising cattle and antennas. She was licensed as KC5AFO and we started the Stephen F. Austin Radio Club in Austin County, TX. While we had a great radio location, we also had every poisonous snake and insect in North America on the ranch.

After starting my consulting business, K5XI challenged me to build another mega-contest station in Iola, TX. Among other firsts, we had a 240' tower for 20M with four stacked 6 element DX Engineering beams. We began competing in DX contests from K5XI and dove into the emerging world of computer logging and computer controlled radios. After a few years, Sid had to shut down Iola and moved to Phoenix. Midge and I had enough of the Texas weather and discovered our hilltop near Virginia City, Nevada, where we've lived and worked since 1997. Oh, yes, I was doing consulting work for K7BV's companies. We wound up relocating to NV as much because of our business with K7BV as for the quality of life we enjoy today on the Comstock. Once again, ham radio points my life in pivotal directions.



We decided to limit the Nevada station to just a couple of towers to allow me and K7BV to compete in stateside contests. Then we joined the Northern California Contest Club and the contesting disease resurfaced. Like malaria, it may be dormant for a while but it always comes back. It wasn't long before the station was headed for multi-two and NCCC members like W6OAT, WX5S and K6KR became regulars and close friends with me and Midge.

In 2006, I also decided to throw a 20-year reunion for the Great Armadillo Run. It was a rousing success that brought to Virginia City many of the TDXS members I had lost touch with, including

NA5R. We made a pact to restart the multiop station that we were building in Texas and that has become the Comstock Memorial Station, that we share. As they say, the rest is history, well almost.

With our ridgeline location, N6BV's terrain analysis program convinced us that stacking two 3 element 80 M beams would open a new world of DX contesting to the west coast USA. We designed a no-compromise multi-two station that, today, is comprised of 7 radios, 8 amplifiers and 24 feedlines coming into the shack.

As we took delivery of the two monopoles that would turn the 80M and 15M stacks, a few of the neighbors decided that enough was enough. We had been told by the Building Department, since 1996, that no building permits were needed for ham radio antennas. All of a sudden, they wanted us to apply for building permits for the two new monopoles. We did and the permits were granted and work began. A month later, we received a stop-work order that was effectively retroactive to 1997. That was July, 2008 and we have been fighting the good battle in Federal court ever since. When the case is resolved, we will be able to tell the "whole" story. In the meantime the monopoles and the 80M beams are lying on the ground.



W7RN continues to be active in contests, putting over 96,000 QSO's on LOTW since 2008. WX5S and N6TV are mainstays for SS and now WK6I is putting the Comstock Memorial Station on the map on RTTY. Most phone contests are dedicated to training new operators and giving back to the hobby.

In 2005 I became the first chairman of the 7th District QSO Party, 7QP. In

2007, I was honored to be inducted into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame.

The lawsuit has taken its toll on me and Midge and my appetite for operating is very small these days. While I remain in NCCC, CW-Ops and FOC, my active participation will be at a very low level until after the litigation is over. I do continue to stay at the top of the honor roll with 371 countries confirmed and the reawakening of 10 meters has me erecting Sterba Curtains for that band and operating the 2011 10M contest, part time, to 2,400 QSO's! As the Governor said, "I'll be back."

In case you were wondering, Midge and I have been back to the DX Convention in Visalia almost every year since 1990. Since we live in one of the few counties in the USA where gaming and brothels are legal, who knows what we might innovate next!

Ted Bryant, W4NZ, CWops #831



I grew up in Gallatin, Tennessee, a small town about 30 miles Northeast of Nashville. We moved there in 1955 when my dad was transferred by TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority), a federal power utility. Our home was very modest with my two brothers and I having to share one bedroom.

"CQ,CQ,CQ 40 meters
W4WGH, William Four William
George Henry". Those were the first words I ever heard on amateur radio. They came

through the earphones of a crystal radio I had gotten for Christmas when I was in the eighth grade. But they were enough. They planted a seed (virus?) that grew into a life-long avocation. The adventure began with a lot of shortwave listening and eventually getting a license with the help of my Elmer, Ray W4WGH. I can still remember sitting in Ray's garage shack on cold December nights copying code practice from W1AW through the 10-inch Hallicrafters speaker sitting atop Ray's SX-71.

I got my Novice license, KN4SXD, in December 1960. Being in high school at the time the radio budget was rather small. I did manage to buy a used Heathkit AT-1 transmitter from World Radio Labs. My parents gave me a National NC-60 for Christmas that year and I was in business. I quickly discovered that one of the most important things about building a radio station was the antenna. This started almost endless experiments with different types of dipoles, verticals and almost any configuration of wires you can imagine. And today nothing has changed. There's still that quest for "just a little bit better" antenna. Novice licenses were only good for a year then so I managed to upgrade to General the next August, dropping the "n" and becoming K4SXD. Eventually the AT-1/NC60 was replaced by a DX-100B/SX101 combination. This led to chasing DX on cw, cw traffic nets and cw contests. The old CD Parties were a favorite. I gravitated to cw because my bedroom was next to my parents' room and being on phone late at night disturbed them. But they couldn't hear me on cw.

Because of the interest in radio and electronics my interests gravitated toward an electrical engineering path in college. I entered Tennessee Tech University in 1962. But in the Summer of 1966 the Army draft called my number which led to a 3-year stint in the US Army. After basic training, advanced training led me to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. Of course that's where the

MARS/ham station K2USA was located. Spent a lot of weekends there. Those huge antennas and six studios stocked with Collins S-lines only fueled my interest in "bigger, better" radios and antennas. After completing training I was sent to Germany as part of the US Army Signal Corps for a 2-year assignment. Imagine my surprise and joy when learning I was being assigned to a US Air Force detachment for their communications support and their communications system consisted of Collins equipment (3 S-lines!) While there I managed to get a station together and was assigned the call DL4EG. Operating the CQ WW and ARRL DX contests from the "other side" was a ton of fun.

The Army was finished with me in July of 1969 and I returned stateside. That Fall I returned to Tennessee Tech to finish my EE degree, graduating in 1971. After graduation followed a career, like my dad's career, with TVA. I spent the larger part of my career in their information technology organization. I was in the telecom engineering group which was responsible for installation of telephone systems and computer networks. I got to play with all the latest technology toys. This career lasted 32 years until my retirement in October 2003.

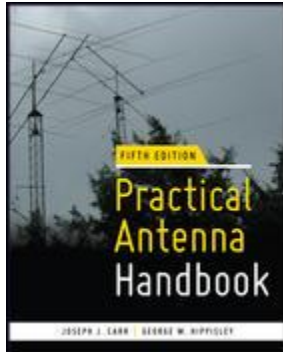
I met and married my wife, Cheryl in 1977 so naturally family and career took precedence over ham radio. But as our two kids eventually made it through school and moved away. I was able to carve out more time to play radio, but almost 20 years had passed. Then when I retired in October 2003, I became a full-time ham.

Getting involved with the Tennessee Contest Group in 1999 re-kindled my radio interests and cw contesting became a serious interest. What contesting showed me was all the deficiencies in my station. Upgrading from the 25-year old Drake C-line to an Icom 765 was like a breath of fresh air. Now the computer could do more of the work. Little did I know then that this started a series of equipment upgrades that are continuing today (one of the "secrets" of contesting: a contest station is NEVER finished!) The current station is configured for SO2R with a K3/ProIII and DX Doubler. The amps in use are an AL1200 and an older-than-dirt BTI LK2000 which has a virtually indestructable 3-1000z. But filter caps are not so durable in this amp - hi! Antennas are spread between two towers, one an 80-footer of Rohn 25G with a 2L40, 4L20 and 4L10. The other tower, another 50 feet of 25G has a 3L20 and a 5/5L stack on 15M. An 80m dipole and 160m inverted "L" finish taking the rest of the available space in my small back yard. Birds don't fly across the yard but they do sit on the antennas!

I enjoy the fellowship of our TCG and CWOps. The camaraderie is one of the things that keeps my interests and keeps me going. Looking forward to many more years in our wonderful hobby and see you all on the air soon.

Book Review:

Practical Antenna Handbook (Fifth Edition)



For those of you who have read earlier editions of Practical Antenna Handbook, you'll no doubt notice that there are two named authors, now: Joseph J. Carr and George W. Hippisley. Joe Carr passed away well before this edition was completed but because George embellished some of Joe's previous work plus added his own touch to this Fifth Edition, it now bears both names – as it should.

George (W2RU and CWops #65), known to his CW companions as “Bud,” had asked me if I might mention his book in an upcoming Solid Copy. “I’ll do better than that,” I said, “get me a copy and I’ll review it.” And, by the way, I will be happy to review any book with ham-radio relevance, by any member/author. Having written five books, myself, I know how useful it is to have someone review your book.

Now, before I read Bud’s book I have had decades of experience reading the ARRL Antenna Books and myriad articles about antennas and antenna-related topics. So, one challenge I set for myself was to see if after reading Bud’s book I felt like I had learned something fundamental and new. The answer is an emphatic “yes.” One thing I learned is why yagis with more than three elements typically add directors rather than multiple reflectors. I knew that was true; I just didn’t know exactly why.

What I particularly liked about Bud’s book is he provides both breadth and depth. But, for someone like myself who gets overwhelmed with too many equations, you can absolutely read this book and come away with very valuable and useful knowledge without having to dabble with the math. That said, it’s all there if you want and need it.

This is a hefty book that goes almost 800 pages and I liked the way it was organized. Part I dealt with background and history, Part II got into fundamentals, Part III established the building-block antennas that are components of every more complex design, and so on. The title is “Practical Antenna Handbook” and after spending several hours poring through it, I truly believe it is an apt title.

The book is published by McGraw-Hill (who published four of mine), so I’m sure it is available from several sources, including online sources. Prices may vary but the quality is solid.

Current Nominees

Need Sponsors	EA2AJB	Andres Jovan Rivero
Need Sponsors	N1BG	Fred Lehman
Need Sponsors	VK6HG	Robin Thomas Richard Norcross
Need Sponsors	N7KM	Ken Munford
Need Sponsors	W7KXB	Bill Harris

For more details about nominees and status, check the “members only” on the Website:

www.cwops.org

For information about joining CWops, check the Website under “membership.”