



Photo by K5ENS



NEWSLETTER PROMOTING **MORSE CODE** SPRING 2024

FROM HOT DOGS TO HAM RADIO

By NY2G, Alan Glasser
(previously KA2VXM)

(Originally published in CQ magazine December 1987 and updated for LICWC Spring 2024. An old story that still holds true today)

I always fooled around with "electronics" when I was a kid. The first electronic project I ever built was an electronic hot dog cooker consisting of two nails attached to the end of an old electrical cord. The idea was to wrap each of the bare ends of the wire around a nail and then insert one nail into one end of a hot dog and the other nail into the other end. Plug the whole affair into an electrical outlet, and in about three minutes the hot dog would be sizzling. (DANGER! Never do this!)

Those were the best hot dogs I ever

tasted, and my mouth still waters whenever I think of them. I also know now how foolish I was to be playing with 110 VAC in such a precarious way. I do not suggest anyone try it. There are much simpler ways to get "involved" with "electronics."

The amateur radio bug bit me when I was 12 years old and going to summer sleep-away camp in Monroe, New York back in the late 1960s. There was a special program which included a full-time amateur radio operator/counselor. His ham shack was right next to my bunk house. The first time I went into his shack I knew that amateur radio was for me! There sat a 6-foot high, 19-inch rack with all sorts of electronic stuff bolted to it. Tubes glowed a warm golden yellow and sometimes a bright cherry red. Strange noises came billowing out of a speaker which had a torn cone. And there were wires leading every which way. One of those wires led to a big pole which swayed precariously

in the wind above the shack's roof. I know now that the pole was a trapped vertical.

I don't remember the amateur's name (and if he's reading this article maybe he'll contact me), but I do remember that he always wore worn-out patched jeans. Upon questioning his dress code, I received my first lesson in amateur radio. His comment was: "Hams spend money on equipment first, jeans last." To this day I usually operate in my oldest, most comfortable, worn-out blue jeans (dungarees). I guess I learned my first ham radio lesson well.

My second lesson in amateur radio was how to receive and send Morse code. I purchased a code practice key that used "D" cell battery and had a buzzer built in. I still have that key today.

Within three days I discovered how to "get on the air." By attaching

a length of wire to one side of the buzzer contact and another wire to a ground, I invented my first "buzzer" transmitter, which was transmitting across the entire AM broadcast band on portable radios up to 100 feet away. Some of the other campers and I would conduct regular QSOs by sending to each other after we wrote out the message in dots and dashes on a piece of paper. Copying was another story. Fortunately, those old buzzer code practice keys are not available anymore. (Spoiler Alert: You can still find them on eBay.) "Spark Gap" transmission is illegal, and the tone was definitely harsh for learning Morse code.

Sadly, my amateur days ended when camp ended. But not forever.

I continued with my electronic experimentation. Warren Street; Green Street; Cortland Street; Canal Street; and most of "Radio Row" in downtown New York City were often frequented by me. For most of you younger readers "Radio Row" was gobbled up by the World Trade Center. What a loss.

Hot dog cookers were smalltime stuff compared to some of the more advanced Tesla Coils; Jacob's Ladders; and super-regenerative receivers; built over the years from parts gathered on Radio Row.

In the fall of 1984, I noticed a strange looking license plate on a friend's car: "Are you a ham?" I asked. "Yes" was his reply." "Ooh, I always wanted to be a ham. Would you give me the Novice test?" The next day I went out and bought a copy of Tune In The World With Ham Radio (an ARRL publication). Within six weeks I picked up the code again and passed both the code and written tests, sent in the forms, and anxiously awaited my ticket from the FCC.

It came! I was a ham! Only 25 years after I was first bitten by the bug. KA2VXM. Let 's see, dah-di-dah di-dah di-di-dah-dah-dah di-di-di-dah dah-di-di-dah dah-dah. That wasn't so hard. I practiced it over and over.

My first station consisted of-an old Knight Kit R100 receiver (that I picked up at a Pawn Shop when I was in the Air Force at Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul, Ill.) and a Knight Kit T150A CW/AM transmitter (from some un-named person who used on the CB Band). The antenna was a hastily installed 40 meter dipole between my TV antenna mast and the telephone pole in the backyard. A knife switch transferred the antenna between the receiver and the transmitter. In front of the equipment, I neatly organized paper; four sharpened pencils; que sheets; frequency chart; "Q" codes; and just about everything else needed to make my first contact. After a couple of weeks experimenting with the transmitter (If dummy loads could only talk, and I found out why transmitter tubes grow red!) and listening around, I decided to call CQ. No answer. I returned a couple of CQs. No answer Humph! Something must be wrong. Better check everything.

Now you might be thinking that the first contact I made was on this setup. Wrong! As In many instances in life, the best comes unexpectedly. It just so happened that I had purchased a used HeathKit HW-8 in "mint condition" through the Ham-Ads in QST (no eBay back then.) When It arrived, I found out that the word "mint" can also mean "any various aromatic plants whose leaves are aromatic ... "This particular HW-8 was not aromatic. It stunk! The tuning capacitor was broken, there were some bad solder Joints, and the case was well weathered. Caveat Emptor. Some careful work on my service



bench and some replacement parts from HeathKit and I had It up par. (That HW-8 now performs like a charm and is still one of my favorite QRP vacation rigs. Just wish I had built it from scratch.)

"Okay Alan" I said to myself, before you put the cover back on tune through the bands and see how It sounds, 40 meters, fine; 20 meters, fine; 15 meters ...

...Holy cow! A CQ and It sounds

like It's coming from down the block! Better hit the key. See If the OM can copy me. KA5GCB KA5GCB DE KA2VXM KA2VXM KA2VXM. He came back. (And KA5GCB, Brad, is still active in QRZ.) Now what? Everything I had prepared was in the other room. The HW-8 was attached to my head by the earphones and I could not hear without them. I picked up a pencil from the workbench and began to copy. At least I thought I was copying (today I can hardly read a word of what I wrote down).

Now it was my turn. What was I supposed to say? Damn it! All that preparation was in the other room! I didn't want to sound like a Novice. After all, I'm 36 years old. Well, let's give It a try anyway...

By the time my first OSO was over I suffered all of the symptoms of "Hamafirstyeest." Sweaty palms, confusion, disorientation, euphoria, and a big grin from ear to ear which could only be rivaled by Cheshire Cat. I quickly ran up the basement steps to tell my family what had happened.

My (then) wife greeted me with "Oh, that's nice. Are you ready for lunch yet?" My six-year-old daughter asked, "How come he didn't call you on the phone?" Call me on the phone? Lunch? The world was at my fingertips! I must get back down to the basement! CQ CQ CQ DE KA2VXM...

By the spring of 1985 I passed the Advanced class test under the new VEC program and received my Advanced ticket shortly thereafter.

I had only had time to make about one contact a week since I received my license and didn't have time to participate in the ARRL Novice Round-up. But I did join a couple of local clubs (of course, the best club

is the Long Island CW Club!) to gain some much-needed experience. In the beginning of June, the members all started talking about Field Day and passed around pictures of past Field Days.

Then it hit! "contest fever!"

Having missed the Novice Roundup, I was not about to miss Field Day. I brought a portable generator Saturday morning to the Kings County Repeater Association in Brooklyn, New York. They used the Field Day call of K2GJ. I helped them get set up that morning, but my heart was set on working my own home station since I had just bought a Kenwood TS-430SA and had never had It on the air using a mic.

When I returned home, I fired up my second portable generator and generated a little audible ORM for my neighbors.

When Field Day was over, I wondered if I would ever get bored with amateur radio. Not at all. I realized that the end is not in sight. I passed my Extra class test on September 9, 1986, and CW and Phone are just the beginning. RTTY; SSTV; ATV; Satellites; AMOR; Packet; microwaves; computers; contests; DX; nets; there are all kinds of things for a "kid" my age (76 now) to do!

Seems like all this writing made me hungry. Guess I'll pop a hot dog into my Microwave cavity hot-dog cooker. Boy, do those hot dogs taste great!

THE MODERN SCIENCE OF MORSE CODE

Quentin, K7DRQ

Over a decade ago, I was a researcher in neuroscience. I've since moved on from studying the brain, but

I remain deeply curious about how we learn, and the mechanisms that affect our ability to understand and process information. The Long Island CW Club has afforded me a fantastic opportunity to study how we learn Morse code, and what attributes or skills might significantly impact one's ability to copy, or indeed improve their proficiency. With the LICW, a team of driven instructors has made hypotheses, performed countless experiments, analyzed results, and drawn conclusions from their experience in class, both as learners and as teachers.

While this is a very worthy thing to do, it's fortunate that we aren't the only ones deconstructing what happens between our ears when we learn Morse code. For one thing, the LICW doesn't have access to MRI machines! Sometimes, it's good to let the pros do the work. I recently read two interesting scientific papers pertaining to the understanding of Morse code, and I'd like to walk you through them.

READING WITH THE EARS

In a 2004 paper by a team in Denmark led by Jens Maier, and published in *Neuroscience Letters*, the authors compare understanding Morse code with our ability to understand written information. They perform fMRI studies on CW operators, recording which parts of their brains activate under different tasks. In this study, operators were given three types of input and asked to identify certain targets by pressing a button. In the first input type, they were given nouns, and had to identify those that related to food or drink. In the second, they received groups of random characters, and had to identify the groups with double letters. The third type of input was complete garbage: invented characters grouped into fake words. Here's

Demetri Hersey (background) and Nathan Hersey at SOTA summit w7o/nc-072 for an all-cw activation on May 19, 2024



the clincher : all three inputs were performed separately in both CW and using written text.

The results are very interesting. In the first experiment, with the nouns, similar areas of the brain lit up for both CW and written text. These areas are known to be involved not only in listening to speech, but also to understanding language and processing semantic meaning. In other studies involving listening to speech, the same areas tend to be activated. The second experiment, with random characters, showed much weaker activation of areas concerning semantic understanding or speech processing. However, the areas of the brain that did light up were similar across CW and written text.

As a fun aside, the authors note that an area that was somewhat activated here is typically associated

with phonological processing, or processing sound into meaning. They suggest that, because CW is too simple an auditory system, consisting only of a pure tone switching on and off, that it's unlikely that the operators were "simultaneously producing inner speech". They also note some involvement of brain areas involved in visual processing. If only they knew about phonic copy and visualization methods like the ticker tape ! Indeed, we see visual cortex activation in blind people reading Braille, too.

What does it all mean? First, that Morse code and written text are processed similarly in the brain. We really can "read" Morse code with our ears. Secondly, that reading or copying when there is semantic meaning in the message is different to reading or copying random groups of characters. You can copy words, understand them, conceptualize them as objects, maybe visualize those

objects, and put them into context. This modality of deciphering code or written text is different to that of reading or copying random letters, in which understanding is not involved. This will be relevant when we look at the second paper.

The authors end with the sentence, "reading Morse code retrieves meaning from simple auditory stimuli effortlessly, fast, and without awareness". This is exactly where the LICW has pitched its head copy curriculum, using phrases like "alert indifference", "letting the code come to you", and "let the subconscious do the heavy lifting". We advocate that students should relax, and not grapple with the code as it comes in; they should let the subconscious mind deal with it. Delegate – it works ! When reading a book, you don't consider each letter in every word, one at a time; you take them in quickly, almost blurring them together, and the brain

does the rest. It's not quite magic – it's neuroscience.

MORSE CODE AND SHORT-TERM MEMORY

The second paper I want to discuss was shared with me this week by Gary W5GW. This paper from 2021 by Sara Guediche (Basque Center On Cognition, Brain and Language) and Julie Fiez (University of Pittsburgh) was published in the *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*. The authors examine the link between your ability to understand Morse code, and your short-term memory. There's a well-established link between short-term memory and comprehension across written text, spoken language, and even sign language, so why not Morse code ?

The study focuses on "comprehending a Morse message as they listen to it, in a speech-like manner, without first transcribing it letter by letter" – in other words, head copy. With a group of 21 hams, they test an operator's ability to repeat a full sentence; this is material that is comprehensible, that contains context and meaning. They also test the op's ability to repeat random words from a list; this is pure short-term memory without the context and comprehension. The authors run these exercises in both CW and spoken language. Finally, they test the operator's ability to transcribe CW as it comes in, letter by letter, onto paper; this provides a good baseline for CW ability entirely outside of memory or comprehension.

Their results are fascinating. They find some operators are able to copy and repeat entire sentences and some are not – but that this cannot be explained by their CW fluency as measured by transcribing the sentence onto paper letter by letter. What does seem to

correlate well with whether someone can repeat a full head-copied sentence is their short-term memory, as evaluated by repeating items from a list (sent in code and in speech). They draw parallels with studies done on reading comprehension as explained by short-term memory, and on how this seems to be true across written text and speech. Their conclusion ? Morse code is indeed "reading for the ears".

This study tells me what we at the LICW already know : that head copy requires a different skill-set to transcription. We rely on ICR to recognize the characters, but in our Intermediate and Advanced classes, we discuss the importance of the "Recognition Buffer", the very short-term memory in which characters go live until a word emerges. We talk about how essential context, or a continuing thread of conversation, are to following a QSO in your head. We know that, when the sentence is grammatically correct and contains real, coherent information, that our Retention Buffer works a lot better, and we can far more easily get the gist of the information contained in that sentence. Finally, it confirms what we also know about how disruptive errors and mistakes can be, when we try to apply our comprehension – it's confusing and it can throw us off; hence, we train in Instant Error Recovery too.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Actually, I feel that we have mostly arrived in training head copy in our Intermediate and Advanced classes. The Intermediate and Advanced curricula make full use of our learnings from class, and these papers confirm what we have hypothesized, observed, and tested. I am incredibly proud of the work done by over a dozen wonderful instructors

in pulling back this veil that hides the mechanics of learning CW, and turning what we have learned into exercises that train the very particular skills needed to become fluent, and conversational, in CW.

What remains is continued examination of instructional methods, exercises, and curriculum adjustments to better reach our students and improve their CW skills. Our catchphrase for the Intermediate curriculum was, "Let's talk." Maybe we can also say, "Let's read... with our ears."

THE LICW MORSE PRACTICE PAGE KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES

Tom, AB5TN

Well, in the last article I said this one would be about how the MPP was modified to meet the needs of the visually impaired but I've decided to put that on hold until the next newsletter so I can talk about the latest changes to the MPP.

The Beginners Carousel and Intermediate curriculums have been extensively modified over the last several months. For more information, go to the LICW website and under Academic Downloads you will find the latest Student and Instructor Guide: <https://longislandcwclub.org/academic-downloads>. Emphasis has been placed on assuming a relaxed state of mind with a loose focus (lean back copy). The new Character Familiarity Model of character introduction necessitated the development of new MPP exercises and functionality.

New exercises for Familiarity and Recognition training have been incorporated in all class levels. In

BC1 and BC2 you will find Familiarity by class letters under the LESSON drop down. Then you will need to use either the Familiarity Spelling or Recognition preset. In BC3 and above you will find FAMILIARITY in the LETTER GROUP drop down. Then select whatever LESSON you want to practice. In the PRESETS you will now have a choice of Familiarity Phrases, Familiarity Spelling, Familiarity Words, or Recognition-Spell and Recognition-Words. Use the one that is suitable for the LESSON you picked.

Under More Settings you will find some new tabs. The Repeats tab allows you to set the number of times the code is sent. The Repeat Spacing determines the time between each repetition of the code. Delay Before is the time before the voice speaks the Card and Delay After is the time after the voice speaks. As always, you can modify the Presets default settings.

Additionally, it was time for a major overhaul both in the way the MPP looked and in the coding behind the scenes. The first thing was to make the look more uniform across the class levels. This was done by breaking out all the class levels under CLASS. That let LETTER GROUP become the area where you pick the type of lesson you want to work on such as characters, words, phrases, etc. Then the LESSON dropdown is where the individual files relating to the type of lesson you selected are held. Finally, the PRESETS will determine how the file is played. You will now find all the dropdown lists are alphabetized.

Additional content has also been added for the Intermediate and Advanced class levels. You can now practice words from 3 to 14 letters and sentences from 3 to 7 words using the appropriate Presets. Check out all the content and use whatever helps you get out of your comfort zone.

Finally, you will see the Instructor content has been reduced to just the BC1 and BC2 class levels where Instructors still use the MPP in class. The rest of the class levels have been removed as the focus for the MPP is on student home practice.

Voice has been updated to address a couple of bugs and improvements. Voice Recap now works on the Edge browser. If you install additional voices into your browser, you will see them reflected in the Choose Speaker box. The voice you choose will be saved so you don't have to select it each time. If you are having trouble with Voice or any other issue with the MPP, the first thing to do is clear the cache on your browser. This fixes many issues. If that doesn't fix it, try deleting the cookies for the MPP site. The procedure for this is different depending on what OS and browser you are using. Do a Google search for your system and you will find how to do it. You will find a link at the top of the MPP that will lead you to the LICW Morse Practice Page User Guide for general assistance.

I'd be remiss if I didn't thank Randy KN4YRM for doing the programming that makes all of this work. I hope these changes have made it easier for you to use the MPP to improve your code proficiency.

Have a great day and practice, practice, practice.

KEY RESTORATION

Mike, VE3MKX

While at Hamcation (a great event) this year, I picked up this little Gem. It was found at one of the club tables located inside the Swaps building. When I saw it, I said, 'wow it was way cool' .. It didn't have any markings on it and the seller said he thinks it was home made. The hamfest



bartering fun then began. He wanted \$40 for it and me, being the cheaper than usual Ham, I said "How much do you want for this \$30 dirty old key?" He laughed but did not budge on the price.

Being from the North I calculated the price with the 35% currency exchange rate. So I started to hem and haw....it was one of those.... Do I buy it or not? I'd kick myself after if I didn't!

I bought it! And I'm glad I did!

After my southern vacation I placed it on the bench, for the restoration that was about to begin. I took apart the key taking various pictures along the way so I wouldn't have anything placed in the wrong spot or left over. Even something as simple as fastener lengths could make a difference placed in different spots. I got out the Brasso cleaner, fibre cloth, Q tips, and rubber gloves. In hindsight it might have worked better cleaning with a toothbrush. I'll save that idea for next time!

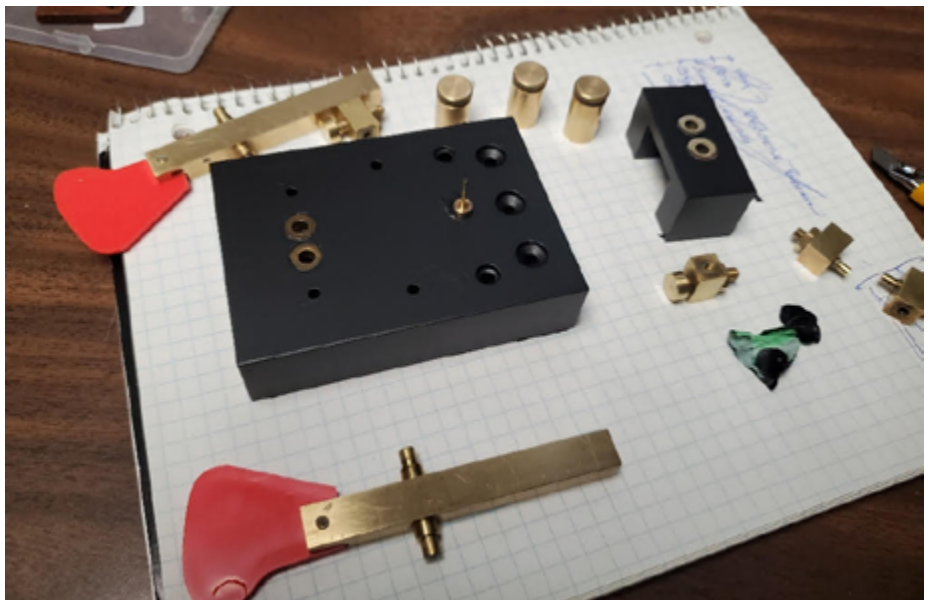
Once the key was totally dismantled, I inspected all the parts. The black base was too far gone with scratches

and chips to restore to my liking. So I then took some 220 grit sandpaper and gave the base the once over. I went over to the local Walmart and picked up some flat black Rustoleum spray paint. I was expecting a true flat dull black finish. The end result was a flat egg shell black which to my surprise I liked a lot better! After each coat of paint (let it dry for 24 hrs) I then did a quick sanding with 220 grit water paper. So after three coats of paint it was done!

The key came with very small wooden finger paddles. I wasn't a fan of those because of the size and shape. So I went into my junk drawer, sorry my 'ham radio treasure collection' and found a pair of spare Begali finger paddles. These finger paddles were acquired a few years back at Dayton, another fantastic don't miss event! With a little cutting I made these fit onto the cleaned brass arms of the new key! The key was then reassembled. One thing that I did do while reassembling the key was to wear gloves. This was done so I wouldn't leave fingerprints all over the freshly restored key! I also gave the swivel arms a few drops of wd40 which would prevent any sticking!

The reassembly went fine. The overall project took a few days to complete. I did place a small piece of cupboard lining rubber under the base of the key to prevent the key from moving on the desk when in use. The key weighs about 5lbs, so it didn't move much to begin with, but ya never know while in a 'intense QSO'!!

Overall the key has a very nice feel to it, I used a QSL card to gauge the contact spacing on the key. I still have some tweaking to do to get the paddle to my liking! A was a fun little project. If by chance you know anything about this key, please let me know! Have a great day and see you at FDIM at Dayton!



NOTES FROM ESSENTIAL OPERATING SUBJECTS SESSIONS

By Anthony, K8ZT k8zt73@gmail.com

- 7 PM Tuesdays on Zoom B with Anthony Luscre, K8ZT
- 10 PM Thursdays on Zoom A with Catherine Goodrich, W4CMG

WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE ESSENTIAL OPERATING SUBJECTS?

When you are looking through the extensive and sometimes overwhelming schedule of LICW Classes, you may see Cathy's or my sessions listed as Essential Operating Subjects and wonder, "What in the world is that?" In this article, I will try and answer that question. Unfortunately, it is not as straightforward as "Beginners" or "Intermediate" class descriptions because Cathy and I always cover a wide and varying set of topics. The common thread, though, just like when your mother said, "Eat your vegetables" or "Take your vitamins," is that it is good for you and your LICW progress. As a matter of fact, one of Cathy's sayings is, "Time on the air – get your Daily CW Vitamin – one a day!"

Although our approaches vary, we both strive to help you get on the air and be successful Amateur Radio Operators. We constantly strive to provide you with broader goals, tips & tricks, operating aids, and a wide variety of operating opportunities and activities. These include contesting, POTA & portable operating, award chasing, new bands to try, and more. We also cover tools to help you maximize your experiences with logging & contesting software and QSLing (both traditional and online, including LoTW and eQSL), ways

to check your own signal and find other potential contacts with DX Clusters, Reverse Beacon Network and free Online, Tunable SDR Receivers.

We are also there to answer questions on almost any aspect of operating on the air. In addition, we will be providing a little pushing, urging and goal-setting to keep you moving forward in your LICW and Ham Radio journeys.

We encourage club members of all levels and experience to join us weekly, and if the time is inconvenient, view recorded sessions via LICW Dropbox Folders 64 (Joy of Operating) & 54a (Reaching Your CW Goals). I also maintain a continuing document with upcoming and previous materials from my Tuesday "Joy of Operating" version of Essential Operating Subjects at tiny.cc/joynotes. You can also find Cathy's notes on her sessions in the Recaps Folder in Drop 54a.

Cathy and I will be doing tag-team articles for upcoming LICW newsletters and would love your feedback.

GETTING ON THE AIR OPPORTUNITIES

One of the best ways to improve on any newly learned skill is by practicing what you have learned. One of the best ways to exercise your CW skills is to get on the air and operate. One of my usual suggestions to all new hams or hams new to a mode is to get on during contests. At first, this might not sit well with many new CW operators. There are several reasons they typically give in response to my suggestion:



1. I don't like the competition of contests.
2. Contest CW is way too fast for me to copy.
3. I don't know how contests work; it is way too confusing.
4. I don't want to mess with logs, contest entry forms, etc.
5. If I don't send in a log, the stations I worked will not get credit or worse yet, they will be penalized.

LET ME RESPOND TO EACH OBJECTION:

1. Don't think of them as competitions. Think of them as times when the bands have more people on, and they are very eager to make a contact with you. You do not need to worry about the contest aspect.
2. Yes, most operators send pretty fast, but the good news is they will send CQ and their callsign repeatedly, giving you plenty of time to try and copy their callsign. Contests also have very few words to copy per contact, and most are short and repetitive.

HERE IS A SHORT VOCABULARY LIST:

- The calling station typically sends CQ CALLSIGN, QRZ CALLSIGN or TEST CALLSIGN (no DE, AR or K prosigns are used)
- After you send your CALLSIGN (only your callsign, no DE, AR, K or other

Did They Copy Me?

No, if they send one of following	Yes, if they send one of following
? or ??	TU (Thank you)
CALL ? (they don't have UR call)	R or RR (Roger)
AGN, RPT (Again, Repeat)	QSL
NR? (Number) usually for a missed serial #	73
EXC ?, SEC ?, CNTY ?, ST ?, CQZ ?, etc. (they are missing part of your exchange)	OK, Yes, or other affirmative
B4 or DUPE (they think they have previously worked you)	They were not having a problem copying you and did not ask for repeat but just start calling CQ or QRZ again typically means they worked you
NIL (Not In Log, they did not work you)	
LATER or SRI (Sorry, no contact, please try later)	

prosigns are used)

- They will respond with your callsign (which you will be able to copy at a very fast speed, much faster than most words except CQ)
 - They will also give you their EXCHANGE (this will vary from contest to contest and may include 5NN (not 599 or a real signal report) and a STATE, SERIAL #, CQZ#, etc.), but you don't even need to copy it if you are not going to send in a contest entry!
 - You will then need to send your EXCHANGE to them.
 - You can find exactly what you need to send by viewing the contest rules at www.contestcalendar.com.
 - The final thing you need to do is make sure they copied your exchange, or if they need you to repeat it (see table- "Did They Copy Me?"). Repeat only what they ask for. Then you are done!
3. If you are unsure how contesting works, I have a presentation,

"Introduction to Amateur Radio Contesting." Watch the Video Recording and view the slideshow at tiny.cc/arcontest. If you are an ARRL member, you can take the online class I wrote by visiting the Learning Center- "Intro to AR Contesting."

4. If you are not sending in a contest entry, you do not need to keep a special log, record the station's exchange, etc.

5. Don't worry if you do not send in a log; the other station will not be penalized!

Also, for #2 above, there are weekly, one-hour contests with slower CW speeds you can participate in:

- MST (ICWC Medium Speed Test) Monday
- CWops - 4 times on Wed/Thu UTC (Wed 1300-1400 & 1900-2000 / Thu 0300-0400 & 0700-0800)
- SST (K1USN Slow Speed Test) Fri & Sun Evenings

Another excellent opportunity to get on the air will be coming up in a few months - ARRL Field Day on June 22 & 23.



HERE ARE SOME FIELD DAY RESOURCES:

- Official website- ARRL Field Day
- ARRL/RAC Sections & Abbreviations Charts- tiny.cc/fdsect
- RATPAC FD Presentations
- "2024 Annual ARRL Field Day Update & Planning" Join RATPAC for a live session via Zoom on May 23, 2024
- "Annual ARRL Field Day Update & Planning"- Video & Presentation Slideshow

If you are interested in trying Contesting and/or Field Day, Cathy and I will spend time during our Essential Operating sessions discussing how-tos for both, including upcoming contests, rules and operating guidelines, exchange protocols, contest logging software and more.

NATIONAL TRAFFIC SYSTEM NET TRAINING

Ed Conway N2GSL

FIRST QSO RADIOGRAMS

We should all be familiar with the First QSO certificates members

ARRL — the national association for Amateur Radio™

RADIOGRAM

NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HK	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
	R	G	N2QTQ	14	BROOKLYN NY		FEB

TO: TRAVIS HARSHBARGER KK7LER
PO BOX 651
WRIGHT
8272L
PHONE NUMBER 307-682-0576
E-MAIL

THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT:

AMATEUR STATION	PHONE
NAME	E-MAIL
STREET	
CITY, STATE, ZIP	

CONCAT	ON	YOUR	FIRST	2W
QSO	X	HOPE	YOU	ENJOY
MAKING	MANY	MORE	73	

FROM: LONG ISLAND CW CLUB W2LCW
DATE: FEB 14 2023
TIME: 1400
TO: KK7LER
DATE: 17 FEB 2023

This message was handled at no charge by a licensed Amateur Radio operator whose address is shown in the box at right above. No compensation can be accepted by a "ham" operator. A return message may be filed with the "ham" delivering the message to you. Further information on Amateur Radio may be obtained from ARRL headquarters, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111 or www.arrl.org.

receive when they complete their first on-air QSO. Did you know that in addition to this certificate a radiogram commemorating this achievement is also "originated" and relayed to the deserving member utilizing the Nation traffic system (NTS)? During one of our planning sessions soon after we started the National traffic System Net Training Class (Tuesdays 7pm Zoom A) we thought it would be nice to follow up the certificate with a radiogram. The radiogram achieved many goals. These radiograms were another way to congratulate LICW members for their accomplishment of that first on-air CW contact. This process generates messages to be sent via the NTS. These routine messages are the grease that keeps the NTS running smoothly so that when the system needs to facilitate high priority traffic (messages) trained operators and a system of existing nets are ready to perform. Students who became active with CW traffic nets are given the opportunity to create and input these radiograms into the NTS (originate a message). This process starts with the email with the First CW QSO Certificate. Then usually Rob W2ITT forwards the email with other needed information to one

of our students who is on deck for the next message. That ham creates the message and "lists the traffic" on a CW traffic net. The Net Control Station (NTS) of that net directs the station holding the message which station on the net to relay the message. The message is now on its way. From that point on the message may be relayed via CW, PHONE or DIGITAL modes. The key point is that the message flows through the NTS to a net geographically close to the addressee. At that point, a ham on that net will receive the radiogram and then deliver it. The usual delivery method for routine messages is by phone. A ham near you will call, introduce himself and relay the message. Here is an example text of the message:

```
<BT>
MAKING YOUR FIRST CW QSO
IS A MILESTONE X HOPE
YOU ENJOY MAKING MANY
MORE 73
<BT>
LONG ISLAND CW CLUB W2LCW
```

In 2024 the NTS Training Team and students have generated 15 Radiograms congratulating LICW

members first-time on-air CW QSOs. Previously 52 radiograms in 2023 and 44 radiograms in 2022 were generated totaling 111 radiograms so far. The task of creating and getting the messages on their way has been spread among LICW members. A recent example is very interesting since in this case a LICW member originated the message and a LICW member delivered the message. On February 9, 2023, Terry WB0JHR issued a First Live QSO Certificate for Travis KK7LER in Wyoming. Soon after Rob W2ITT asked Colin N2QTQ who lives in Brooklyn, NY to generate a radiogram. Colin created the radiogram and got it started on its way in the NTS. Jerry WB7S in Wyoming received the message and delivered it to Travis a few days later. Participating in the National Traffic System relaying sending and receiving messages while preparing to put these skills to use under emergency conditions can be very rewarding.

AH SPRING!

K. Williams, N8FNC

Yes, Spring, and a young Ham's fancy turns to Antennas (of course)! With warm weather and minimal moisture many Hams will decide it is time to try out one of the easy to build and put-up wire antennas we have talked about on the Sunday AM LICW Antenna Forum. Just some wire (likely from that roll in your junk box), left over coax or ladder line from an earlier project, some insulators (one for a feed point and one or two for ends) and all you need to complete the job are supports for the ends.

Now comes the time for a bit of caution, careful planning, and an awareness of just how fragile the human body is. Especially when it falls in a 1g gravity field and comes to a sudden stop by impact with the earth.

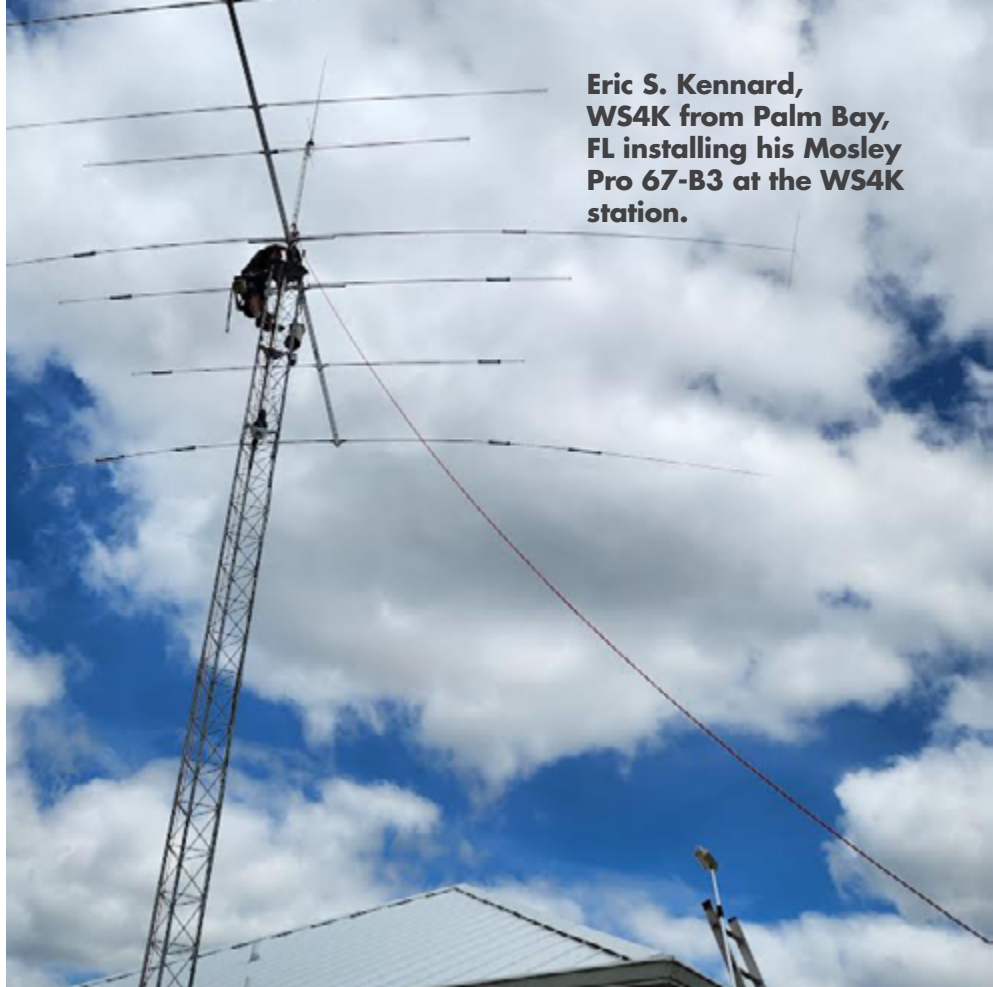
Yes, we want that dipole up $\frac{1}{4}$ wavelength for optimal radiation angle. But be realistic. If you are putting up an 80-meter antenna for working local friends and traffic nets, do you really want to be climbing a tree to get one leg tied off at 65 feet above the ground? Also, if the antenna is intended to be primarily for local communications, would it not make more sense to locate it closer to the ground and use it as a NVIS (Near Vertical Incident Skywave) antenna?

So, if it is to be a NVIS antenna, how close to the ground is necessary to get that NVIS nearly circular radiation pattern, with most of the energy going straight up and bouncing off the ionosphere and coming back within a 100-300 mile diameter circle? Some questions can be answered by using the EZNEC modeling program and varying (playing around) with some of the design factors to see what equations say can be expected in the 'ideal' situation.

"But it can't model everything in my situation, so what good is the program." The objection is correct but short sighted. Any model is like a map. It doesn't show every bump in the road. What it does show is one way to reach the destination and can reveal alternative paths to accomplish the same final goal. "Installing" an antenna in a computer modeling program allows multiple alternative configurations to be 'tried out' before having to string even one wire. Simpler, Faster, Safer.

Speaking of safety, let's harken back the comment about falling in a 1G gravity field, and landing hard when you stop.

Safety should always be a concern when operating (or assembling) Amateur Radio equipment. This is especially important when putting up an antenna. Let's talk about a few



**Eric S. Kennard,
WS4K from Palm Bay,
FL installing his Mosley
Pro 67-B3 at the WS4K
station.**

simple things that should be considered when planning where and how to put up an antenna.

- Always work with a friend or a family member who can use a phone and call for help if something goes wrong..... If you think; "What could possibly go wrong with (complete this sentence)" and have come up with less than 3 possible items on your list, think again. Murphy never takes a vacation!
- When launching an antenna wire toward any support, check to be sure that there is no other object that might be impacted or entangled with the wire. (Especially not local power lines!)
- If the installation requires leaving the ground for a tower, tree, roof or other elevated support, find someone significantly younger and lighter than you to leave the ground. Young folks

tend to bounce. We older fellows tend to break!

- If you, or a friend or acquaintance volunteers to 'go up that tree, tower, roof', be sure they have and use an appropriate climbing harness and pay more attention to staying safe than installing the antenna.
- Even when just walking on solid ground, watch where you step, and keep your balance. One of our members stumbled and fell while laying out radial wires on the ground for a vertical antenna and broke a leg. That is not the way to enjoy Amateur Radio!

Antennas are one of the most fun and easy things to experiment with in our hobby. Have lots of fun and be safe so you can continue to have fun with everything Ham radio has to teach us.



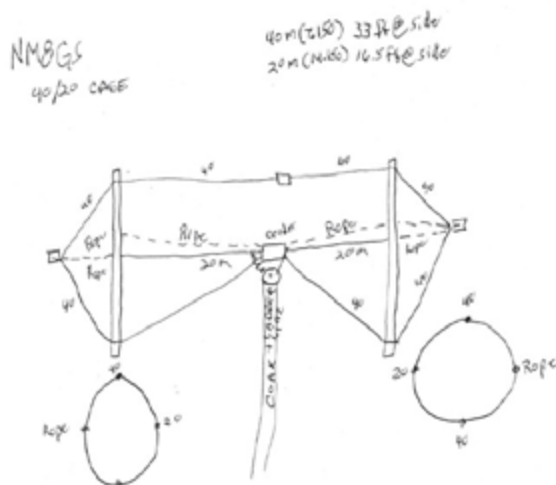
N2GSL operating portable CW

AN INTERESTING ANTENNA PROJECT

By AC8W and K8AQM

It's a limited antenna we're working with and I'll try to explain; the Huron Lightship "had" a cage antenna strung between two masts (see ship photo) which provided a radio beacon (3.0 MHz something) back in the day to provide a beacon as well as a light on a shoal north of Port Huron 6 miles out in Lake Huron. Back in 1973 the ship became a "museum" for the city of Port Huron (1973). Well, the cage broke and they wanted it fixed; Chuck KG8EF (SK) and I (K8AQM) offered to repair and replace it. As it happened the distance between the masts was exactly the distance for a 20m dipole! I made a 20m dipole for one of the four "wires" of the cage and used "black rope" to replace the other three "wires". The museum folks were happy we repaired and replaced the antenna for them, the local radio club was happy because now they had a great 20m antenna for Muse-um Ships Weekend.

2023...I'm back in PH now (K8AQM) and belong to the Lightship Huron Radio Club (NM8GS SKCC 19777T). We do "Jamboree on the Air" but only have 20m for the Scouts to talk to other Scouts. We tried several versions of 40m antennas but there is just too much "iron" around for the antenna to work well. As "luck" would have it, last month the RG-58 we had tie-wrapped to the 450 ohm ladder line (not feeding the disguised dipole) finally gave out..... So my crazy mind went to work on how to mesh a 40m antenna with the 20m antenna. The museum folks won't have anything but a "cage"



antenna up...no traps...must "look" like the original cage..... So, here's the deal.....

The 20m antenna that fits in the cage distance was cut for about 14.150 MHz, or 33ft and that is 16 ft 6 inches a side. If we make a 40m dipole for 7.150 MHz, the antenna is 65.5 ft or 32 ft 4 inches a side. That's about perfect for fitting into the cage! I can remove two of the rope elements, use the same 20m existing feed point, connect the center of the 40m "dipole" there (using the same coax as the 20m), run the wires out the distance of the 20m to the cage rings (removing a rope element) and back through the rings (thus removing another "rope" element) and join the two 40m wire ends via a small insulator (almost invisible at 30 ft). The result is a "kinda" 40m folded dipole! See if my drawing makes better sense. The rings are about 12 inch diameter, that's pretty close for a folded dipole and I'm sure there will be interaction with the 20m dipole as well but I'm thinking a good tuner (Dentron MT2000) will make all work well enough that both bands will be operational. The museum folks will be happy and with new co-ax attached to 450 ohm ladder line all will be well....we hope!

My plan is to model the antenna this winter using 144 MHz (1/2 wave dipole) represent-ing the 40m and 288 MHz (1/2 wave dipole) as the 20m. We can make the rings with rulers cut to 6 inches, glued and criss-crossed. An MFJ SWR Analyzer meter could tell us how bad the coupling might be. I'm not smart enough to use EZNEC for this modeling!...LOL!

Follow up to this article after as tests are conducted. We would appreciate any thoughts on the project via k8aqm1629t@comcast.net or AC8W@comcast.net.
73, AC8W & K8AQM



Jean-Jacques, F5IJO
newest rig and a couple of the paddles of his design, home-built in his workshop. The larger is all bronze and brass, titanium levers with olive-wood finger pieces.

WILD ABOUT BUGS

By Tom, WA9CW

The last few months have been interesting in the WAB forum. Attendance has been good and we have had some good discussions with great feedback and participation from the group. I would like to thank everyone and I hope you have enjoyed it as much as I have!

One of the topics we often discuss is the fundamentals of good sending with the bug. Just like you cannot make good music with a guitar that is not set up correctly or in tune, it is difficult to send good, clean code with a bug that is not set up properly. Although the process of setting up a bug is not difficult, it can be a little confusing in the beginning. There are 8 primary adjustment points and there is a loose

order or succession to making these adjustments.

Depending on where you got your bug, you may need to at least clean the contacts and make sure that the screws are all tight. This ensures good continuity throughout. A strip of brown paper sack (or a crisp new \$100 dollar bill) are usually abrasive enough to clean the contacts. Try this first before getting more aggressive.

The next thing is to make sure that the pendulum swings freely from side to side but does not have excessive up and down movement. Exercise caution here so that excessive pressure is not placed on the cone shaped arbor and bushings that hold the pendulum in place. Too much tension here can damage the bearing surfaces. Some bugs with the jeweled bearings can

easily be damaged if you are careless here.

Once you have this preparation done, the set-up can begin.

HERE IS A LIST OF THE SETTINGS MENTIONED EARLIER:

1. Adjust pendulum so that at rest it pushes into the damper wheel just enough to see it move. Once this is done correctly, it should not need any more adjustment.
2. Secure the weight to the pendulum at about the midpoint of the shaft.
3. Adjust the throw of the pendulum so that it moves far enough to impart sufficient energy and vigor when it hits the stop. This also sets the dit paddle deflection from rest position. About 1/8 is deflection is a good starting point.
4. Adjust the dash paddle for about the same amount of paddle deflection from the resting or center position as the dit paddle. Take note, this is deflection of the dit and dah paddles not the contact spacing.
5. Adjust the tension on the dit spring.
6. Adjust the tension on the dash spring. (One third take up on these springs is a starting point, you can adjust for more or less tension as you gain experience.)
7. Adjust the movable dot contact to produce 15 to 20 good clean dots.

Note: If you can make eight good dits, that is about all you will ever need. Some bugs may send a string of seemingly endless good quality dits. For the sake of this discussion, I gave you a number to shoot for, refinement can come later.

8. Make sure that all lock nuts are secure so that your settings stay put. These 8 steps combined with cleaning the contacts, making sure that all screws are tight and making sure that the pendulum moves correctly adds up

to 11 steps in the process on setting up your bug.

By now, you may be totally confused. That's OK, I am a little confused myself just writing this. Don't worry, this was not written as an instructional document for setting up a bug. It was mainly written to get you to look at that bug you have sitting there on the shelf or unused at the operating position and ponder it for a few minutes. See if you can visualize some of the settings and the function of the adjusting screws. This may sound like a lot but in reality, this entire process can usually be accomplished in less than five minutes when you understand how the bug works. Bugs are beautiful instrument that are just as relevant today as they were in their heyday. They are challenging and fun to use. And sometimes, you can cut the nostalgia in the air with a knife, especially in bug x bug qsos thru the ether. Hopefully, this may have sparked some interest in using a bug. If so, join us in Wild About Bugs on Tuesdays in Zoom A at 5pm Eastern time. I am sure that we can help you get it set up and rolling.

Changing direction a bit, for those looking for an opportunity to use your bug on the air, there is a Bug Round table that takes place on 40 meters on Wednesday evenings at 8:30 PM Eastern. The frequency is 7.118. Give a listen and hopefully, throw you call out there and join us. Enuf for now! I hope to hear your bug on the air soon.

5 TIPS I HAVE UNCOVERED FOR BEGINNING CW OPERATOR

By Greg, K15ZJZ

Learning Morse code, also known as Continuous Wave (CW) operation, can be a thrilling journey for amateur

radio enthusiasts. While it may seem daunting at first, with dedication and practice, anyone can become proficient in this timeless mode of communication. Whether you are just starting out or looking to refine your skills, here are five invaluable tips to help you navigate the world of CW:

1. Start Slow and Steady: Just like learning any new skill, it is crucial to begin at a pace that is comfortable for you. Do not rush into trying to copy fast Morse code right away. Start with slow, easily decipherable characters and gradually increase the speed as you gain confidence. Many beginner-friendly resources and software programs allow you to adjust the speed to your liking, ensuring a smooth learning curve.

2. Embrace the Rhythm: Morse code is all about rhythm. Each character has its own unique combination of dots and dashes, forming a musical pattern when transmitted. Train your ear to recognize these patterns by listening to Morse code regularly. You can tune in to CW practice sessions on the radio or use online resources and mobile apps specifically designed for Morse code training. The more you immerse yourself in the rhythm of Morse, the easier it becomes to decode.

3. Practice, Practice, Practice: Like any skill, proficiency in CW comes with practice. Set aside dedicated time each day to practice copying Morse code. Start by focusing on individual characters before moving on to complete words and sentences. Consider joining CW clubs or participating in on-air activities such as CW contests and QSO parties to put your skills to the test in real-world scenarios. Remember, consistency is key, so do not be discouraged by initial challenges—perseverance pays off.

4. Learn the QRS and QSB: In the world of CW, "QRS" stands for "Please slow down," and "QSB" refers to "Fading signals." These are common abbreviations used by CW

operators to communicate effectively. Familiarize yourself with these and other common Q-signals to enhance your proficiency in CW conversations. Knowing when to request a slower speed or acknowledge signal fading can improve your ability to communicate smoothly on the airwaves.

5. Keep a Cheerful Outlook: Learning Morse code can be a rewarding yet challenging endeavor. It is normal to encounter difficulties along the way, but maintaining a cheerful outlook is key to overcoming obstacles.

Celebrate your progress, no matter how small, and do not be afraid to ask for help or guidance from experienced operators. Remember, every mistake is an opportunity to gain experience and improve. With patience, perseverance, and a can-do attitude, you will soon find yourself fluent in the language of Morse code.

In conclusion, mastering Morse code is a journey that requires dedication, patience, and perseverance. By starting slow, embracing the rhythm, practicing regularly, learning common Q-signals, and maintaining a cheerful outlook, you will be well on your way to becoming a proficient CW operator. So, grab your key, tune in to the airwaves, and embark on this exciting adventure—one dit and one dah at a time!

GROWING UP "HAM" IN NEW YORK CITY

By Tom Perera, W1TP

I had been interested in radio from the age of 5 when I used to listen to the big AM radio in my parents' living room. I did not know that radios were one way communicators at that time and often talked back to the "man inside the box"...

I could not understand how he fitted in there or what he had for

breakfast. One time I heard him say that President Franklin Roosevelt had died... I started screaming at the "man-in-the-radio" ...telling him that he was wrong. I called my mother to tell her what a terrible thing the man had said.

This was the first that she heard of the president's death. After she explained to me that the president had really died, I began to understand that the man in the radio was just there to talk to us and not to listen.

My grandmother had a huge floor-standing radio that could tune in stations from all over the world. She showed me how to tune in strange and whistling sounds and stations that were speaking in different languages and I spent hours hunting around the radio dial.

My interest in radio led me to befriend a local radio repairman. He gave me radios that he could not fix to play with, take apart and learn about what was inside them.

Eventually he suggested that I buy my first radio kit. It was a Knight 5-tube AM radio. I followed the instructions carefully taking great care to solder every connection well and apply plenty of heat as my friend had taught me in order to avoid cold-soldered joints.

Thanks to Thomas Edison, most of the buildings in New York City were wired with 110 volt DC current so I needed the rotary inverter to change the DC to AC for the transformer in my radio kit and all of the other AC appliances in the house.

When I finished the kit I confidently plugged it into my rotary inverter and promptly blew out the fuse to my room. I replaced the fuse and plugged it in again with the same result.

I was upset about my radio not working so I took my radio to my friend and told him about how it kept blowing fuses.

He took one look inside it and started laughing...

He laughed so hard that he started crying...

I had no idea what he was laughing about and he just kept pointing at my radio and bursting into laughter. He couldn't even tell me what he was laughing about for the longest time...

When he finally regained control he showed me that I had soldered all of the connections to the tube sockets so well that the solder had run down each lead and into the socket base and then formed a complete circle of solder connecting all of the tube socket pins together...

I asked whether he could fix it and he started laughing again...

Finally he said that it was too "good" to fix...

I didn't understand what he meant.

He actually bought me another kit so that I could try again and kept my kit in his store. I completed the second kit and it worked on the first try.

I believe that he kept my kit to show his friends and get a big laugh from them at my expense.

As I continued in school I learned about electricity and electrolysis. In chemistry lab we put the leads from a DC battery into each end of a pan of salt water. The electricity caused bubbles to be given off at each electrode and I learned that the water was being broken down into oxygen and hydrogen by a process called electrolysis.

I also learned that if you mix oxygen and hydrogen gas together in a test

tube the mixture becomes potentially explosive when ignited by a match. The resulting 'pop' was a fun surprise.

After this lesson and armed with this knowledge, naturally, I went home, filled an entire bathtub with water and added a box of salt. Then I took two wires from a 110 volt DC wall outlet and put one in each end of the bathtub.

The water started bubbling immediately. I collected the bubbles at each end of the tub, mixed them together in a large glass container and lit the mixture with a match. Luckily, the explosion only left a few pieces of glass in my hands and did not injure any other parts of my body. It is a wonder that I survived that little experiment.

At about that time I took the exam for my first ham radio license.

I had to learn the Morse Code to pass the test which was given in a terrifyingly austere Federal office building in downtown New York by an equally terrifying examiner named Finkelman who never smiled.

I apologized to him about how poor my handwriting was and he growled... "Just copy the code... KID..." Yikes... he was terrifying!

I was so nervous that I couldn't even read my own handwriting ...but amazingly enough, he could... I passed the test and he gave me my temporary license. Phew...

I met another young ham in New York City and found out that he lived on the other side of Central Park from where I lived. I discovered that I could actually see one window in his apartment. We started communicating with surplus Navy signal light guns...

But, some well meaning citizen turned

us in as possible spies since World War II was a very recent memory. We were simultaneously raided by some kind of federal officers... Our new Ham Radio Operators Licenses got us out of trouble with the law but they firmly suggested that we use radio and not light to communicate in the future to avoid scaring the local residents...

Hanging antennas from the roof of my 14 story high apartment building to the roof of an adjacent building by throwing a grappeling hook across the gap and then lowering a small feedline down the front corner of the building to my 4th. floor window and hoping it would not be seen was challenging and dangerous. When I was caught by the owner of the building he was nice enough to just demand that my parents take out liability insurance on my antenna farm in case it injured someone.

When I tried to throw an antenna wire out my window and across 5th. Avenue into a tree in Central park I accidentally let it sag a bit and it was caught by a passing bus. The bus pulled most of my radio equipment off my desk but luckily the wire broke before dragging it out the window or dragging the window frame out and into the street.

As my radio equipment became more complex I found that my rotary DC-to-AC inverter could not handle the load.

I went down to Canal Street and bought a large alternator and a one-cylinder gasoline powered Maytag washing machine engine. I hooked them together with a drive belt and ran the exhaust out of the window but it made a great deal of noise and I was afraid that the neighbors would complain. Finally I made a big muffler out of a metal garbage can filled with surplus steel wool with an input pipe and an output pipe that went out the window. It quieted the generator so

well that I was never caught.

Right after I earned my ham license and shortly after the end of WW-II hundreds of tons of war surplus radio equipment began to appear in the stores of the district of New York City known as "Radio Row". Sadly, Radio Row was later torn down to make room for the World Trade Center.

There were a number of 'legitimate' radio stores that sold new equipment and also a number of war surplus dealers in musty and dirty stores. It was easy to spend an entire weekend browsing through all of the shops hunting for radio parts and radios hidden deep inside the stores.

My parents had enough money to buy me a very fine Collins Receiver for my ham radio station. When I went to the same store to buy my first transmitter, the salesman said... "Sorry Kid" I can't sell you a Collins Transmitter... You have to BUILD your first transmitter yourself... Here's a kit".

It is hard to imagine nowadays that a salesman would turn down a sale of a very expensive radio transmitter just to teach a kid a lesson about the value of building and understanding radio transmitters. I owe him a great debt of gratitude because he got me started understanding rather than just using electronics. He sold me a two-tube transmitter kit with a 6L6 Output tube that cost 1/20th. the price of the Collins transmitter. With this mandate, I learned to build a basic transmitter and then went on to successfully build most of my transmitters and other gear for the next 70 years.

I had a very hard time learning the Morse Code. As a result I began to collect telegraph keys because they seemed to be sort-of magical. After I had found a few surplus keys I went back to the salesman and told him that I wanted to buy his best fancy chrome-

plated Vibroplex semi-automatic key. He looked at me strangely and asked... "How fast can you send with your surplus key, kid?" I told him that I could send about 13 words per minute and he shook his head. Come back when you can send a good solid 20 words per minute with your straight key.

When I came back he actually gave me a test before he would sell me the key. Again, he had turned down a big sale to teach me a lesson about the value of being able to send fast code without the artificial help of a semi-automatic key.

The stores in Radio Row that sold war surplus radios had a continuously changing mix of radios, parts and junk for sale.

I decided to buy a BC-654 and a hand-operated dynamotor from REX, one of the busiest surplus stores... I went out into central park in NYC and set up the station and called CQ on 75 and made a few contacts... All was well until the police showed up and took me to the Central Park police station house under arrest... It turns out that there is actually a rule on the books in New York City that makes it illegal to operate a radio station in Central Park and my ham license was not enough to get me out of it... Luckily, the desk sergeant took it as a big joke and let me go... It was good to be only 15 years old if you were going to do things like that...

I bought a very classic WW-II Army surplus BC-611 walkie-talkie from REX for \$5 WITH the now-impossible-to-find 103 volt battery ...I found one that was tuned to 3885 KC which was right in the 75-meter ham band. I called CQ and called CQ and called CQ with never a reply...

Finally a friend of mine bought a matching BC-611 and we made

contact on 75 meters BUT, the maximum range we could achieve was only about 400 feet... We had seen the movies with John Wayne talking from one mountain to another with these radios and expected to at least be able to work into New Jersey but no such luck...

Many years later I read about how the military had purposely detuned the BC-611 walkie-talkie transmitters so the GIs in the field who were using plain English would not be intercepted by the enemy listening posts located a few miles from the front lines...

G and G Radio had a great selection of military surplus items. They had early fax machines that actually used gunpowder-impregnated paper. When you used them to try send and receive pictures with other hams using ham-fax, the room would rapidly fill up with smoke as the paper burned... The high voltage electrode made a spark that exploded the gunpowder at one small spot and produced a pretty clear image... My parents were Very tolerant of the clouds of smoke coming from my room...

G and G sold the famous "Gibson Girl" emergency lifeboat transmitters that sent out an SOS signal on 500KC when you turned a hand crank. These radios came with balloons to raise the antenna straight up from the lifeboat. You connected a balloon to a hydrogen gas generator, immersed the generator in salt water and the resulting gas filled the balloon so it would rise and lift the antenna.

I bought as many hydrogen generators and balloons for Gibson Girl transmitters as they would sell me... They didn't like the fact that I just wanted those balloons and not the Gibson Girls so they limited how many they would sell me...

I filled the balloons with hydrogen out

in Central Park and then attached a postcard and released the balloons into the sky over New York City hoping that they would travel a long distance away and that the postcards would eventually appear in my mailbox telling me of the exotic places where the balloon and postcard had been found.

After my friends and I launched about 10 of these balloons we finally gave up because nobody ever returned a post card from some exotic distant location... It was one of the really big disappointments of my childhood...

My favorite war surplus store was LEEDS... It was filled with a dirty confused pile of radio gear. Tons of "stuff" was just piled in every available place leaving only a small walkway through the middle.

Mr. Leeds was a crusty old guy with a big cigar and a horrible disposition who sat at a dirty desk under a bare light bulb at the back of the store... I used to hang out there for hours poking through his junk and listening while he insulted customers and kicked some of them right out of the store...

One Friday afternoon, he had been drinking for quite a while and when I asked him for the 1000th. time if I might go 'upstairs' to his upper floors... he said "OK Kid"... This was ham heaven and I was able to poke through generations of surplus items that I had never seen before. Some dated back to the very earliest days of radio.

Phil Weingarten was the major counterfeiter of early radio equipment in those early days. He ran a little 'downstairs' junk shop on Canal Street. It had huge flat tables and glass cases full of just about everything and anything with sometimes ridiculously high prices and sometimes not... He actually made fake deForest

Audions and sold them as the real thing...

Sometimes he would borrow a piece of wireless gear from its owner and then return a replica in its place so he could sell the original one without the owner finding out.

The few people that got to know him pretty well soon learned that he kept a loaded pistol under the cushion in his sofa at his home in case one of his customers came to get their money back.

Strangely enough, some Weingarten replicas are now worth more than the originals that he copied.

In 1958, I took a girl out for a date in my car. I had installed an Elmac AM ham rig under the dash and a PE-103 military dynamotor power supply in the trunk. On our first date we were driving along when she suddenly said... "Something's Burning". I said "Don't worry it must be outside somewhere." ...but soon smoke began to fill the car. I jumped out and found the power cable to the dynamotor glowing red hot due to a short circuit. I was able to cut it and disconnect the battery. If she hadn't warned me I would have lost that car... So, I eventually married her and we have been married for 65 years...

Like most radio collectors and hams I gradually accumulated larger and larger piles of equipment until it would not fit into our New York City apartment. I had to start piling radios on top of radios like old-man Leeds.

At that point I bought a farm in Vermont with 11 outbuildings. Predictably I gradually filled all of them.

When I finally realized that my collecting had gotten out of control I decided to sell all my big radios and concentrate on collecting telegraph

keys that are small and light and don't take up much space.

Unfortunately, that got out of hand too... and I ended up with over 3000 antique telegraph keys in my collection dating all the way back to the Civil War.

I had many adventures hunting for and scuba diving for telegraph keys but the most exciting was when I visited the huge Deutsches Museum in Munich, Germany. I knew that there was a very important key buried inside a huge Poulsen Arc transmitter and I desperately wanted a picture of it for my online museum. Again, my wife came to my rescue. As I unscrewed the access plates and pulled the key into view for a picture she used a walkie-talkie to warn me if the guard was approaching.

Happily, at about that time the internet became accessible and I started putting all of my telegraph keys into an online telegraph museum at WITP.com and then selling them and the remaining big radios at hamfests. Little-by-little the pile of telegraph keys got smaller but I found a new collectible... Enigma machines...

So now I sit back and restore Enigma machines, write books, give lectures and think back about all of the adventures of growing up "Ham".

If you would like to see my illustrated talk on this topic you may find it in the LICW Archives or view a 52 minute version at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wc6SAtpBtl>

PROFILE OF A LONG ISLAND CW CLUB OPERATOR

By Terry Jackson, WBOJRH

"I am most grateful for having had the

opportunities to explore my interests in the world around me without being exposed to cultural brainwashing" (Steve Greenbaum, N1SGN)

Greenbaum's education, which spans from Washington, DC, to Georgetown University, is a testament to his diverse learning journey. He cherishes the influence of his parents and teachers, who exposed him to many sources of information. He was born on April 26, 1947, and raised in the DC area.

Greenbaum's career trajectory led him to New Hampshire, where he initially served as a programmer/analyst for a paper company. After six years, he transitioned to a high-tech government support company, where he excelled in analysis, design, programming, and project management for various governmental agencies.

Greenbaum and his wife, Sue, nurtured their twins, Benjamin and Bethany, who have made significant strides in their respective fields. One of the twins, Benjamin, a mechanical engineer, embarked on his career with Amphenol RF, a connector that all ham radio operators would come to recognize and appreciate. Bethany is currently touring the world with a friend. She is in Australia but is leaving to go to Jakarta to pursue a job in sync with her education, which is linguistics, with a minor in business.

High school football and soccer participation were Greenbaum's priorities. Later in life, he had other interests that would benefit him as a ham radio CW operator, including playing guitar and piano and tap dancing since he was six.

Greenbaum's bucket list seems full, although meeting new people and making new friends are probably his top priorities. He thanks the LICW Club for making this a reality.



Greenbaum loves rag chewing and casually working DX. He also credits the LICW Club for accepting him as a CW instructor. He teaches the Elmer 101 class on Saturday mornings, assists in the Sunday Gud Fists class, helps with the Monday key setup, teaches the beginners CW sending class on Tuesday, assists in the beginners CW class

on Wednesday, and assists in the recorded QSO class on Thursday.

"The best compliment I ever received was, "You are armchair copy," says Greenbaum. His goal with all students is for them to send good, clean CW. "Speed is secondary to accuracy," said Greenbaum, and "Accuracy transcends speed." The most satisfying moments for Greenbaum are when he sees the understanding smile on a student's face!

Greenbaum's shack is stocked with equipment most of us only dream about. He has been a Flexer since 2005 and owns a 6600m and a Maestro. He also uses a Yaesu FTDX101D, an Elecraft K4d, and other QRP and QRO radios, which are too numerous to mention. His key collection contains more than thirty years of CW key finds. His Zoom background always features him sitting in front of one of his many radios and keys. His latest keys are Amplidan, Marconi, and Cooties of various descriptions.

Greenbaum is pleased with his current CW sending and copying speeds. His smile suggests that he is having fun being the best CW operator he can be. He encourages new operators with a quote from Winston Churchill: "Perfection is the enemy of progress."

He also challenges his students to go live and make contacts without fear of making mistakes."

Co-founder of LICW Club, Howard Bernstein, praises Greenbaum for all he is doing to promote CW. "He is a pillar in our club," says Bernstein, "and we are very fortunate to have him in our group."

USING VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES TO AID IN THE PRACTICE OF CW

By Gary White, W5GW

Being able to send and receive Morse code (CW) is a skill. Not an extremely difficult skill, but to excel and attain higher levels of CW proficiency requires many hours of practice. One method of practice that is often overlooked is visualization. Musicians, athletes, cooks, dancers, actors, communicators, etc., are all professions where application of visualization techniques improves proficiency in their chosen skill set.

WHAT IS THE POWER OF VISUALIZATION?

Visualization is the power of the mind to simulate an event or action and exercise the neural pathways associated with that skill.

In exploring mankind's existence, Rene Descartes, a French philosopher, examined the power of the mind. His famous quote, I think, therefore I am, is applicable today to help us think about how much power our mind really has. Many sports coaches believe in the power of visualization. Pete Carroll, one of the most successful coaches in the NFL teamed up with Dr. Michael Gervais to incorporate visualization

Greenbaum's interest in ham radio began when he was ten years old. His family had a short-wave radio, and he was fascinated by listening to it. A friend gave him a Boy Scout manual three years later, and he learned Morse Code as dots and dashes. That would turn out to be very problematic when copying CW. It ended his first attempt at getting a license. Fast forward thirty years! A friend at work informed him he could get a ham radio license without the code.

Having only five days before the next test would be given, Greenbaum immersed himself in studying for the Technician and Novice ham radio licenses. He took the Novice test and passed but failed the Technician test by one question. Within three months of getting his Novice License, he had his Advanced Class License and was well on his way to getting his Extra Class License.

"I used the microphone on my transceiver while showing friends. It is then I decided I liked CW better and never went back," said Greenbaum. He joined the LICW Club in September 2022, thanks to Bob WO6W. "Bob called me asking about Cootie keys and told me all about LICW Club," said Greenbaum, "and after a one-and-a-half-hour phone call with Bob, I joined LICW Club and never regretted it."



Rene Descartes



I THINK, THEREFORE I AM

and mindfulness techniques into the Seahawks training schedule.

Visualization is also used with stroke victims to aid in their recovery process. It aids in neuroplasticity, or our brain's ability to organize and re-form connections that have been injured. These are the same neural pathways that must be developed when we learn to send with a different type of key (e.g., going from a straight key to a bug or paddles, or when we attempt to increase our speed). It can also help stroke victims improve cognitive skills and aid in reducing stress and help them regain emotional stability.

Musicians and music teachers are enthusiastic about visualization. In this short paper from Modacity, they explain the primary benefits are:

- Improvement of Physical Techniques
- Help with Memorization (note: I believe what they are saying is trying to connect the conscious to lean on the unconscious part of the mind – and really, that is what we are trying to do with ICR training)
- Dissolving Tension

We will discuss these benefits a bit further as we explore some visualization techniques that may assist you in your mastery of CW. Before we delve into these techniques here is a short story of how I recently

used visualization to help overcome a problem I had, namely sending the numeral 8 in Morse code.

At best, my eights would come out as an OI and sometimes even an OE, OS or an MD. For the life of me the character formation was erratic, and it didn't seem to matter if I was on a straight key, bug, or paddles it didn't seem like I could master getting a nice smooth 'dah-dah-dah-di-dit' acoustic sound.

Whenever an 8 came up in a QSO, I'd do almost anything to avoid sending it, and lots of hams received 599 or 579 signal reports even though they probably deserved 589s. Using the mental repetition technique described below, I began to relax when sending that pesky 8. Today I don't always get my 8s sent perfectly, but I'm not stressed about it like I used to be and I'm seeing significant progress.

Here are three examples where visualization may be of benefit in advancing your level of CW proficiency.

Mental Repetition:

In our BC classes we use the repetition of acoustic sounds to train instant character recognition (ICR), both for sending and receiving.

We can similarly perform mental repetition by visualizing the characters while replicating their sounds in our mind. For example, while first visualizing the character R we can then 'hear' the sound 'di-dah-dit'. This is the receiving portion of the mental repetition exercise. We can modify this by saying R and then mentally 'hear' the acoustic 'di-dah-dit' sound.

Conversely, we can mentally visualize our hand or finger movements as we hear the character R formulated as the unique acoustic 'di-dah-dit' sound. This is the sending portion of the mental repetition exercise.

One word of caution, always hear, In your mind, the sound as an ensemble not as the individual di and dah elements. You might need to send a few characters in your code practice oscillator at a fast speed to help formulate the character sound in your mind. Repeat. Relax.

Mental Feedback or Reading Your Sending:

This combines visualization of both sending and receiving. In the previous mental repetition exercise, we focused on either sending or receiving, but not both. Here we do both.

This is an excellent visualization technique to help those that are working to increase their overall CW proficiency. Close your eyes and visualize manipulating a key, bug or paddle (not all at the same time of course!) to send a character, word, phrase, or sentence. Visualize your hand movements. It may help to place your arm on a desk or chair arm just as if you had a real key at your fingertips. As you visualize sending visualize hearing, in your mind, the acoustic sounds. Repeat. Relax.

If you move your hand or fingers while doing this exercise that is okay.

Create Mental Images of Adverse or Unexpected CW Scenarios:

The real CW world never consists of perfectly sent signals devoid of noise, interference, fading, and poor sending. By imagining adverse copy scenarios of these real-world factors and how you will react to them will go a long way into breaking away from that 'perfect' CW. This helps you to use QRS, and AGN without feeling inadequate or stressed. It also helps you gain familiarity with your equipment by simulating when to switch in a notch or BW filter. Repeat. Relax.

These are just three examples where visualization can be used in CW practice. I'm sure you can identify many other exercises.

Here are a few guidelines about visualization and practice.

- Visualization works best when it is integrated with actual physical practice. Visualization exercises should always be a supplement to actual hands-on practice.
- Be positive during visualization. Learning and improving CW is best achieved when realistic goals and expectations are established and visualized.
- Practice regularly when you are well rested and in a positive and relaxed mental state.
- Engage as many senses as possible when visualizing. Touch, see, hear, say, etc. Let your mind envision you at your operating station with your favorite key (we always have more than one key, don't we?).
- Review each practice session whether it be hands-on or visualization. What did you learn, what can be improved? Use this to tweak and create your own practice sessions and visualization exercises.

I hope this short paper motivates you to try visualization techniques.

Whether you are a beginning, intermediate, or advanced CW operator I believe it can help you.

Or, as Descartes might say if he were around today:

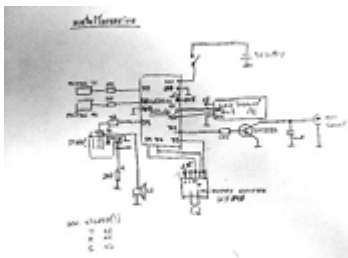
I Think, Therefore I CW!

THE MORSERINO 32

MANY NEWCOMERS ASK, "WHAT IS THIS MORSERINO I HEAR ABOUT? HOW HARD IS IT TO BUILD?"

The Morserino 32 is without a doubt the best CW training tool I have seen in my 45 years of amateur radio.

Let us start with a little history. Dr. Willi Kraml, OE1WKL, and some friends were attending a conference in 2018. During lunch, they discussed that a better tool needed to be available to teach and train Morse Code. Dr. Kraml drew out a design on a napkin!



Harald Boeck, OE3HBS developed a PC board using an available HelTec module. Dr. Kraml posted it online and sold 20 immediately. Within a short time, orders for hundreds came in. Thus, the Morserino was born.



- M32 is feature rich. It is an electronic keyer featuring Iambic A, B, Ultimatic keying, Single Lever, or straight keying.
- M32 has paddles that are attached for you to use to get started. You may plug in your paddles or straight key too.
- M32 has an internal Display and speaker.
- M32 is a mega featured CW Trainer code generator.
- M32 has Koch method lesson group that you follow along with as you progress through B1 & B2 Carousel classes. Yes Dr. Kraml incorporated the LICW Carousel Sequence into the Morserino.
- M32 is an "Echo Response" CW Trainer. It sends a challenge, and you immediately send it back. The challenge can be random, English words, Call signs, or CW abbreviations. There is an Echo challenge in the Koch lessons too.
- M32 is a CW transceiver. M32 can send to another M32 that is in close proximity via LoRa or it can transmit via the internet. I have worked England and Thailand from here in Florida with my M32.
- M32 will decode your transmitting and show you if your CW is pure or not. Mine wasn't!
- M32 will decode received CW if connected to your radio.

I encourage every LICW student to take a look at the Morserino 32. Read about it here <https://www.morserino.info/> Long Island CW Club has pages and pages of information and videos in the LICW DropBox Folder 19. Roger N3GE has also written numerous white papers to assist in making your Morserino work. These are available in the file section of the LICW Groups.io.

How hard is it to build a Morserino? Well I have built many Morserinos for LICW members and repaired quite a few. If you have soldering experience, easy. If you do not you may want

to get some assistance or start with a simple project as the Morserino is moderately difficult. I want to share a few tips on building the Morserino. Many of these have been common problems I have encountered when repairing the Morserino.

1. Read the assembly manual. Now read it again! You can download the current assembly manual from GitHub at this link [Morserino-32/Documentation/Assembly Instructions at master · oe1wkl/Morserino-32 · GitHub](https://github.com/oe1wkl/Morserino-32) There is also a photo album at this link with additional pictures.

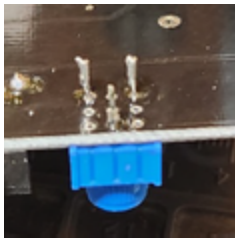
2. DO NOT USE LEAD FREE SOLDER!!! If

you do, you will probably be ordering a second kit. I prefer to use Kester solder 44. Available on Amazon



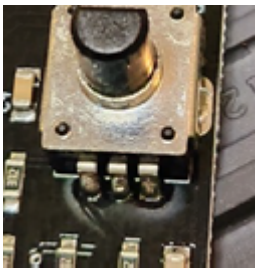
3. You will need a pretty hot soldering iron, at least 40 Watts and with a very small point.

4. There is a small rheostat with a knob next to the on/off switch. The orientation is very important. There are 9



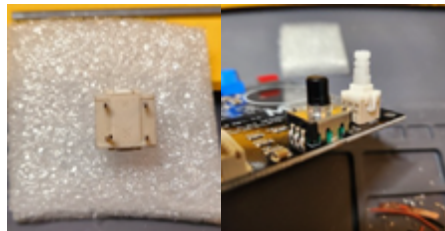
holes because Dr. Kraml never knows which brand of part he will get. You want to orient the pins so they are in rows front to back. Do not solder two pins in the same front to back line.

When you install the black encoder, it is imperative to get it really hot so that the solder runs down leg to

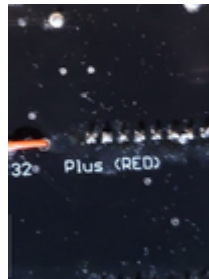


the other side of the PC Board. There are foil connections on both sides of the Board. If you don't hit both sides with your solder, you will encounter issues. It should look something like this on the top:

5. Next to the Black Encoder is a tan and white switch that is for functions wake up from sleep/volume/WPM Speed. This switch's pins are in a rectangular position. Here is a secret, if you really tried hard, you can put this in 90 degrees off. Your Morserino will not work. Here is the bottom and a second image with it and the encoder installed in the correct orientation.



6. This is a BIG PROBLEM. There are 32 pins that must be soldered on the bottom of the PC Board. These pins are small and really close together.



If you get the slightest solder bridge across any pins, you will encounter freak problems with you Morserino. Here is a photo of a board. Can you spot the solder bridge?

Here is how you want it to look, not the prettiest job but no bridging:

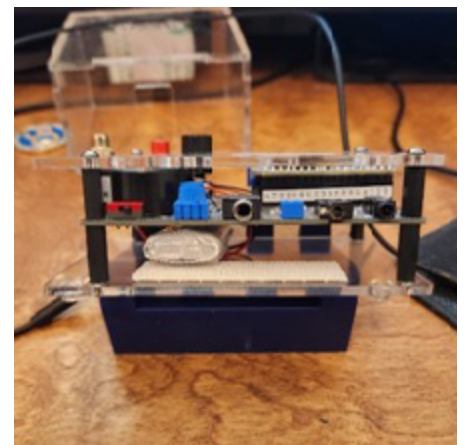


You have two options to power your Morserino. You may use a cell phone charger and plug it into the Micro USB port on the left side of the Morserino.

This does not require a battery. I prefer to use LiPo batteries. I use drone batteries that can be purchased off Amazon. You get several of the batteries and a little charger that will plug into the cell phone charger. This little charger will charge all the batteries at the same time in a short period of time. Below is the battery I bought to run my M32. It is a little larger than those recommended on forums. I keep 2 or 3 charged and sitting on the bottom deck so I can plug in a fresh one if I run one down while operating. This only happens to me once in the middle of class. These batteries come with a tiny charger too. It will charge all the batteries at once. It has the correct connector to plug into M32.

<https://www.amazon.com/URGENEX-Battery-Rechargeable-Batteries-Quadcopter/dp/B08XZNRTCP/>

I build the Morserino with all the stand offs on the bottom to raise the PC board so you have space to put your batteries underneath. I put a 3M Command strip of Velcro on the bottom of the PC Board. To separate the Velcro halves, just use a small flat screwdriver and peel them apart. You can cut up the second piece to stick to your batteries and Velcro them underneath. You can remove the standoffs to change the height if you desire. There is an Allen wrench in your envelope that will fit.



If you try to charge the battery through the Morserino, it will take many hours (note: Remember when charging through the Morserino USB Port that the on/off switch must be in the on position).

Be sure if you order something different that it has the correct plug. You can use a cell phone charger or computer through a Micro USB cable to power the Morserino also.

The Morserino now includes two pair of capacitive touch paddles and a 50-ohm terminated end to use in place of the LoRa rubber duck antenna. I include a 3D printed clip to hold the paddles in place. I also put a Command strip underneath to hold your battery.

Remember that Roger N3GE and Dave W7DLR host the Morserino forum every Sunday Morning at 10am eastern time. I have been known to join them. The group will answer whatever questions you come up with on the use of the Morserino. You can also contact me directly if you need assistance. Eric Kennard, WS4K



Photo by Bob W7JNM/K2LCW

LONG ISLAND CW CLUB



Teachers of Morse Code longislandcwclub.org

WELCOME TO THE LONG ISLAND CW CODE CHALLENGE!

By Kasey, KD2YMM

The second quarter of 2024 brings the close of the first full year of the 'LICW Challenge' and marks the beginning of a new quarter, where your point count resets. With the continuation of the weekly GOTA assistance class (Saturdays 16:00 UTC in Zoom C), there is never a better time to get on the air, no matter your operating speed!

Full details, rules for participation and past scores can be found at <https://licwchallenge.org/>

Submitting and tracking your scores has never been easier thanks to the online Logger App located at <https://licw-apps-h96ku.ondigitalocean.app/logger/>

Any operator wishing to be listed as a Special station, including the coveted opportunity to use the LICW Club Call, may email kd2ymm@gmail.com.

The following is a sample of scores from the first quarter of 2024. Will you rise to the 'Challenge' and be awarded as a top scorer!?

Name	Call Sign	LICW#	Score	Award
Mark	AA0YY	4770	12	Bronze
Charles	AD4CH	3738	2	
Evan	K2EJT	3740 I	2	
Jerry	K2GV	4 I	92	Silver
Bruce	K3FBR	5266	3	
Jeff	K4TNE	3163	5	
Ken	K5ENS	3562	35	Bronze
Bill	K5VB	5648	5	
Andrew	K7HSH	4456	47	Bronze
Marcos	KBARE	4282 I	34	Bronze
Steve	K9NUD	3918	5	
Eric	K9VIC	2404 I	81	Silver
Wayne	KA1CKD	5572	21	Bronze
John	KA1DTG	5332	6	
Kelly	KA7MA	4748	46	Bronze
Joseph	KB0YTS	2576	3	
Randy	KB4CQJ	1086 I	84	Silver
Don	KC0DWZ	3982 I	119	Silver
Brian	KC9HEK	5275	19	Bronze
Kasey	KD2YMM	3405 I	2	
DUGBO	KD7DUG	3608	29	Bronze
James	KE8EON	4161	2	
Jesse	KE8MDA	5369	6	
Grace	KE8RUJ	K100 K	18	Bronze
Adan	KF0DST	2727	58	Bronze
Ryan	KF0GVX	K30 K	3	
Connor	KF0OKY	K128 K	3	
Isalah	KJ5CMP	120 K	2	
Elizabeth	KJ7MEB	4617	9	
Kat	KK6CN	1565 A	2	
Dale	KK9D	3790	11	Bronze
Stuart	KM3STU	4277	24	Bronze
Mitch	KN4ONH	689	11	Bronze
Jerry	KN4SYD	1203	3	
Iac	KN6VWQ	4343	7	
Lidiette	KQ3QJ	4685	66	Bronze
Jonathan	KQ4DJG	K90 K	11	Bronze
Rich	NO6SO	701	5	
Jim	NO8PA	588 I	146	Silver
Richard	N1RBD	230	23	Bronze
drew	N2AKJ	3224 I	12	Bronze
Ed	N2EC	3533 I	21	Bronze
Dean	N2TNN	5402	46	Bronze
Rich	N2WBJ	890	20	Bronze
Dave	N5DCH	3064 I	19	Bronze
Joy	N6GO	3787	17	Bronze
Aldo	NA7DO	5063	6	
Nick	N0CK	3058	5	
Donald	NN8B	5450	6	
Ant	NU3U	1876	17	Bronze
David	SM2YUW	2187	5	
Annie	VA7NNE	K127 K	10	Bronze
Phil	VE4STG	4731	3	
Jim	VE6GL	4003 I	8	
Jim	VE6GL	4003 I	8	
Rose	W1R8G	1800 I	5	
Savi	W1SAV	3822	8	
LICW	W2LCW	1CW A	16	Bronze
Cathy	W4CMG	899 I	7	
Ed	W4EMB	3459 I	7	
Brian	W5BAY	2082	3	
Dale	W7HLO	2356	13	Bronze
Bob	W7JNM	488 I	29	Bronze
DAVID	W9AIL	793 I	4	
HAL	WA2AKV	77 I	56	Bronze
Ken	WB2KWC	921 M	41	Bronze
Si	WDSIR	K80 K	187	Gold
Russell	W5ARD	5718	2	
Pete	WM4Q	3273	15	Bronze
Lou	WZ3J	4064	5	

THE DOCTOR IS IN FORUM

By Greg WA1JXR

Hello fellow LICW members. The Doctor Is In forum is held Monday Evenings 7PM EST in Zoom B. Videos of the forum can be found in Drop Box # 35

The Forum is an Open Forum format. We sometimes have a specific topic or presentation but most of the time it is open format and we discuss your question or topic. Please come to the Forum with your questions??

If you have suggestions for topics you would like to see covered and discussed please send me an e-mail at wa1jxr@comcast.net with your ideas.

Please join us on Monday evenings 7PM Zoom B. Looking forward to a fun 2024 and thanks for all the support for the forum.

FIRST QSOS

**SHAIE WILLIAMS
K5JDX**

Soon to change as I applied for a new vanity call that fits better to the CW side in my opinion.

I started trying to learn code back in the middle of October. My current work and life schedule make it really hard to be consistent. I joined LICW as a life member about the same time. This was a no brainer as I knew this would be a life time hobby. Not sure who or what originally pointed me towards LICW but I saw a few of the available resources and knew this was the place to be. I still haven't scratched the surface on the resources available from LICW. I have been using the code practice page more than anything. I have only been able

LICW - YL4CW OPEN HOUSE

By Anne Dirkman, KC9YL

Our YL Open House continues to meet every Monday evening. Ham-Vention is coming up soon, so several of us are making plans to meet. Hopefully we can organize a photo-op! The ARRL Events App will help with that! Don't forget to list YL4CW under your Organizations – and include an email (phone # optional) - on your profile. That will enable us to search for and contact each other. Discussions in recent weeks have ranged from Geocaching (a fun add-on to POTA activities), Skywarn, ARRL Insurance, updating QRZ pages, cut numbers and ways to find other YL nets.

And as always, we share upcoming events, tips and tricks, software suggestions, and try to help troubleshoot and advise where we can.



N6CC and friends were camping on Crandall Peak in the Stanislaus National Forest running CW with portable military gear. Dipoles up in the trees, the J-45 Knee Key at work. Here running the 10 watt crystal-controlled AN/TRC-77 with buddies on the west coast long range Recon channels of 7050/3550 kc, Days/Nights. The TRC-88 and PRC-74 were also exercised for CW and occasional USB contacts. Good fun!

to get on a few of the zoom meetings due to time conflicts on my end. I started practicing my sending and became fairly confident in that. I was listening to words and some QSOs online and trying to copy. It seemed like I was getting better at copying until I made my first QSO. I don't know if it was nerves or if my copying is just still that bad. To get to my first QSO I was watching the SKCC Sked page one evening and a gentleman had posted his call sign as active and beside it said "QRS just ask". So, I did and reached out on a call with him. We exchanged the basics and RST before I bailed and said 73. My sending was so butchered as well due to nerves it made me more nervous. Little did I know that the gentleman is N1TX and was in the middle of operating a special station K3Y/KL7 for the SKCC month long contest. He is in Alaska and apparently has several people trying to reach him for the contest as a unique state to get. I am in Texas and it was a good 599 signal. I was nervous and about to get off the air for the evening excited that I had made my first QSO. N2TNN, a LICW member, reached out and said let's try a 2nd QSO. I answered and tried to exchange the bare minimum, call sign and RST. Dean said no you aren't getting off that easy. We went on to make a few more exchanges such as QTH and pleasantries. I am thankful now for his persistence and keeping me on for a few more exchanges. Thank you to both of these gentlemen for their patience. I learned a few things for sure. One, just jump out there and try. People are more than willing to help. Two, I need a lot more practice on copying than I thought. Third, I hope the nervousness goes away so I will stop butchering the sending part of a QSO. Lastly, I need to find a code buddy or elmer to help work with me some more. Looking forward to many more years of learning and getting better at this part of the hobby.

TRAVIS KK7LER

I passed my technician in March of '23. I bought a 2 meter Anytone radio and played around with that and got kind of bored with it I couldn't get the DMR to work and was just ready for something different. A friend of mine had a Yaesu FT 450D for sale and I bought it from him. Boy how my world changed. I got on 10 meters and made some contacts with phone. I would be surfing around the band and would come across someone sending CW and I just fell in love with the sound and how nostalgic it seemed. I downloaded some apps to start learning CW and got after it. I was riding the struggle bus learning on my own. I will admit, I am more determined than smart. I have myself set on learning CW but I was getting a little overwhelmed and discouraged that I was wasn't picking it up like I thought I would and should. My buddy Wade, KD7KNZ, told me about LICW and that it might be beneficial if I try to learn in a classroom style environment. That is the best move I have made on this CW trail. Being around folks that have the desire to learn code, and instructors with a passion to teach and extreme patience makes it so fun and enjoyable. Fast forward to my first QSO with Jerry, K2GV. When he said to turn on break in on my rig my heart jumped. I thought oh crap, it's getting real and I am gonna make a complete fool of myself. He walked me through the process of how the QSO would go and told me to git er done. It took me a couple tries to get it sent the correct way but by golly we did it. A big load was lifted off my shoulders after that. I ain't sayin I have all the confidence in the world right now on my CW skills but the first one is out of the way. Every night I get on and surf through 10, 80 and 40 trying to find CW being transmitted and work at copying it. Copying seems to be my nemesis right now. The training

modules on LICW are awesome. I try to do 15 minutes a day when I can. I have a long ways to go on this journey, but I look forward everyday I get to play with it. I just want to tell everyone involved with LICW I am very grateful for them and all their efforts in keeping it going and spreading their knowledge. Thank you everyone! 73

JOSHUA W4CQS

I am very pleased to be a part of the LICW and am thankful for the tutelage of the club's kind volunteers. With regards to my first CW QSO, it was a POTA activator that I hunted. The information, if needed, can be found on my QRZ under my W4CQS log. As for my personal story, I got my tech and general license at the end of December and joined the LICW in January. My goal has been to use radio as a means for self improvement. In particular, I am drawn to the physical challenge of SOTA and the natural beauty that comes part and parcel with mountains. CW fits well into any SOTA activators tool kit and so I felt I needed to add it to my new skill set.

Since joining the CW community I have made several new acquaintances and many new facets have been revealed. I no longer see CW or the LICW as simply a means to an end but rather, a growing part of my life and the first steps in what appears to be a long and rewarding journey full of many interesting fellow traveller's.

LICW THUNDER DOWN UNDER

Mike/N1CC

G'Day: LICW has members in 57 countries around the world. We are pleased to announce our first Beginners Carousel class specifically scheduled to accommodate them. VK

Dave VK5PL will conduct a BC class on Mondays at 6 am ET. That's 8 pm Australian Eastern Time and midday in Europe.

More classes are planned. Garry VK2GAZ and Lidiette KQ3Q are in the Associate Instructor training pipeline and will each conduct similarly scheduled classes. We are actively recruiting instructors interested in conducting these types of classes. Ideal candidates are familiar with the LICW culture, curriculum, and teaching methods, possess good communication and people skills, and have sincere empathy, patience, and a drive for helping students grow and develop. If you or someone you know is interested, please reach out to me (mikepadron@me.com).

MY JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF CW

Tom Langer KD9FPC

The trek started a long time ago. When I was a kid, my dad operated a military surplus transmitter with a Heathkit receiver and an end fed out the window. He was in the Navy on loan to the Air Force. As an MMA graduate engineer he designed and implemented armory control systems in the then B-47 project during the "Cold War". We lived in family housing, aka an apartment. He would sit by the hour with his key and rig and clatter away. Canada was a huge leap and would bring him to run out and announce the deed.

Over the next years that set moved with us. To Marietta, Milwaukee, you name the place and it went. Later he could be found running mobile in his old Olds with a whip on the back bumper bent over to the front bumper bracket. And in the basement, right next to the washing machine and dryer sat his rig. That was back in the

era of cloth diapers. And I had two younger brothers who both knew how to keep the washer busy. But through it all, my dad soldiered through.

From there life became a blur for me. School, playing in a rock bands, to racing cars and learning how to fly as a General Aviation pilot it went quickly. Then married with two kids of my own. And to make sure I kept the move on we started in St. Louis, then to Fort Wayne, followed by Toledo, then up to Michigan and back to Toledo. It was there my kids started playing soccer and someone heard I had played some soccer. That began a 28 year trip as a coach that ended with me coaching adults, high school and college soccer.

Following the most awesome career path I could imagine, first corporate then entrepreneurial, I arrived at 2007. After a regular physical I was diagnosed with a very rare immune disease. At the age of 50, they told me no more sports car racing, no soccer since a hit in the head could result in a brain hemorrhage. My platelets were being killed by my own system. Was told then that it was typical for something else to happen down the road.

To 2009 when my liver stopped working properly. That led to a journey of MD's. Think I saw every kind of "ist" there is to see. Time went on. I was bound and determined to fight every step. When 2015 came around the complications along with the medicine side effects made it such that I had to quit working. So, that year we made arrangements for our 4 businesses and come 11/1 my working days ended.

Needless to say I was not ready to stop. A shout out to God, my family and friends and an amazing medical team. I was going to fight this thing as long as possible until the good

Lord was ready to take me home. It was tough though. I knew what I wanted to do but my body wouldn't do it. It was then I remembered my dad's radios and all of the fun he had. And I remembered that ham radio is like a million pursuits in one radio. There was SSB, CW, digital and all of the rest.

With that in mind I bought my rig and assembled a shack. Then I hit the books and started studying. Wrong order I suppose, but it worked out. My early days were spent with 2m and 70cm. Got my General and a Kenwood 590SG and the world of HF opened up to me. Got my Extra just so I could use all the band space. By early 2016 I was up and running.

It was at this time I was looking for another challenge. As a result, I signed up with what was then a quickly growing group known as LICW (#371). Met with Howard and Rich the folks responsible for building this club. Began learning from this amazing instructor by the name of Supoj and others. Got to a point that I wasn't too bad. Thanks to my learning at LICW could hold my own on a QSO at about 12 WPM. Then the shoe dropped.

Through 2020 and 2021 my health really collapsed. Had surgeries to repair spine fractures from falling, then another to create bypasses around my liver to keep fluid from building up in my gut. A fellow LICW guy came to the rescue. Nigel (G0JOH), and I began practicing together and talking frequently. By then we realized we were like "twin sons of different mothers". He stuck with me thru thick and thin. Over time some other LICW guys came along and we grew... Al (Keith), Ray, Rich and Mike. It was, and is, great fun. And along the way I was introduced to Morse Ninja. Along with LICW I was learning quickly.

At this point I really have to thank the guys for putting up with me. As 2021 progressed my speech became very slurred and code was haphazard at best. But, these guys stuck with me. And, when I wasn't able to participate well, I could always go to practice. And in between Nigel and I have been "Zooming" nearly every day since. Shortly after we became members of LICW. Our XYL's have become big friends too. In fact, this past October Nigel and Kim came to visit us for 10 really great days. What a blessing.

In early October of 2021 I spent a few days in hospital on another planet. My test scores tanked, and they told my wife and eldest son that I had hours, maybe a day without a transplant. A liver was found and it was a match. Following the 14 hours total of surgery I was put in ICU. Tests in-

dicated that I was having damage to my brainstem, had 2 rounds of heart failure and pneumonia. Was kept sedated for 5 weeks. A month after ICU I was learning how to speak and swallow, get in a car and the rest, I was sent home.

As soon as I was able to move about a little, I wanted to get back to my rig. I was blessed to have a wife who had had a stair chair put in so I could go to the basement and get to the shack. So, after months away, I was in front of the rig. Fired it up, began listening for CW. I did not recognize a thing. Nothing. The Morse code was gone. Thanks to the damage to the brain stem it might as well have been another language.

Again, LICW and Kurt at Morse Ninja have come to the rescue. Since I wasn't going down without a fight,

and with an awesome bunch of doctors, I have returned to relearn CW. I typically audit the sessions so that I don't slow down the rest of the group. I am now at 25 characters. And I am learning to hear code again. There was lasting damage with the brain stem so the connection between my ear and my hand is slow. But, I declare publically to my LICW fellow members, I will return... albeit at slow speed. Appreciate the slow CW activities of SKCC.

Wrapping up this article I simply wish to say thank you. It's been quite a journey. But if you see yourself in any of this, you have found very amazing people. Your fellow members are all about helping people become great at CW. But it's much more than that. They care about you as a person too.



Photo by Randy KB4QQJ

COLORADO SOTA

Jim Stinson NOIPA

Spring is here and in Colorado the SOTA Winter Bonus period has ended. That means to get points, you've got to go up high. And while the deep Winter challenges, high winds and extreme cold, have subsided, snow is still on the high peaks and thumbing its frosty nose at us.

That's not to say the high peaks are inaccessible. Snowshoes and spikes are still the order of the day, and in many cases it's easier to snowshoe over the boulders, than it is to stumble through them.

Warmer daytime temperatures mean the snow melts in the afternoon, seeping down through the layers that



have accumulated over the winter. Then when the temperatures plummet at night, the wet snow freezes and consolidates the layers into a packed mass. Now, the avalanche danger that keeps many summits off limits subsides and those high, steep peaks are now on the list again.

A recent activation of Mount Flora, WOC/SR-035, at 13,146' had an early morning start with trailhead temperatures right around freezing. Heading up the popular sledding/ski hill, the snow was knee deep, but frozen solid. We started with snowshoes on, rather than carry them. The solid

slope kept us on top, like Legolas on Caradhras, and spikes would have been sufficient for the climb.

Just under halfway up the mountain, snow gave way to earth and rocks, and we were able to pack the snowshoes the rest of the way up the mountain. It sure feels good to get them off and tread the ground in just boots.

The summit was a mix of deep snow and protruding boulders. I found an upright slab, facing South, with a cushion of soft snow that provided a shield from any wind that might come up. Though I had brought my Bothy Bag, expecting a stiff breeze on the treeless summit, the wind was light and the sky cloudless. No Bothy needed.

After stringing out my end-fed antenna, I settled in for the activation. Protected from the breeze, and facing the sun in a cloudless sky, I was treated to a gloveless morning with my paddles.

The snowstorm we expected was late, and we were able to operate for well over an hour, running all the bands.

Knowing the snow would have softened in the sun, the snowshoes went back on for the descent, and we followed our tracks back down to the top of the sled hill, being chased by the incoming snow. Still in the shadows of the surrounding trees, the final hill was quite firm and allowed us to glissade down the last several hundred yards, saving us time, but soaking our butts.

While we didn't collect another 3 points of Winter Bonus, we were able to comfortably, and safely get back up to the high country for a spectacular day on an 8-point summit. And we

have our eyes set on quite a few other high summits that, until now, were not worth the bonus points.

KLØS TECH TIP #6 USEFUL WORKBENCH ADDITIONS

Here are a few helpful additions I've added to my workbench, things that make working on equipment easier. Amazon.com product links are included at the end of this Tech Tip.

#1 - "BENCH COOKIES"

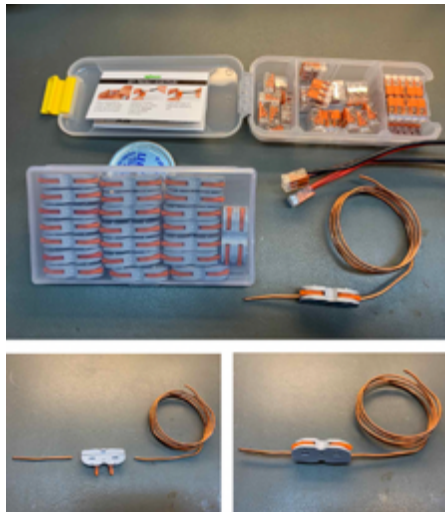
Need to prop up the front panel of a radio you're working on? "Bench Cookies" are just the thing. What's a Bench Cookie? They look like a hockey puck and have a non-slip material on their top and bottom sides. Adding a set of four to the bench gives you great flexibility in propping stuff up to work on instead of scratching around looking for a book, a box, roll of solder, etc., things that gear invariably slips off of. They're available from different manufacturers and are a worthwhile investment.



#2 - "LEVER NUTS"

Although electrical wire-nuts are still used extensively a newer concept is taking hold - lever nuts. These connecting nuts open and close their connection surfaces with a lever action and make it a snap (pun intended) to connect two solid or stranded wires together. They are available in sets with in different configurations to match the number of wires you need to connect.

You can see in the picture below that they're even useful for temporarily or permanently connecting radio power supply cables. Simply open the lever, insert the wires into the appropriate ends and close the lever.



With proper weatherproofing they could even be used for making antenna wire connections as well, although I'd be careful with high power operation. Search for "lever nuts" and you'll find lots of different varieties; keep an assortment handy for making temporary connections at the workbench instead of the usual alligator clips, especially for thicker gauge wire. "Wago" is a brand name associated with one style of these connectors and they're often referred to as such.

#3 - "THIRD HANDS"



These devices have been around for a long time and small versions are usually one of the first soldering accessories I see new hams purchase. This version is a much larger industrial strength model that offers three flexible goose-neck alligator clips for holding a project temporarily in place for soldering and other work. Each individual arm can be removed and the set comes with a replacement alligator clip and soft rubber clip tip covers that can be used for fragile material. The unit's base quickly clamps and unclamps to your bench and I keep the middle arm detached unless I need it. Hope you find these workbench tips useful!

73 – Dino KLØS (kl0s@cox.net)
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Links: Here are some starting points to Amazon sellers for the products described here.

<https://www.amazon.com/Bench-Dog-10-035-Cookie-Grippers/dp/B0037Z7D0A?th=1>

(The orange colored Bench Dog Tools don't appear to be available at a reasonable price any longer; consider the ones made by Rockler; ~ \$15)

https://www.amazon.com/Wago-221-412-221-413-221-415-Assortment/dp/B018MGMFDI/ref=sr_1_7?dchild=1&keywords=WAGO+221+LEVERNUTS&qid=1602450517&s=hi&sr=1-7

(Wago connectors; prices vary by kit selection)

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07QCJQRDF/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1 (Kotto Helping Hands Soldering Tool; ~ \$15)

KLØS Tech Tips are a companion to my longer "Shack Notes" series but

concentrate on shorter, general tips and techniques for both our radio and test benches. These Tech Tips are forwarded to you via our club's email reflector and are also uploaded to our WAARC Groups.io Files section.

In addition, new club/group members might want to scroll through the set of "KLØS Shack Notes" located in the "Files" section at our Groups.io web site. They cover a variety of topics you may find useful and several of those Shack Notes have been published in QST magazine. If you're not an ARRL member you can still view some of my other articles as the League has included them as free articles on their web site:

Protecting Shack Equipment from Electrostatic Discharge:

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/QST/This%20Month%20in%20QST/January2019/Papas.pdf>

Installing Crimp Connectors:

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/QST/This%20Month%20in%20QST/February2019/Papas.pdf>

Soldering Surface-Mount Devices:

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/QST/This%20Month%20in%20QST/March2019/Papas%2003.pdf>