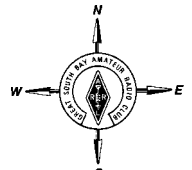


# THE COMPASS



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT SOUTH BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

VOLUME 30 ISSUE 2

"..serving the community through Public Service."

February, 2003

## GSBARC 2003 OFFICERS

President: Walter Wenzel, KA2RGI  
Vice Pres: David Wandell, N2UHR  
Treasurer: Tom Carrubba, KA2D  
Corr. Secretary: Scott Verity, KC2FBV  
Rec. Sec: PattyLynn Wandell, KC2AUX  
Director 1: Dom Stengele, WA2UJI  
Director 2: Frank Spinazzola, KC2EGK  
Director 3: Phil Lewis, N2MUN  
Director 4: Charles Rousselet, N2MZK

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GSBARC General Meeting

Thursday Jan 30, 2003 – 8:00 PM  
Thursday Feb 27, 2003 – 8:00 PM  
Thursday Mar 27, 2003 – 8:00 PM

### GSBARC VE

Sunday Feb 23, 2003 - 12 PM  
Sunday Mar 23, 2003 - 12 PM

### GSBARC Executive Officers Meeting

Thursday Feb 13, 2003 – 8:00 PM  
Thursday Mar 13, 2003 – 8:00 PM

### GSBARC Open House

Saturdays 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

## NETS

Newsline Report - Dave Wandell, N2UHR  
Monday 7:00 PM 146.685/R

Club Info Net - Dave Wandell, N2UHR  
Monday 7:15 PM 146.685/R

DX/Contest Info - Phil Lewis, N2MUN  
Monday 7:15 PM 146.685/R

TOBARES Net - Rotating Net Controls  
Monday 8:15 PM 146.685/R

Swap 'n Shop Net - Bud Eagan, WA2QAV  
Tuesday 7:30 PM 146.685/R

10 M Net - Brian Keegan, N2NGE  
Tuesday 8:00 PM 28.320

New Years Eve Net  
Dec. 31 12 Midnight 146.685/R

## REPEATERS

2 M 146.685/146.085 PL 110.9  
1 1/2 M 223.860/222.260 PL 131.8  
70 CM 440.850/445.850 PL 114.8  
70 CM 447.625/442.625 PL 114.8\*

\*Repeater owned by Chris Baumgartner, WA2AMX

# President's Message

By Walter, KA2RGI

## Field Day 2003 June 28-29

Field Day is just four (4) months away. It is time to think about getting ready for our annual event. That means checking out the equipment, and making sure it ready for use for day. We have to check and test all antennas, radios, and the assorted equipment that goes with each station and see if we have to repair any of it or replace any needs so.

It also means for us to think about any changes or modifications we would like to do for this year's event. This could be a simple modification or something, as more complex designing a new antenna or radio for a mode not used last year. The limit to what you want to do for this years Field Day is what you as a club desire.

We will again be operating from the same location, Babylon Town Hall's East Lawn as we have since GSBARC has been doing Field Days, because of the involvement of the club with ARES, RACES, and the local Emergency Management with the Town. This year there are some changes to the reporting of Field Day and operating from an EOC. We are looking into this to see how thing my affect us in our reporting during operation. We will have more on thing as we obtain the information.

73,  
Walter, KA2RGI

## GSBARC Committee Chairpersons

GSBARC Committee Chairpersons	
<b>Club Apparel</b> – Frank "Spin", KC2EGK	<b>Field Day Co-Coordinators</b> –
<b>Club Station/Equip</b> – Walter, KA2RGI	Equipment Preparation – Doug, KB2SIE
<b>DX/Contesting</b> – Tom, KA2D	Equipment Take Down – Position Open
<b>Education</b> – Phil, N2MUN	Food Preparation – Walter, KA2RGI
<b>Hamfest</b> – Walter, KA2RGI	Safety Manager – Position Open
<b>Library</b> – Dom, WA2UJI	Station Manager 1 – Position Open
<b>Membership</b> – Tom, N2MIG	Station Manager 2 – Position Open
<b>Newsletter</b> – Walter, KA2RGI	Station Manager 3 – Position Open
<b>Home page</b> – Tom, KA2D	Station Manager 4 – Position Open
<b>DX Cluster</b> – Tom, KA2D	Station Manager 5 – Position Open
<b>Repeaters</b> – Walter, KA2RGI	Logs / Reporting – Tom, KA2D
<b>VE Sessions</b> – Tom, KA2D	

## MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

BABYLON TOWN HALL EOC, LINDENHURST, NY

Thursday February 13, 2003

Meeting called to order by KA2RGI at 8:00 PM

### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

President	KA2RGI	Walter Wenzel
Vice President	KC2EXP	David Wandell
Treasurer	KA2D	Tom Carrubba
Recording Secretary	KC2AUX	PattyLynn Wandell
Corresponding Secretary	KC2FBV	Scott Verity
Director 1	WA2UJI	Dom Stengele
Director 2	KC2EGK	Frank Spinazzola
Director 3	N2MUN	Phil Lewis
Director 4	N2MZK	Charles Rousselet

### BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

### ADDITIONAL MEMBERS PRESENT:

N2PIK, N2MUN, K2TAT, WA2QAV

### RECORDING SEC. REPORT: PattyLynn, KC2AUX

Made a motion to suspend with the reading of the previous month's minutes, and accept them as published.

N2OCK seconded the motion.

Motion was accepted by majority of membership present.

### CORRESPONDENCE SEC. REPORT: Scott, KC2FBV

N2GA & N2FF notified of club officer changes. US Islands QSO confirmation are now done with eMail instead of QSL cards. Bank Statements, Dues Renewals, Newsletters from other clubs, Receipts for Oct newsletter mailing, request for dues from ARLS.

### TREASURER'S REPORT: Tom, KA2D

\$1396.97 in checking account

\$2769.17 in CD - Next CD rollover is 2/09/2003

\$3973.29 Total as of 11-29-2002

Projector Fund Balance from 2002: \$180.00

Grand Total of all funds: \$4346.14

2003 GSBARC Budget was presented to the Exec. Board

Budget was unanimously accepted by the Exec. Board.

### APPAREL: KC2EGK, Spin

Checks for Jacket orders was requested.

Restock order to be given to supplier for 3 each size for a total of 12 shirts, and hats. Tee Shirts are ready. Hats & Golf shirts will be ready next week.

### CLUB STATION & EQUIPMENT: Walter, KA2RGI

Nothing new to report.

### DX & CONTESTING: Tom, KA2D

Latest DX and contest info is presented on Monday Club Net. Tom gave info on upcoming events and contests via supplied info sheet.

### EDUCATION: Phil, N2MUN

March 4 new Tech Classes will start at 7:30PM at TOB EOC.

An Extra Class will start at conclusion of Tech Class.

Saturday mornings KA2RGI is running specials sessions to assist persons with code during open house through Jan.

### FIELD DAY June 28-29, 2003: Doug, KB2SIE

At present club station will be 5A w/ GOTA Station.

Need additional committee personnel assist with checking out of Field Day equipment. Equipment check outs will be during "Open House" on Saturday's unless otherwise requested.

### HAMFEST: Walter, KA2RGI

Nothing new to report.

### LIBRARY: Dom, WA2UJI

Nothing new to report.

### MEMBERSHIP: N2MIG, Tom

Nothing new to report.

### NETS:

Newsline: MP3 format working better for quality

2 Club Net: Phil is stepping out of DX portion of net looking for replacement. N2UHR is looking for backup Net Controls

Swap n Shop: Bud will email Walter with additions for compass listing. Needs new listings.

10 M Informal: 12+ check ins Net running 30-40 minutes long.

### NEWSLETTER: Walter, KA2RGI

Deadline for submissions for Newsletter is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Looking to see if anyone is interested in being editor of newsletter, If so contact KA2RGI.

### Homepage / WEBSITE / DX CLUSTER: Tom, KA2D

Webpage is down. Use backup site

<http://www.qsl.net/ka2d/gsbarc.html>.

Cluster Telnet is working OK.

### REPEATERS: Walter, KA2RGI

144 - checking various things to correct extra RF in area.

Rich Moffit is looking at Central Alarm equipment.

220 - no change

440 - no change

### VE SESSIONS: Tom, KA2D

2003 Test Fee is \$12.00

The next session will be held on Feb. 23 at Town Hall.

### SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

Nothing to report

### ARES/RACES: Walter, KA2RGI

Time to renew for ARES and RACES.

Feb 20, 2003 next Basic Skywarn Training Session anyone planning to attend needs to pre-register.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jan. Gen Mtg. - Tom KA2D will talk to club about DX Cluster

Feb. Gen Mtg. - QAV suggested blind auction for meeting.

Mar. Gen Mtg. - No suggestion was given

### OLD BUSINESS:

HRU 2003 is Jan 19<sup>th</sup> in Oyster Bay.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bud WA2QAV will chair a committee to collect foreign stamps from QSL cards for donation to possible local school that are interested in stamp collecting. He will pick up donations.

GUEST SPEAKERS & PROGRAMS:

Jan – The DX Cluster and its operation by Tom, KA2D

A motion to adjourn was made @ 9:15 PM by KA2RGI and seconded by N2UHR.

Respectfully submitted by  
PattyLynn Wandell, KC2AUX  
Recording Secretary



**GREAT SOUTH BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING**

BABYLON TOWN HALL EOC, LINDENHURST, NY  
Thursday January 30, 2003  
Meeting called to order by KA2RGI at 8:00 PM

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

President	KA2RGI	Walter Wenzel
Vice President	KC2EXP	David Wandell
Treasurer	KA2D	Tom Carrubba
Recording Secretary	KC2AUX	PattyLynn Wandell
Corresponding Secretary	KC2FBV	Scott Verity
Director 1	WA2UJI	Dom Stengele
Director 2	KC2EGK	Frank Spinazzola
Director 3	N2MUN	Phil Lewis

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Director 4                    N2MZX                    Charles Rousselet

RECORDING SEC. REPORT: PattyLynn, KC2AUX  
N2UHR made a motion to suspend with the reading of the previous month’s minutes, and accept them as published. N2OCK seconded the motion.  
Motion was accepted by majority of membership present.

CORRESPONDENCE SEC. REPORT: Scott, KC2FBV  
Bank Statements, MetroCor Frequency Certification for repeaters, Radio Central Hamfest flyer, LIMARC Hamfest flyer, QSL cards, Dues Renewals, Newsletters from other clubs, Insurance Certificate for club owned equipment.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Tom, KA2D  
\$1204.12 in checking account  
\$2769.17 in CD - Next CD rollover is 2/09/2003  
\$3973.29 Total as of 11-29-2002  
Outstanding check to Viking for club apparel purchase

APPAREL: KC2EGK, Spin  
Checks for Jacket orders was requested.  
Restock order to be given to supplier for 3 each size for a total of 12 shirts, and hats. Club approved to purchase misprinted tee shirts (Blue Lighthouse) for \$6 each.

CLUB STATION & EQUIPMENT: Walter, KA2RGI  
Nothing new to report.

DX & CONTESTING: Tom, KA2D  
Latest DX and contest info is presented on Monday Club Net. Tom gave info on upcoming events and contests via supplied info sheet.

EDUCATION: Phil, N2MUN  
March 4 new Tech Classes will start at 7:30PM at TOB EOC. An Extra Class will start at conclusion of Tech Class. Saturday mornings KA2RGI is running specials sessions to assist persons with code during open house through Jan.

FIELD DAY June 28-29, 2003: Doug, KB2SIE  
Need additional committee personnel assist with checking out of Field Day equipment. Equipment check outs will be during “Open House” on Saturday’s unless otherwise requested.

HAMFEST: Walter, KA2RGI  
Nothing new to report.

LIBRARY: Dom, WA2UJI  
Nothing new to report.

MEMBERSHIP: N2MIG, Tom  
Nothing new to report.

NETS:  
Newsline: MP3 format working better for quality  
2 Club Net: Phil is stepping out of DX portion of net looking for replacement. N2UHR is looking for backup Net Controls  
Swap n Shop: OK 6-8 check ins weekly Needs new listings.  
Requested Compass listings be refreshed they are old.  
10 M Informal: 12+ check ins Net running 30-40 minutes long.

NEWSLETTER: Walter, KA2RGI  
Compass has a new setup. Looking to see if anyone is interested in being editor of newsletter, If so contact KA2RGI.

HOME PAGE / WEBSITE / DX CLUSTER: Tom, KA2D  
Webpage will be down for about another week. Use backup site <http://www.qsl.net/ka2d/gsbarc.html>.  
Cluster Telnet is working OK.

REPEATERS: Walter, KA2RGI  
144 – checking various things to correct extra RF in area.  
220 – no change  
440 – no change

VE SESSIONS: Tom, KA2D  
2003 Test Fee is \$12.00  
The next session will be held on Feb. 23 at Town Hall.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:  
Nothing to report

ARES/RACES: Walter, KA2RGI  
Time to renew for ARES and RACES.  
Feb 20, 2003 next Basic Skywarn Training Session anyone planning to attend needs to pre-register.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OLD BUSINESS:

Nothing new to report.

NEW BUSINESS:

2003 Tom, KA2D, presented GSBARC Budget to the membership.

Budget was accepted by K2TV and seconded by KA2VKD. Budget was unanimously accepted by membership.

GUEST SPEAKERS & PROGRAMS:

Jan – The DX Cluster and its operation by Tom, KA2D

A motion to adjourn was made @ 9:15 PM by KA2RGI and seconded by N2UHR.

Respectfully submitted by  
PattyLynn Wandell, KC2AUX

Recording  
Secretary

DUES REMINDER

Dues renewal is \$ 25.00 per year. Tom KA2D will be collecting dues at GSBARC meetings . You may also mail in your dues to the club PO Box. When renewing your membership it is important to update any change of your personal information such as a new address, phone number, call sign, license class, ARRL membership, and e-mail address.

CLUB APPAREL

Frank “Spin”, KC2EGK has club apparel for sale. A new T shirt and hat order has been placed. Light weight, Medium weight, and heavy weight jackets of different can also be ordered with or without embroidered club logo, name or call sign. These items are available in various colors. The people that have expressed interest in these jackets have to pay before the order can be placed. We have enough requests for the order but need the money.

GSBARC VE SCHEDULE 2003

January	Jan 19 * <a href="#">HRU2003</a> <a href="#">Oyster Bay</a>	July	July 27 * New <a href="#">Technician</a> test effective July 1, 2003
February	Feb 23	August	Aug 24
March	March 23	September	Sept 28
April	Apr 27	October	Oct 26
May	May 25	November	Nov 23
June	NO VE <a href="#">Visit Field Day</a> - 6/28-6/29 Babylon Town Hall East Lawn	December	NO VE <b>Season's Greetings</b>

From ARRL HQ

Amateur Radio's public service story--now available for download.

Narrated by former CBS news anchorman Walter Cronkite, KB2GSD, Amateur Radio Today showcases the public service contributions made by hams throughout the country.

<http://www.arrl.org/ARToday/>

Tom Carrubba KA2D  
ARRL ARES Section Emergency Coordinator  
Assistant Section Manager  
New York City-Long Island  
[www.hudson.arrl.org/nli](http://www.hudson.arrl.org/nli)

If anyone is interested in a copy of the 2 the basic 2 meter Monday night net script for GSBARC give Dave, N2UHR a call on w2gsb/r, home: 631-842-6340, or via email at : n2uhr@arrl.net

SWAP & SHOP

For Sale By Dave, N2UHR

Various computer components  
UPS's some in need of minor work or batteries Best Price  
Contact Dave N2UHR 631-842-6340 [n2uhr@arrl.net](mailto:n2uhr@arrl.net)

For Sale KA2RGI

MFJ -493 32K super menu driven keyer W/Keyboard connection \$125  
Hustler 5BTV 5 Band Vertical HF Antenna needs work \$50

Contact Walt KA2RGI 631-957-0218 [ka2rgi@arrl.net](mailto:ka2rgi@arrl.net)

'73 DE DAVE, N2UHR!

SO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORSE CODE  
HOW TO AVOID FRUSTRATION, MINIMIZE THE PAIN  
AND GAIN FULL HF PRIVILEGES

**By David G. Finley, N1IRZ**

*Copyright © 1995 All Rights Reserved\**

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**Note:** For complete information on Morse Code training, CW operating, and more, see the author's book, [Morse Code: Breaking the Barrier](#), published by [MFJ Enterprises, Inc.](#)

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Most of what you've been told about learning Morse Code is wrong -- dead wrong. Amateur radio operators traditionally have used the slowest, most frustrating, most painful and least effective techniques possible for gaining code proficiency. It's no wonder that the 13- and 20-word-per-minute requirements for full HF access are considered a nearly insurmountable barrier by many hams.

You can overcome that barrier. You can do it in a reasonable amount of time and with a minimum of frustration and pain. In order to do so, you must approach code training from a different perspective and use different techniques from those common among amateurs for the past half century.

It will require work. You will have to commit yourself to at least one 15-30 minute training session every day until you reach your goal. You may succeed in a month or in several months; individuals differ greatly. Without this commitment, however, you may as well not bother.

So what's new here? By using a code training method devised by a psychologist some 60 years ago, you will progress as quickly as you possibly can, with ample reinforcement and little frustration. By understanding this method and how it builds your code proficiency, you will know why you have to spend time practicing and you'll be able to make a reasonable prediction of how long the total effort will require.

We're going to start on your road to success by throwing some time-honored ham-radio traditions onto the trash heap where they belong. These are:

- Slow (5 wpm) code -- It ought to be illegal to teach anyone code at 5 wpm. Every minute spent toying with 5 wpm code is irrevocably wasted. In addition, as we'll

see later, starting with slow code is a virtually-guaranteed path to frustration and quitting. Morse at 5 wpm and Morse at 15 or 20 wpm are completely different critters, and you don't want to waste time on the wrong one.

- Charts, mnemonics, musical cues and other "memory aids" -- These things make you think about what you're doing while trying to copy code. That is deadly to proficient copying.
- Code tapes -- In very short order, and unconsciously, you'll memorize the tape. This will lull you into false confidence in your ability. That false confidence will be quickly shattered when you hear transmitted text that you haven't memorized.
- Copying QSOs off the air -- You don't know the speed of code you find on the bands, and much code on the air is pretty badly sent. All this makes it useless for training purposes.

Now that you know what you're NOT going to do, let's start examining just how you can best gain code proficiency.

**THE MECHANICS: JUST WHAT IS CODE TRAINING, ANYHOW?**

Go to the shack of a veteran CW operator, or visit the CW station at a club Field Day operation. Watch people copy and send code at 30 to 35 wpm. You'll notice they're pretty relaxed about it; they're not sweating each character as it comes out of the speaker and they're not racking their brains to "figure out" what's being sent. Code has become second nature to them.

That's the key to code proficiency. Copying code must be a thought-free process. When you hear a character, you should know, without thinking, what it is. It should be a REFLEX. In fact, copying above about 10 wpm can only be done by reflex. Above that speed, thought processes are too slow to succeed.

That's why slow code is a deadly trap, and why traditional amateur methods of code training are so painful and frustrating. Most hams are told to memorize all the characters, then start building their speed. When you do it this way, you build a "lookup table" in your brain, comparing each character you hear with those in the lookup table until you find a match. This process shuts down from overload at about 10 wpm. That's why people experience a "plateau" at 10 wpm, and don't see any progress for weeks or months.

Those who finally get over that "hump" and progress beyond 10 wpm do so because, through constant practice,

they have begun to copy code by reflex instead of by thought. They are the lucky ones; this 10 wpm barrier is where many folks give up out of frustration.

Code training, then, should completely bypass the lookup-table phase and begin by building copying proficiency as a reflex. This was recognized in the 1930s by a German psychologist named Koch, who devised the most efficient method known for Morse training. It's his method, and how you can use it, that we're going to examine in detail.

#### **MORSE TRAINING BY THE KOCH METHOD**

Koch's method is a simple, direct way of building reflexes. However, it requires either a computer and Morse software or a personal trainer. That's why it was overlooked for so many years. Now that computers are commonplace, it should become the standard Morse training method.

Here's how it works:

You start out by setting up your computer (or a microprocessor-based code tutor machine) to send you Morse characters at 20 wpm and at an overall sending speed of at least 15 wpm. You then get out your paper and pencil and have the machine start sending -- but only two characters. That's right, for your first sessions, you'll only have two choices. Copy on paper for five minutes, then stop the machine and compare what you copied with what the machine sent. Count characters and calculate your percentage of correct copy.

If your score is 90 percent or better -- congratulations! You just learned your first two characters, and, importantly, you learned them at full speed. You'll never have to learn them over again. If you didn't make 90 percent, practice some more. As soon as you can copy the first two characters with 90 percent accuracy, add a third character to your practice. Your accuracy will drop as you work on assimilating the new character, but it will rise again to 90 percent or better. Then you add the fourth character, and so on.

This method does not allow you to build that lookup table in your brain. To copy at full speed, you **MUST** build the reflexes in order to achieve 90 percent accuracy. And that's what you're spending your time doing -- building reflexes. Think of it as a parallel to perfecting a tennis swing or mastering a gymnastic routine; you're practicing

until you get it right. The Koch method of building code proficiency character-by-character is similar to standard methods of teaching touch typing, another skill that must be reflexive.

This is a very individual method of training -- you progress at your own best speed, and spend only the time required to gain each new character. This means that you will waste no time in reaching your goal.

How much time is required? That will depend on the individual. Koch himself, with hand-picked students, got a group to master 12 wpm code in a mere 13.5 hours. You probably won't match that, but that's much faster than any other method in the psychological literature. You can get an idea of how long it's going to take after you've mastered a few characters. Keep track of your training sessions (some software will do this for you) and calculate your hours-per-character rate (or characters-per-hour if you're really fast!). That, multiplied by the 43 characters in the amateur Morse test, will give a rough idea of how long it's going to take.

While the Koch method is the fastest method of Morse training, speed alone is not its principal advantage. Its principal advantage, and a major difference from other methods, is that it provides you with constant positive reinforcement. This begins with your realization, after mastering the first two characters, that you **CAN** copy code at 15 or 20 wpm, because you just did it. After that, each new character mastered is further proof of your progress. Contrast that to slowly trying to build speed up from 4 or 5 wpm, then hitting the plateau at 10 wpm and seeing no progress for a long time. With the Koch method, frustration is at a minimum.

Constant testing is necessary to ensure that you maximize the effectiveness of the Koch method. You must copy on paper, so you can grade yourself. Remember, if you score 90 percent accuracy or better, add another character. If you score any less than that, try again. By constantly testing yourself on continuous copying of at least five minutes, you know exactly how you're doing and exactly when you should add another character. This results in the fastest progress possible.

Naturally, with the Koch method, you'll be copying random groups of characters, rather than words, until you've mastered the entire character set. If your software allows, make these groups of random length, rather than a constant stream of five-character groups. This will ease the transition from random groups to actual words. Yes, there is a difference in the rhythm and "feel" of words and random groups. Once you've become accustomed to copying words, you should start copying sample QSOs, which are the format of the amateur tests. Pay special attention to callsigns, locations, and numerals; these are the types of things that can form questions on the test. As you proceed toward your goal, remember that some days are just going to be better than others and some characters will take longer to assimilate than others. You know, however, that you can reach your goal because you've already mastered some characters and proven that copying at full speed is something you can do. Keep in mind that what you're doing is building reflexes, and that takes time. The amount of time you require has nothing to do with your intelligence; it's just how long it takes for characters to "sink in" and become part of your reflexes. So there it is -- your path to passing the 13- or 20-wpm code test. After you've used this method, and start enjoying the wonderful world of HF radio, try a few CW QSOs. With Morse code developed as a reflex, you may just find that you really enjoy using it on the air. After all, you've gained proficiency without the frustrating ordeal that most hams have endured for decades. See you on the HF bands!

Questions? They're probably answered in [Morse Code: Breaking the Barrier](#), the author's complete book on code training and CW operating, published by [MFJ Enterprises, Inc.](#) It's available now for \$14.95 plus shipping. Call (800) 647-1800 and ask for stock number MFJ-3400.

### **Bibliography**

Finley, D.G., "Reducing the Barrier: Effective Morse code training," *Radio Fun*, May 1995, pp. 14-15.

O'Keefee, V., "Learning Morse," *QST*, August 1972, pp. 58-62.

Peak, H., "Koch's Method of Learning Code Reception," *Psychological Bulletin*, XXXIX (1942), p. 495.

Taylor, D.W., "Learning Telegraphic Code," *Psychological Bulletin*, XL (1943), pp. 461-487.

Taylor, D.W., "The Learning of Radiotelegraphic Code," *American Journal of Psychology*, LVI (1943), pp. 319-353. [Instructions](#) for implementing the Koch method with Super Morse V4.04 software.

Need a copy of *Super Morse v4.16* ? [Click here](#).

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### **A PERSONAL NOTE**

These ideas may sound very bold and unconventional, but I know they work, because they worked for me.

I fell in love with radio in grade school, but was kept off the air for 30 years because I found traditional code training just too frustrating. During those decades, I tried several times to learn Morse, but every time gave up in frustration and disgust -- my progress was just too slow.

In 1991, I became one of the first 500 people to enter ham radio by way of the no-code Technician license. After becoming bored with repeaters and HTs, I decided to make one last attempt to master the code. Fortunately, I stumbled on information about Koch's method, and found that it was the only thing that would work for me. In 1993, after diligent work at my computer, I took my first code test and passed the 20 wpm exam on the first try.

I became very curious about why Koch's method had worked for me when all else had failed. That sent me to libraries to read the now-aging psychological literature about Morse training. I soon realized that the Koch method achieves its speed through directness; if you want to copy reflexively at 15 or 20 wpm, then just start building those reflexes from the start. I also realized that it provides much more positive feedback than any other method, so you can keep your motivation and a "can-do" attitude throughout your training.

This was knowledge I wanted to share with others, so I began giving lectures to amateur groups on the topic. I quickly found that, after my lectures, "old-timers" would come up and tell me that my ideas on the need for reflexes were absolutely right. Many said that the Koch method sounded similar to the intense code training they had received in military schools.

Probably the only reason Koch's method didn't become standard back in 1936 when he first published it was that the average individual had no way of implementing it. The personal computer has changed that, and the time has come for the Koch method to replace all others. I hope that the speed and positive-reinforcement aspects of the Koch method can cut down the code barrier to a much less formidable size.

Sometime during 1993, those who have not passed at least a 13-wpm code test became the majority of radio amateurs in the United States. While the debate over the code requirement continues to rage, I hope that use of the Koch method can help many more people overcome the barrier and enjoy full HF privileges right now, instead of several years from now when the requirement may be lifted.

I cannot overemphasize my dislike -- even hatred -- for 5 wpm code. As I've outlined above, it is highly counterproductive to gaining proficiency at higher speeds. In order to go from 5 to 13 wpm, you have to start over again, even though you may not realize that while you're doing it. The worst aspect is that many people pass a 5-wpm test, then never go beyond that. They are trapped in the ghetto of the Novice/Tech HF bands. Why waste your time learning a skill (slow code) that has no relevance to real (13+ wpm) code proficiency? Why limit your HF operating to the most unattractive parts of the amateur bands?

Finally, as I was using the Koch method and building my code skills, I intended to forget the code as soon as I passed the test. My 30 years of frustration had built up a bitterness about CW. However, about two weeks after getting my first HF rig on the air, I looked at my straight key and decided to try a CW QSO "just so I can say I did it." Guess what? I enjoyed it. My second CW QSO was with a DX station, and I was hooked. With the encouragement of a CW Elmer, I continued to enjoy the bottom parts of the bands, and now my microphone isn't even plugged into the rig!

If the Koch method could overcome three decades of bitterness and turn me into an enthusiastic CW operator, I think it's certainly worth a try on your part. Have a go at it.

Maybe I'll find you on the CW bands and we can have a ragchew.

Best of luck, and 73.

Dave Finley, N1IRZ

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