



# OPEN MIC

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
RUNESTONE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, W0ALX

JULY 2017

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## PRESIDENTIAL SPLATTER...

PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

### REMEMBER JULY 15

**8:00AM COFFEE/BREAKFAST AT BRASS LANDTERN, ALEXANDRIA**

**10:00AM RARC MEETING, GLENWOOD STATE BANK, ALEXANDRIA**

### SPECIAL PROGRAM NOTE RE RARC MEETING

**SKIP JACKSON KS0J, MINNESOTA SECTION MANAGER, ARRL  
FRANK KARNAUSKAS N1UW, MN AFFILIATED CLUB COORDINATOR , ARRL  
WILL PRESENT ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF AMATEUR RADIO  
IN MINNESOTA AND AROUND THE COUNTRY**

SURE DO HOPE YOU CAN BE WITH US FOR THIS ONE.....73 Bill KG0DX

## RUNESTONE ARC MEETING MINUTES

The most current minutes are found in the June Open Mic.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK???

How to Copy CW in Your Head

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

The second most common question that I get about CW is, "How do I learn to copy in my head?" When I get this question, I give, what to some, is a very unsatisfying answer. One day, I just went cold turkey. I put down the pencil and paper and never copied letter-by-letter ever again.

Carlo Consoli, IK0YGJ, author of Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy ([http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygj/enu/ZART\\_r20101008m.pdf](http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygj/enu/ZART_r20101008m.pdf)), says that what operators need to do is to program themselves to copy in their heads. He counsels operators to practice relaxation and visualization exercises. Visualize yourself as a high-speed operator, and maybe one day you will be one.

This approach seems to have worked for Consoli. He is a member of the Very High Speed Club (VHSC), First Class Operator's Club (FOC), and has been clocked at copying over 70 wpm. I'm not sure that this is really going to work for everyone, though.

Another approach is touted by Carl, N7AGK. On his website, Carl writes, "I have created a program to assist you in learning to copy Morse code in your head. Everything you need will be contained on a single USB flashdrive that I will provide to you. In the program there are audio Morse code presentations followed by a visual display. The visual display shows the information in large print and upper case letters. The visual display verifies that you have received the Morse code correctly." Carl's program costs \$20 and is available from [n7agk.com](http://n7agk.com).

Zeb, HB9FXW, has created a free web application called Seiuchy (<http://www.kb6nu.com/let-walrus-help-copy-head/>) to help people learn head copying. Seiuchy, which Zeb says is Japanese for walrus, simulates on-air contacts. The trick to using this app is that instead of copying exactly what's sent, you only copy the most important bit of information. The idea is that if you train yourself to do this, then you can concentrate on what's important rather than getting bogged down in copying what's not important.

A different take on head copy was sent in by one of my blog readers, Bill, W3MSH. He wrote, "I was a CW op for many years and discovered something fascinating. I first began to hear "dots and dashes", then letters, words, sentences and at 35+ wpm, thoughts in my head."

I think Bill may have hit the nail on the head with this comment. I like the idea that copying code in your head is more akin to generating thoughts than it is to copying individual characters or words. Everybody talks about how getting faster is about moving from copying individual characters to copying words to copying entire sentences. I've never thought of it that way, although I was at a loss as to how to describe how I do it. I think the idea that when copying in your head, the code creates thoughts directly is a beautiful way to put it.

Isn't that what's happening when you talk to someone? When someone talks to me, I don't consciously parse the sentences and then analyze them to see what was just said. It's more of an unconscious process. The sounds being uttered are creating ideas in my head.

Shouldn't we approach head copy in the same way? Instead of thinking about head copy as the process of writing down the characters on an internal blackboard to be read later, it should be about translating the sound of the Morse Code directly into concepts. The sounds "dah di dit...dah dah dah....dah dah dit," should conjure up the image of a poodle or a pitbull, not the letters "D O G."

How that translates into a program or a method for learning to copy the code in one's head is another matter. It might be worth thinking about, though.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of The CW Geek's Guide to Having Fun with Morse Code and the No Nonsense series of amateur radio study guides

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 15: 8am Coffee/Breakfast, Brass Lantern, Alexandria

July 15: 10am RARC Monthly Club Mtg, Glenwood State Bank, Alexandria

Aug 5: 8:30: Coffee/Breakfast, Truckers Inn, Sauk Centre

Aug 19: 8am Coffee/Breakfast, Brass Lantern, Alexandria

Aug 19: 10am RARC Monthly Club Mtg, Glenwood State Bank, Alexandria

## 2017 CLUB OFFICERS / DIRECTORS

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