Signals From The Point

Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium
Editor: W0CG

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PJ2T World #2 in CQWW CW

Zone 33 showed up, darn it. CR3W won the plaque in Multi/Multi and CR3DX took it in Multi/2. That left us world second and our friends at PJ4K also second, both behind Madeira stations. But we are still extremely happy that we 1) got on the air at all, 2) made over 13,000 contacts, and 3) made some wonderful new friends. WI9WI and I were the only CCC members on hand, and we had a great time meeting and hosting K1EP, AC6ZM, N6AA, NG7M, KO8SCA, YO8WW, and VE4GV. Here's the team.

L-R: Gabi (YO8WW), Adrian (KO8SCA), Rob (VE4GV), Juan (AC6ZM), Dick (N6AA), Ed (K1EP), me, Max (NG7M), and Jim (WI9WI).

This was an excellent group composed of very highly experienced and noted operators and a couple who were new to Caribbean contesting and its attendant high rates. One of those was Max (NG7M) who confessed to me prior to the contest that he "felt like an impostor" being here among top operators, and then proceeded to post the two best rate hours of the entire team, well over 200/hour both hours! He not only survived the crucible but dominated in it, and we hope he will come back to PJ2T many times in the future.

We slipped a bit on mults. Comparing our numbers with PJ4K, we were right on or very close to the mark on all bands except 40 where, inexplicably, we were way behind them in both QSOs and mults. We had many reports that we were super loud in the States on 40, and we dominated on that band in the SSB contest, so it's just a fluke, and who cares, we had a great time on the air and maintained PJ2T's very high profile on the bands. The weather outside was good, the space weather fair, but not as good as for the SSB weekend, and the Aqualectra power stayed on. Two days after the team departed we lost both water and electricity, but both outages were only for a few hours. It was a good weekend.

Band	QSOs	Zones	Countries
160:	796	21	72
80:	1772	27	91
40:	3202	32	110
20:	3072	36	111
15:	3252	34	111
10:	1199	26	77
Total:	13293	176	572

Total Score 29,265,500

Also, I'm happy to report that the gear held up very well. We ran the Commander HF-2500 at the 10/160 meter station, so it was in action all 48 hours, running easily at around 1300 watts output and keeping cool. Tuning of this amp is very critical, and very touchy, so we will all need to be very careful with it. One Bencher paddle failed (80 meter station), and I quickly swapped in one of the newly donated ones. N1MM got out of sync and a couple of the networked machines dropped quite a few QSOs, but it was no problem to resolve and get a good log. All K3s were perfectly solid, and there were zero antenna problems and only slight interstation interference when frequencies approached exact harmonics. Ed (K1EP) brought his K4, and we played with it for a couple of days at Station 1. I opted not to use it in the contest, however, in the interest of standardization when ops were changing from station to station, and because none of

us were fully confident in operating it. It did, however, look VERY good at Station 1 (below).

The K1EP K4 at Station 1

When K8ND saw this photo he recommended that I superglue the radio to the desk.

One special treat was welcoming two Romanians to the shack. Adrian, KO8SCA, was planning to vacation on Curacao with his family and friends, so it was a natural segue for him to drive over to PJ2T for the contest. Adding to the fun, his friend Gabi (YO8WW) made the trek all the way from home in Savinesti. It was a tremendous privilege for us to meet this well-known contester, with a radiant smile, big enthusiasm, and a kind word for everyone. His English was incredibly solid, and I know he had as much fun being here as we had hosting him.

KO8SCA was issued YO8SCA when he was 16. He is well known to all of us in the contest and DX community, having moved to the States many years ago and established himself in IS/IT consulting in New York City. He will be on next year's Bouvet team, so it was a special treat to have him here. He and Gabi moved into Signal Point on Friday morning and stayed through Tuesday. We got to meet some of his family and friends at Signal Point when they dropped him off and drove off with the car!

Prior photo: KO8SCA, his Connecticut friend from Estonia, Dorothy, Adrian's XYL, another Connecticut friend (from Sweden), and YO8WW.

As we have said so many times, this is the thrill of amateur radio – international friendships.

It was Thanksgiving, and thanks to the magnificent efforts of Dorothy, assisted by chef K1EP and Annette Fitzpatrick, we had a full scale traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Here's the chief chef about ready to take hot stuff out of the oven.

The chef's salute.

The photo below shows AC6ZM and his XYL Melissa at the counter being served by KA9DOC. At the table are N6AA, K1EP, NG7M and WI9WI, with Dorothy's back to the camera.

Dessert was traditional pumpkin pies made by K1EP and topped with a lot of whipped cream.

Work was accomplished in addition to eating. We had several donated Bencher paddles in the October ocean freight, but they did not have cables. Max (NG7M) kindly offered to make up four cables in his workshop in Utah, and then he ended up installing them in Curacao, next page.

NG7M

On contest Friday we made the traditional trip to Sol Food for pizza and ice cream. Everyone was on board, 12 eaters in three cars, but oddly we lost one of the vehicles en route when AC6ZM decided he did not have enough gas to make it to Westpunt, and he and his XYL and the Romanians ended up having lunch at the airport after their third day COVID tests.

I went to the airport just four hours before the contest to collect VE4GV, finally getting here after he missed a flight to the island in October. Dorothy asked me to drop into Cost-U-Less for some eggs, both of us completely forgetting that it was Black Friday. Traffic. Lines. Crowds. Here I am in an endlessly slow checkout line just for a dozen eggs.

In the slow line on Black Friday

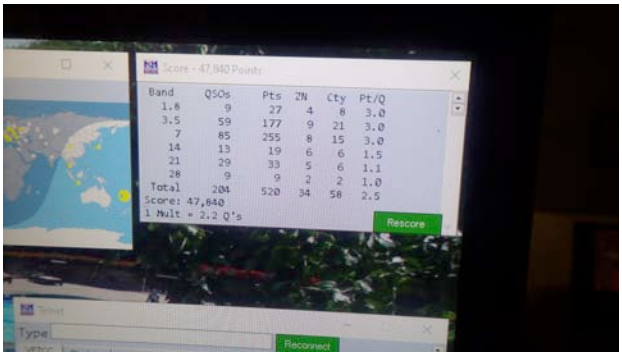
I did get to the airport on time, and caught a photo of Rob's airplane blocking in after the long nonstop from Toronto. They made it in the nick of time, because 10 minutes later TWO monster flights landed from Amsterdam and dumped almost 600 people into the airport. Rob, like many others, commented on the extremely fast and professional in-processing of passengers by Curacao emigration.

Multiple large arrivals within minutes of each other

VE4GV arrives four hours before the contest.

I missed dinner Friday because I was setting up the shack and computers, but it was hot dogs and hamburgers on the grill, an American treat for YO8WW.

The contest started smoothly, but a little slowly – here's the summary after 30 minutes.



Here's the first hour staff.

The CQWW CW opening team: N6AA (10), AC6ZM (15), WI9WI (40) KO8SCA (80), VE4GV (20). That's NG7M looking on.

Below, AC6ZM patiently working SA and JA on 15 in the early hours of the contest.

AC6ZM on 15

Juan is a Marine, as you can tell from his shoulders and biceps, but in addition to being able to kill you with one finger he is a Ph.D. cybersecurity expert, and he brought a wonderfully positive and aggressive attitude to the team.

The night proceeded as expected. Here are Max (NG7M) on 80 and the famous Dick Norton (N6AA) running 40 at about 2 AM Saturday morning.

By Saturday morning at the 25% point we had 3823 QSOs in the log and the smell of chili cooking in the shack. I made my traditional contest chili, thrilled to do so after a year and a half of wondering if we would every again have a signal on the air from Signal Point, as well as whether I would ever again have the privilege of cooking for a team.

W0CG and the contest chili Saturday morning

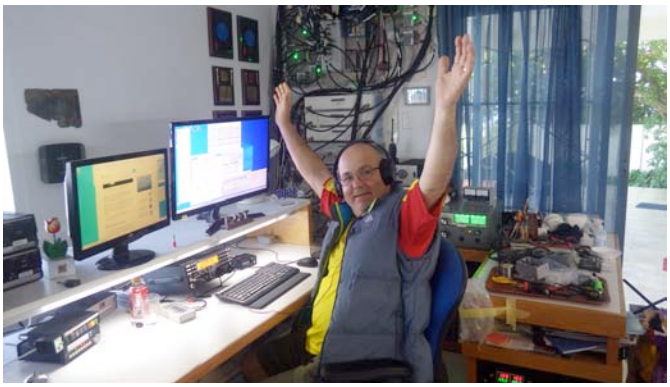
As I was cooking, VE4GV was running mad pileups into Europe behind me on 14.040. He's at Station 5 (20 meters) on the foldout desk cleverly designed and built in 2015 by N0YY and funded by NP2L (SK). Mal's gift lives on.

Meeting the legendary N6AA was a thrill for me. Dick is a delightful, super bright, funny, quiet, gentlemanly, and fantastically competent person. He quietly showed up a few minutes before every shift, sat down and transitioned smoothly, made fantastic numbers of Qs and mults, and never seemed the least bit flustered or stressed. At 80 he is a model of what we can all aspire to: quiet, modest, and brimming with expertise. Here he is running fabulous rates Saturday afternoon on 15.

N6AA on 15

If the SSB team's score at adapting to the PJ2T station was a 9, this CW team was more like a 6, never quite seeming to get the hang of using the pushbutton access to our suite of versatile antennas. Still, things went

well through the second night, and we were hoping for better 10 meter conditions on Sunday. 10 meters was a disappointment, but on Sunday morning Gabi was in a 10 meter shift and suddenly the multiplier bell started ringing, a lot, as he was knocking off Europe multipliers at an incredible clip, employing the trick of calling them long path at a time when their beams were all turned east into Russia. Here he is after nailing yet another unexpected 10 meter Europe mult.



YO8WW celebrating a 10 meter Europe mult. (He hates air conditioning.)

This poor propagation on 10 was no fault of the HF-2500, which below is making plenty of watts on 28 MHz.

The NR0X amplifier on 10 meters in CQWW CW.

Dr. Rob Kaufman, VE4GV, reeling in points on 20.

KO8SCA, 40 meters, 1:45 AM Sunday.

Sunday afternoon, our Ridge feedline in the boonies supporting incredible rates concurrently on 10, 15, and 20. The ants, lizards, and cacti are unimpressed.

Finally the clock dinged, and it was over, 13,293 QSOs in the log and 29.3M points. Here we are at the end, excited and tired.

N6AA, K1EP, YO8WW, W0CG, KO8SCA, AC6ZM, VE4GV, NG7M. WI9WI not in photo.

In October we went for Monday night post-contest dinner to El Sorbrino, our old standby place in Westpunt. It was a huge disappointment. Ownership has changed, the varied menu we all loved so much is gone, and it was very slow. Dorothy and Annette did careful research and found a place called the Shelterrock, very close to the station, and receiving

good reviews. The team went there for dinner, and it was a total winner, photo below. (WI9WI stayed home and ran QSOs.) Special thanks to KO8SCA for the surprise of picking up my and Dorothy's dinner!

Monday night dinner at the Shelterrock.

The rest of the week was taken up with the logistics of getting the team back home, and cleaning up Signal Point. YO8WW got into that spirit by hauling his laundry.

YO8WW hauling bedsheets to the laundry, not something we see often from contesters!

Even better, Adrian and Gabi put clean sheets on both beds in their room! Afterward an impromptu post-contest statistics analysis meeting sprung up in the East Bedroom, with Dick, Adrian, Max, and Gabi (below).

Analyzing rates, mults, and passes.

We made multiple trips to take people for COVID tests. The process was simplified when Adrian found a lab service that came to the house, and did an on-site COVID test for $35 instead of $20. Some of the crew left Monday, some Tuesday, K1EP and N6AA on Wednesday (on different flights) and VE4GV Friday on the non-stop to Toronto (below).

Sending off VE4GV to the airport with Dorothy.

All incoming, 3rd day, and outgoing COVID tests were negative. On Tuesday we took N6AA to do some birdwatching in town and spotted this license plate on the way back to the car, indeed an omen. The ARRL DX contest exchange in reverse.

An omen for the ARRL SSB Contest!

Prior to departure, Dick and Ed worked on a bad Bencher paddle, which Ed decided to take to the States for repair, and Rob kicked in on repair of a chair that got broken during the contest week.

Finally Signal Point was quiet, the rental and Signal Point houses clean, another superb contest effort in the books, and a rainbow at the end. THIS IS WHAT CCC DOES! We have fun, make friends, and put LOTS of contacts in logbooks. Mission accomplished. Next time we're hoping to have the CCC family back together here on site.

ARRL 160 CW Contest Report

K8ND, W8WTS, and I ran the 160 ARRL CW contest. Conditions were not great, but it appears from claimed scores at this point that we are the high multioperator score on the DX side, a notable accomplishment. W8WTS put in a mammoth last minute effort and got his remote operation working so he could pitch in.

K8ND did the majority of the work via the remote, and I did a bit of operating on site. I was not very good, made a bonehead error and ran part of my shift at low power, and generally was grogged out from lack of sleep. I'm not an effective nighttime operator.

894 QSOs 80 sections = 143,040

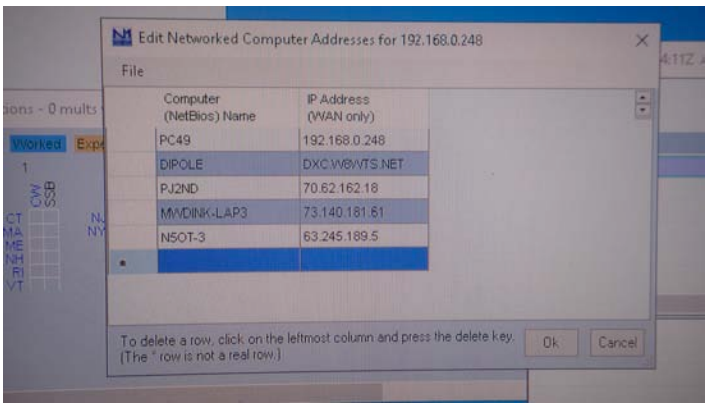
Again, this is what we do. All of our CCC activities eventually focus on putting RF into the sky, and we did so in ARRL 160. Your club station's profile is very high.

10 Meter Contest Report

Thanks to W8WTS, who led the effort to bring us into modern times by setting up wide area networked logs for the ARRL 10 Meter Contest. Most of you have seen or done this. If not, it requires relatively simple setup and, once accomplished, all the ops on a geographically dispersed team see the same log in real time. This enables us to coordinate mult-chasing and serial numbers, and we all know as a team where we are at all times. The 10 meter contest is easy and straightforward enough that it was a perfect opportunity for our first foray into wide area logging.

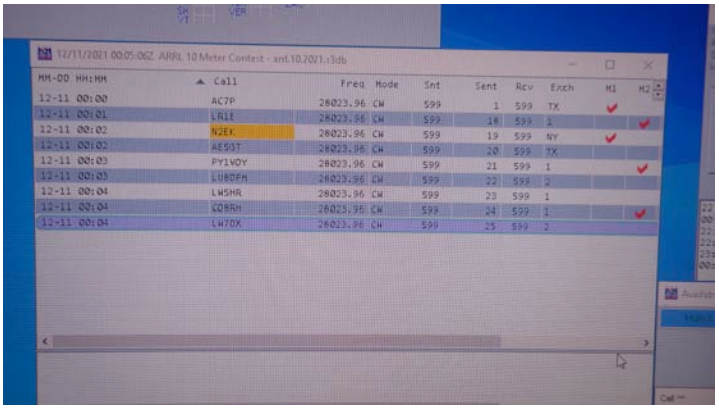
We ran the contest over the weekend using a hybrid of remote ops and W0CG on site. K8ND, W8WTS, N5OT, N7NR, N7WA and I operated, me on site and everyone else, obviously, from home.

Here's the table of addresses in N1MM that instruct it how to find the other stations and what to call their computers.



N1MM, Network Status, Actions, Edit Networked Computer Addresses.

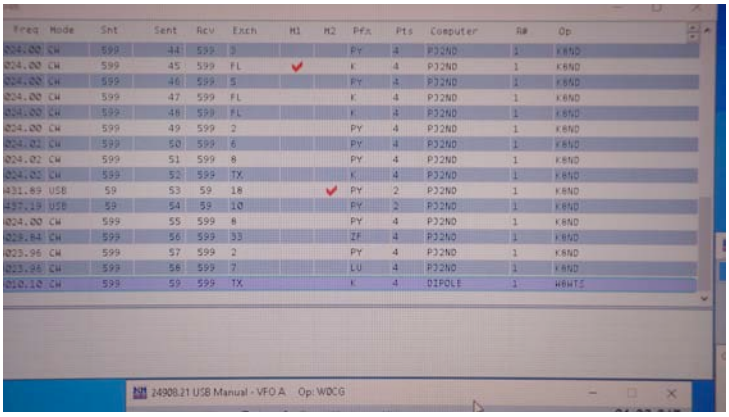
The left column is the NetBIOS names by which each computer is known on its local LAN, and the right column points at an IP location where those machines can be found. PC49 is the Station 1 computer at Signal Point, for example, and the local LAN address is shown. The other stations on the network refer to me not as 192.168.0.248 but as pj2tstation1.hopto.org, which goes to No-IP.com and looks up our present IP address as informed by a DDNS client at Signal Point. DXC.W8WTS.NET points to Jim's present IP address from No-IP.com.



Here's what the networked log looked like in Curacao as K8ND opened the contest in Columbus.

The contest started as expected, with about 40 or so LU/PY stations per hour for about two hours, and a handful of southern tier US contacts, almost all of which were Texas. W8WTS hung in beyond the end of his scheduled shift until the band was good and dead.

Notice (next page) the bottom QSO in the log as seen in Curacao, where W8WTS took over from K8ND. It's seamless networking magic.



W8WTS' first QSO at the bottom.

Here's the 10 meter antenna combination that we used for most of the contest.

Half power to US/JA (5 over 5 stack) and half to South America (Cush-Craft A3S.)

Saturday morning we were dreaming of Europe runs such as those we enjoyed in CQWW SSB, but with an SFI of 89 that was not happening. N7WA gamely worked an empty band beginning at 1200Z, but at around 1300Z things exploded and suddenly he was running stateside on CW with rates sometimes exceeding 200/hour. This was invisible to me, however, because Dink's log was not propagating across the network. He made a ton of contacts, but none of us could see them. We did some troubleshooting during the contest, but did not succeed in fixing that problem.

N5OT took over next, but Mark was not able to make his F-keys send CW, and his limited bandwidth made his CW very choppy, but he gamely operated an hour and made a nice contribution to the score. The N5OT contacts also did not appear in my log on Curacao. W8WTS then returned, and for a while was chipping off CW QSOs into the States at 4/minute. We elected to go to SSB for about half an hour because mults were very heavily lopsided toward CW, then returned to CW. At 1 PM local time N7NR took over and did a solid hour of SSB, grabbing lots of badly needed multipliers in NA and SA. This was Dave's first time running PJ2T, and he did a superb job. CW resumed, then in K8ND's hands. All N7NR and K8ND and W8WTS QSOs did show up correctly in the networked logs.

We continued like this, alternating operator shifts and modes, until the band quit giving at around 0220Z. At the halfway point there were about 600 contacts in the log, not a bad effort, and 100% of them were remote because I had not yet gotten on locally.

Another day of this followed on Sunday, spiced up a bit by a tiny glint of Europe conditions in the local morning. N7WA worked a handful of unexpected Europe mults, but the US opening came later than Saturday, and was of much shorter duration.

Kudos to the ops on this team who endured many slow hours of about 30 PY and LU per hour. That's not exciting, but after years of a totally dead 10 meters, this was a nice improvement.

The score is not available at press time because W8WTS needs to consolidate and balance the logs, all of which were missing QSOs from a couple of the ops because of network problems. Our final QSO serial number was 900, and multipliers were pretty sparse. We won't win any accolades in the score listings on this one, but marked an important milestone in our PJ2T operational history with this first use of wide area networked N1MM logs, thanks to W8WTS' leadership.

Thanks to team W8WTS, K8ND, N7NR, N5OT, and N7WA, with me on site pushing buttons and making a few Qs locally. Thanks also to Dave (N7NR) who pledged to reimburse dollars to the club just as if he had been on site in Curacao. That's huge, and the resources are very much appreciated.

Curacao COVID Travel Requirements as of Mid-December

See https://gobiernu.cw/corona-travel-to-curacao/ .

The requirements for entering Curacao are still easy, and unchanged. Departure to the States requires a rapid antigen test one day prior to your flight, at $20.

On your third day on Curacao it's still necessary to get another rapid antigen test. These are very quick and the charge is only $20. Results are provided normally within 20 minutes via E-mail. Travelers who can prove they are vaccinated do not need this third day test, but

they do NOT accept U.S. vaccination cards because they are too easy to spoof.

New PC Power Supplies on Site

Thanks again to Gene, KB7Q, who hurriedly bought (and donated) four DC power supplies for our Optiplex 7040 computers. He got them on EBay, shipped them to WI9WI in Wisconsin, and Jim brought them to the island on November 23. We're now in a strong position on these. (When I arrived in October I was unable to find enough supplies to run all of our computers.)

N7IR Second High Claimed Score: ARRL 160 CW Single Op QRP

324 x 67 x 5 = 47,952

Congrats to Gary for enduring the rigors of 160 QRP. Imagine?!

New PC (PC49) In Service Here

KB7Q acquired a Dell 7040 PC for us via EBay, reconditioned, for about $260 and sent it to the island via WI9WI's free baggage cargo service. I installed it at Station 1 on November 23, then Gene spent several hours configuring the new computer remotely using AnyDesk.

Two New Heil Proset 6s Are on Site

Same as above. Thanks to WI9WI for bringing two new CCC-purchased boomsets to the island. They are both now labeled "PJ2T Nov 2021" so that they will not inadvertently be taken home by anyone. Additionally, K1EP spent some time disassembling our one bad Heil trying to find an obvious reason for an intermittent mic. No luck there, so I will take it to Idaho and send it to the Heil Hospital for a rebuild.

Bencher Paddle Stock Now Up !

Thanks to the donation of four paddles (W1FJ, W8PT, K8IV), as mentioned in earlier newsletters, and NG7M's patient work in Utah and here on site, we now have a sufficient number of good condition CW paddles as we head into the high sunspot years. Max fabricated and donated four cables for the paddles in his shop in Utah, and then installed them on November 23 on site (photo).

NG7M's Curacao workshop, installing cables and lugs on the donated Bencher paddles.

From PJ2T Station Equipment Lead N7IR:

CCC Acquires Two More K3s !

Two new (to us) K3s on the bench at N7IR.

Dave, N7NR, has purchased a K3/100, SN8079, to our specification, from Larry, K6RO. He paid more than we originally thought we would have to: $2324. I will add the KDRV3 that Dan, K9DR, donated to the club and check it out before I arrange shipping to someone who is going to the island.

I have also made an offer (accepted) to buy another K3/100, SN8323 from W4NPD in Florida, for $1640 shipped. It does not have the new KSYN3A in it but I can buy one of those from K6RO for $400. I will add the spare KDVR3 and KXV3 I have here to it and buy a 2.1kHz filter from K6RO. It will then have the same configuration as the one that Dave purchased.

Huge thanks to N7IR for his many hours over a period of two weeks to make these purchases happen. -Ed.

The Back Story

Most of you never see this part. It takes two or three long trips to town to buy all the groceries for a major contest effort.

A $600 load of perishables on November 22, ready to be rushed to the freezer and fridge at the rental house.

But the very next day, the smiles make it all worth the effort, below.

Max George, NG7M, happily running QSOs on 40 CW shortly after arriving at Signal Point after a very long trip from Utah.

Thanks Again to N7IR

Gary has had a very busy CCC month in Chandler. In addition to acquiring and setting up two additional CCC K3 transceivers mentioned above, he fabricated a ton of Beverage transformers and resistive terminations in a big hurry and sent them to the island via WI9WI. Here below is one set, and we now have enough of these on site to outlast all of us.

Gary also sent homebrew replacement parts for the Europe Beverage common mode choke. Hopefully K8ND and W8WTS will have time to install these in January. THANKS!!

Tile Reinstalled in West Bathroom

As you know, the 50 year old tile glue is failing here and there everywhere all over the house. Tile is spontaneously falling off the walls. The most recent episode was 25 tiles above the bathroom sink in the East Bedroom. By now, we are getting too good at doing the repair after all the practice. It takes a ton of time to remove the bad tiles, power grind the glue off the concrete walls, making a total dustbowl mess, clean all the tiles of glue, and then reinstall and re-grout them. Here I am on November 18 putting these tiles back up after a couple days of prep time. We did the grout the following day.

November 18, 2021, West Bathroom

PJ2T Station 5

As the sunspots return all the bands are much better. For WW SSB we set up Station 5, the first time in years, and it served as the 20 meter position. This

station resides on the brilliantly designed N0YY hinged desktop adjacent to the kitchen oven. You fold up the desk, put the custom leg under it, install the cleverly designed amplifier trestle above the desktop, and voila, a new operating position emerges. It's a little bit cramped, so we need to have narrow operators on 20. Here's K8PGJ (next page) at Station 5 during the SSB contest.

Station 5 is practically in the oven.

After WW SSB I took that station down, temporarily, and converted the 80 meter station next to it for remote access. The result was a rat's nest of cables for the intervening three weeks (below).

Prior to the arrival of the CW team I reinstalled Station 5, neatened up all the cables, added CW capability at Station 5, and reconverted Station 4 from remote to the 80 meter position. Thanks again to N0YY for this clever and insightful design. And we mustn't forget the incredible generosity of Mal, NP2L (SK) who funded the design, construction, and much of the ship cost to get the desks from Iowa to PJ2T in October of 2015.

Radical Radial Repair

The three "Rs." Heavy rain drains across the backyard and makes deep ruts where the car tires go back and forth. Eventually those ruts got so deep that the car tires were breaking a couple of radials from the 160 TX antenna. It seems radical to put radials in conduit, but over the short width of the driveway that's exactly what I did (next column).

The photo shows where I dug a shallow ditch for the conduit, resoldered the broken wires, and used some leftover scraps of conduit to protect the radials from car tires. Success!

Giving Up on Knife Switches

For years we have used one knife switch after another to switch the 80 3-el loop antenna from SSB to CW. KB7Q recently supplied the latest increment of difficult to find knife switches. Electrically this works fine, but the switches never last. I returned in October to find this switch on the driven element hopelessly frozen up. The solution was to give up on the switch and put in a couple of pigtail wires and eye lugs on the ends, inside the grey glob on the photo.

When it's time for CW, as the photo shows, the pigtail wires are bolted together with a small stainless bolt, finger tight. For SSB, remove the bolt, stow it on one wire, open the connection, let the blue wires hang open, and there's resonance on 3800. Basic, reliable, and failure-proof for the future.

Curacao Horrors, the Usual

For 21 years I have had the same Curacao phone number. During many of those years the bill was sent electronically and the balance due deducted

automatically from my MCB bank account. The service was reliable, and I got liberal minutes of calling to the U.S. with that package.

About five years ago they "improved" the system and bills stopped coming and autopayments ceased. The service became unreliable, and for almost two years they were unable to bill customers because of software problems. That finally got fixed, but by then I was finding many other means, all free, for calling the States.

Now, the new phone company is "Flow," a privatized version of what was formerly the government PTT.

My Flow package contains a non-optional telephone wireline service, and last week I decided to use it to phone my daughter on Thanksgiving and for her birthday. No dice. The calling system that has worked for years for Zoom to call me from the house had stopped working without explanation. After much Googling and calling the help line, it evolved that I now needed a carrier access code, and that the ONLY WAY to get the code was to book an appointment at the office in town, show up with ID and copies of invoices, and hash out how to get a designated carrier access code. This is a two hour round trip plus waiting in line at the office. Incredible, all this is required just to resume a service that I have had for 21 years and pay for religiously each month. Typical Curacao bureaucracy.

VE4GV accompanied Dorothy and me to the 11 AM appointment at the Flow office on December 2. I sat for an hour and 45 minutes watching the clerks move at the speed of molasses, and finally my number was called. I explained everything to the lady and gave her all the paperwork. She disappeared in back. Twenty minutes later she came out and said they did not know what was wrong, that I should go home, and they would call us at 4PM to troubleshoot. The call never came, so we wasted most of an entire day getting nowhere. We are all hoping on the island that Flow will be de-certified by the government.

Failure of Our Security System

Our alarm monitoring company, Curacao Surveillance Services, is the BEST on the island, and is owned by PJ2KC. Sadly, though, the business model on the island is that the security companies only provide monitoring. The customer is on his own to find equipment, install it, configure it, and keep it working. That's not easy.

In July we got a new DSL cablehead modem because the old one failed. At that time the security system stopped reporting to the monitoring center. After investigating, it evolved that the security system at the house is working perfectly, but the new protocols on the line introduced by the new modem compress the DTMF tones such that the equipment at the security company can not decode them. Thus I had to buy an entirely new security system. The security company kept calling asking when I am going to get this done, but offered little assistance.

I decided to swallow my pride and get help. I installed the last two security systems myself, most recently in 2010, but I have much else to do around here, and this is an advanced IP-based system that requires expert configuration. After some digging I found an excellent security system technician who lives nearby, speaks perfect English, and clearly knows what he's doing. He visited the house, assessed the needs, bought the equipment in town after my funds transfer, and showed up on December 4 as scheduled to do the install, below.

Giovanni Adamud installing the new DSC HS2032 alarm panel, TL280E communicator, and ProSeries Neo keypad in the existing wall box.

After the initial install on December 4, Giovanni returned on the 7th with two experts who were adept at the IP configuration of the system. Now all is complete and functioning. I have an application on my smartphone now that provides control and access to the security system wherever I am in the world.

The new security system keypad. Same location as the old one.

This is an IP system that makes a wired CAT6 connection to our ASUS router, and thence to the outside world. No more POTS connection. It is technically much more capable, and configuring and monitoring remotely is easy and powerful. The total tab was $768, which the house fund and PJ2T spilt 50/50 on the thesis that we both benefit from the protection of a modern, monitored security system.

I put in a lot of time on December 9 installing surface mount conduit so that the CAT6 cable to the ASUS would be unobtrusive. It connects to our ASUS router along with a menacing warning tag (below).

Decapitation is the minimum penalty for unplugging this cable.

It's frustrating that the customer is responsible for keeping their system updated rather than the monitoring company. Another maddening Curacao business practice that would never be acceptable elsewhere.

Upcoming Events

CQ 160 CW (2022): K8ND, W8WTS, possibly K1LT.

ARRL DX CW: Hopefully COVID will be much less a problem by then. Presently we are hoping/expecting to have WI9WI, W9NJY, W9VA, N7IR, NF9V, and W0CG. That leaves four beds available. Drop me an E-mail to sign up. Dorothy will be on site, so there's incentive enough right there to come to this contest. We have the Moran pool house for the week.

ARRL DX SSB: The team is: Chuck, AD4ES, Don, AF4Z, Dan, N1ZZ, Walter, K5LD, Vince K4JC, Greg, N4EN, Steve AK4R

This contest is open to anyone else interested. K8PGJ will hopefully be on hand. Others?

CQ WPX SSB: The operator list for this contest is presently W4ATL, K4WK, AE4CW, WT4BT, WA4ZXV, K4UEE, and K4NHW. Bob (K4UEE) is still recruiting, and this contest is absolutely open to all CCC members who may want to fly south in late March. We have the Moran pool house reserved and Dorothy will still be on site in late March.

Update: Vaccinated CCCers

We keep adding to this list as I hear from you.

W0CG (including booster) and Dorothy, N1ZZ, K8IV, K9DR, K8ND (including booster), N7IR, VA7AM and Gill, WI9WI and KA9DOC, W9NJY, N7WA, N2BA and N2GSG, VE3CX , SM4KYN and Ingela, K4JC, W8WTS, K0MD, W8PT, W9VA, N7NR, KB7Q and Joyce, K8PGJ, ND8L, NF9V, NA2U+Liz, KY7M (including booster), N5OT and family.

Drop me an E-mail if you'd like me to add you to this list.

Health Report on Europe Tower

It is three years since December 4, 2018, the momentous day we put up the new Europe tower. The hope was that the careful prep and painting of the tower and the careful use of aluminum and stainless steel would nearly eliminate the maintenance load imposed by our salt water environment. That has definitely been the case, and this tower has been maintenance free for three years! This is a DRAMATIC improvement over the old tower, which required endless hours of maintenance work month in and month out.

This tower has a coat of epoxy primer, a finish coat of epoxy white, and a final coat of epoxy grey. Even epoxy eventually ages out, and it was my judgement that our grey coat was starting to oxidize as evidenced by a gradual color change toward blue, and some chalking on the upwind salty surfaces. Hence it was time to begin applying a fresh finish coat of epoxy to be 100% sure that we don't allow rusting to begin. Once it starts, there is no stopping it.

I began that process in early December, starting at the top plate with bright white epoxy and meticulously working down from there. I now have it finished down to slightly above the Pacific tribander at about 71 feet, and will continue when I return in January. This is not highly urgent, so we can fit this work in around other maintenance. Once this full recoat is on I don't foresee a need for any more work on this tower for at least four years.

Here I am on December 7, loaded up and ready to go up and do another two hour painting session. Note that I am wearing the old harness so as to not wreck the new VE3CX one with paint. We are using the new harness for all other tower work.

Geoff ready to paint the Europe tower, December 7.

This photo at the right, also from December 7, shows me working my way down with white paint, starting at the top plate and presently at about 88 feet. By the time I put away the paint yesterday I was at the 71 foot level, and will continue in January. This is difficult and dirty work that requires lots of patience and care.

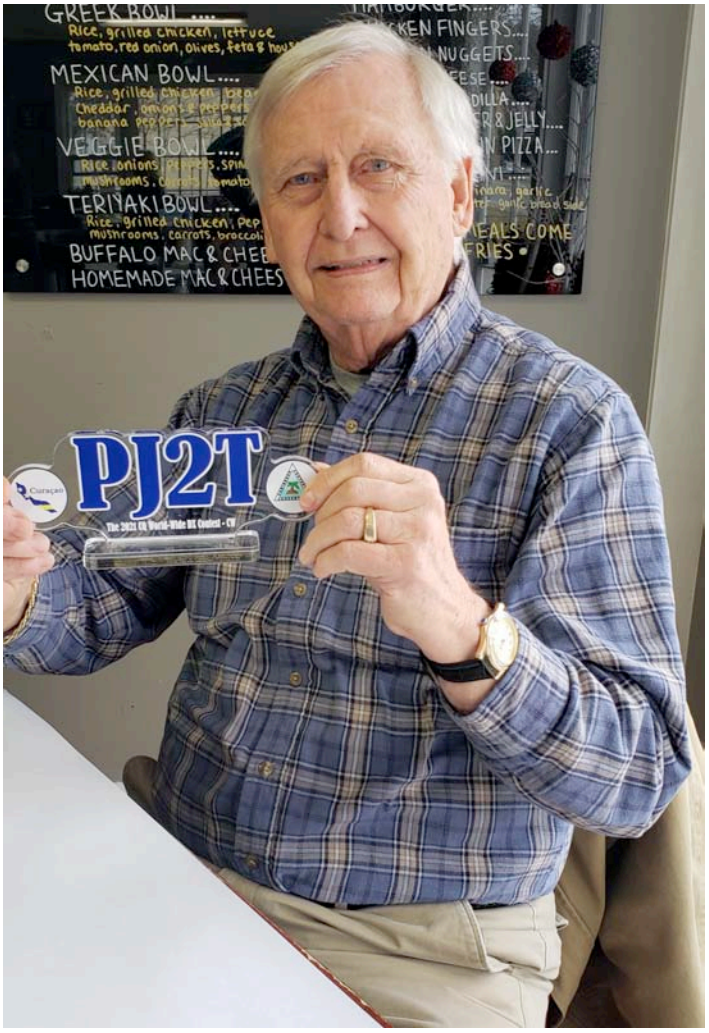
W0CG getting high (on paint fumes), December 7

Closing Down, Conditionally

Dorothy and I leave on December 14, with K8ND taking our place on the 17th. I have to allow for the possibility that the pandemic may prevent our return on January 25 and plan accordingly. Thus, I put three of our K3s and six computers in the safe against the chance we may not be right back in January. Here's the safe happily protecting our valuable gear. (I left Station 1 (primary) set up for K8ND and Station 4 set up for the remote.

Our high value gear safe and sound

Gifts from YO Now in Massachusetts!



Al Rousseau, W1FJ, in Massachusetts

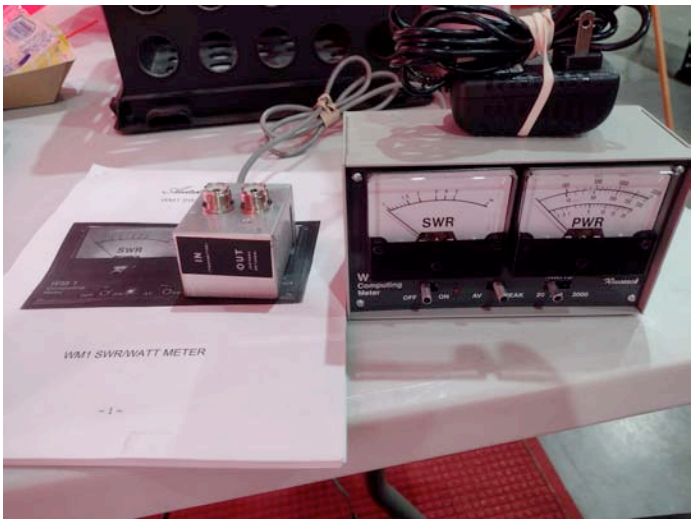
The Romanians (YO8WW and KO8SCA) came in the door at Signal Point with a wonderful bag full of gifts, including Jack Daniels and eight of these beautiful plexiglass desk signs for the CQWW CW 2021 event. K1EP was kind enough to take one of these back to New England, and here is Al, W1FJ, with his gift at an eatery in the Boston area last week. (Thanks K1EP for the photo.) Al was our guest of honor in the 2017 50th anniversary CQWW CW event, gifted us with a K3, and we are hoping to see him back here someday making searingly fast CW contacts. And thanks again to Al for his Bencher gift last month!

W8WTS' End of Month Treasury Report

There has been a lot of recent activity in the accounts. Revenue from contests has again started flowing post-COVID, and we did a big ocean shipment and bought a seventh K3. The present balance in the Station Support fund is $3426.03.

Thanks N1ZZ and K4JC

I heard just now from CC member Vince, K4JC that he and N1ZZ were at the Tampa Hamfest on December 11 and picked up an Autek WM-1 as their donation to the station. They will bring it down in early March. Here's the photo Vince sent. THANKS to these guys for being so attentive and remembering that we have this need.



Autek WM-1 from Tampa Hamfest

Thanks to VE4GV for Rotor Donations

When Rob was here for CQWW CW, he noticed a dead Hy-Gain Tailtwister sitting on the back porch and asked about the story. That's the one I removed from the Europe tower after three years of good service, and it was waiting for me to pack it in my suitcase to go back to the States for rebuild. Rob said that he had two Tailtwisters in his garage in Winnipeg that he will never use, but that need rebuilds. He not only donated the rotors, but offered to ship them to Norm's in Alabama for reconstruction. They are now on the way south.

The rotor I took out of the tower is jammed, probably as a result of the major storm in September that did so much other damage here. I'll ship it to Arizona for re-work once I get back to Idaho. THANKS VE4GV!

See the next page for the usual newsletter novelty of some old historic photos from Signal Point.

PJ2T Historic Photos

November 20, 2002, Jim Livengood (KP2L) and W0CG final-tuning the 15 meter US/JA gamma match before raising the antenna to the tower. We got it right, and this match has not required any maintenance in the intervening 19 years.

L-R working on the 15 meter yagi are KP2L, W0CG, N1ZZ, K8GT, and K8ND, November 2002. We trammed it up to the tower from this point in the side field.

W0CG on the tower installing the US/JA 15 yagi, November, 2002.

W8TK running big rates in CQWW CW 2002 on the new 15 meter beam. Notice how much has changed: no triplexers, no fancy N0YY desk, manual antenna switching, boat anchor monitors and PCs, old ugly floor tile.

If you're new to CCC you can see from these old photos that you're now part of a long tradition of fun and friendships catalyzed by Signal Point and this great hobby of ours.

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