



# Signals From The Point

Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium  
Editor: W0CG

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## Fibre Project Update

The crew to install the fibre confirmed yesterday that they would be at Signal Point July 14, 9:00 AM, as per our longstanding appointment. At 8:59 they phoned that they would not be here, but are “definitely” coming tomorrow. This is the normal pattern on the island, and it’s why I built a few days of slack into my travel schedule. I will release this newsletter today and let you know by E-mail if the fiber project happens tomorrow.

Below you see my drill with a 14 inch masonry bit imbedded in the masonry wall in the access ditch I dug. This punched a hole from the street into our backyard yesterday, preparatory for arrival of the fibre crew. I did my parts and now await them to do theirs.



Hole through wall from street to backyard for fiber

## Hotel Construction Site Report

When I arrived July 12 my friend Rick, the backhoe operator, saw me in the road and came down off his machine and gave me a big welcome hug and an update. He says that now the construction of the first hotel building has slipped until the end of 2022. So, for whatever reason, the investors have blinked.

Meanwhile, the dirt work on top of the Ridge has been completely respectful of our property line, and while they have extended the road to almost above the house, and moved a lot of fill up there, their activity has stayed well clear of ours and Flow’s utility cables on the east side (the safe side) of the property line. The new road has not yet been built, but more dirt has been moved in preparation. The Aqualetra power poles to our neighborhood are still in place along the road.

Yesterday (July 13) I was lucky to be here to catch the major milestone of removal of the last pile of fill material from the previous mountain of rubble across the road. I caught the moment on camera, and Rick (blue shirt) and the wheel loader operator and dump drivers posed for this photo. We celebrated with cold Cokes all around. All that remains now is a pile of twisted concrete and rebar that Rick says is pretty much useless except possibly for roadbed fill.



Celebrating the last pile of dirt removed

## CQWW SSB Contest Planning

Our team for CQWW SSB presently consists of VE4GV, DL8OBQ, NN3W, KL2A, and W3ACO. W3ACO will be accompanied by his daughter Melissa, and together they will serve as chefs. We have had the privilege of enjoying Rich’s gourmet meals before, and

it will be superb. If you don't come for the pileups, then come for the feast.

After two queries and hearing from nobody else in CCC I opened this contest to KL2A and NN3W, both of whom were with us last year. They will take up two of the four remaining bedrooms, and they are now recruiting from among their high-octane contest friends to fill the other two beds.

I have now paid the rental deposits for the Moran pool house for both modes of CQWW.

### CQWW CW Contest Planning

Things look more populous for the CW weekend, with a team of W8WTS, K9DR, VE3CX, VE3JM, W9NJY, N7IR, NA2U, and KY7M. If all these guys show up we will still have one bed open.

### ARRL Club Grant Application Filed with League

Our ARRL Club Grant application was filed by the June 30 deadline. All credit for this to CCC member Ray Fallen, ND8L, who volunteered to write the grant application. I had poor vision on this, not seeing a fit between what we do here and the requirements of the grant. But Ray did have the vision, clearly saw a workable theme, researched it, wrote it up, and got it filed in consultation with the League.



His "sell" includes providing youth with "go kits" so that they could participate remotely with some of our M/M teams in the contests. He also envisions funding travel for select young ops to come to Curacao and operate with us as mentors. There are many other clever thoughts and angles in Ray's thinking, and the club owes him a great debt of gratitude for all the hours he invested in this. The ask was for a Level 3 \$25K grant, and we await word from the committee sometime this month.

See <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Foundation/Club%20Grant%20Presentation%205-4-2022%20pdf.pdf> for more about this program.

### Two Additional Computers Obtained

I'm a nervous Nellie. One of my greatest panics is that we will at some point have a full multi team on site for a contest, but then be unable to put up all the stations because of equipment shortages and failures. The best protection against this nightmare scenario is adequate inventory of spare gear. Better safe than sorry.

To that end, Gene (KB7Q) has recently bought two more refurbished Dell 7040 PCs through EBay. These serve our needs perfectly and are affordable at about \$200 each, and are increasingly hard to find.



Gene has configured them up in Montana for PJ2T use, done full testing, labeled them as PJ2T PCs 50 and 51. He will send them to W0CG/Ohio in August for the October trip to Curacao. Thanks Gene for taking care of all the computer and remoting technology at PJ2T, and thanks to all of us members for funding such things through the Station Support portion of our annual dues.

### Tropical Storm Bonnie

On June 29 Bonnie arrived in the ABC islands, and we got very lucky. Our across the street neighbor Dirk reported to me that there was almost no wind, but heavy rain in the late local afternoon. A day later the sun was out and everything dry. It is extremely unusual for storms to make their way this far south, but there was a rare blocking high pressure area northeast that pushed the storm south. Fortunately, contact with the landmass of the mainland also helped weaken the storm.



**CCC Polo Shirt Order**

You saw my E-mail soliciting orders for more PJ2T shirts. That order is now closed. These will be the standard PJ2T aqua green, and will still have the “20 Years in 2020” slogan together with our CCC graphic and your name and callsign.



Grouchy looking Geoff with the sample shirt

These are free to new members, and will probably work out to \$55 (mailed) for the others. I heard from a handful of members who wanted to get in on this order in addition to our newest members. After waiting a couple of weeks to be sure everyone got their orders in, I dropped the shirt order at my local embroider on June 30. They said it will be about a month, so hopefully you can expect to see them in early August once I pick up the order and mail them out.

**Water Heater Shipped**

This is not as exciting as buying new ham gear, but essential to our contesting comfort nonetheless. The Signal Point water heater is a small 20 gallon unit that runs on 115 VAC. One would think that we should have a solar system, but that’s more complexity than I care to deal with for installation, maintenance, and capital cost. A solar system will have too many failure points. Thus, simple is best for our application.

The last time our water heater failed (2014) I had to do extensive re-plumbing to get the replacement heater in service. To prevent that next time I want to get the exact same make and model so that swapping it in will be easy. That unit is a Richmond 6EP20-1, pictured here.



Sometimes, very occasionally and unpredictably, this unit is available on the island at Kooyman at a retail price of \$1086.

Since our present water heater is in the eighth year of its six year predicted life, I want to have a spare on site. That precise same Richmond unit is \$346 at Menards with a rebate offer. This week (mid-June) I ordered one from Menards for direct shipment to our freight forwarder in Miami. With shipping and sales tax that came to \$421.91. The unit was delivered in Miami on June 23. It will then go as ocean freight to the island, incurring many more costs along the way, but that total will still be substantially less than the \$1086 island price, and we will have the security of having it on hand at the QTH when we need it. I had planned to pick it up at Caribbean Cargo Services on or about July 15. Unfortunately, Menard’s fouled up the shipping label and the unit went to “unknown

freight” at AMCAR. Some searching on July 13 solved the problem, but the unit will not get to the island in time for me to get it in the July trip. Caribbean Cargo Services said it will be no problem to hold it for me until mid-October. I will not buy from Menards again.

If I’m lucky, mechanical guru W5XD might be on site when the old heater fails, and David and I can team up and install it easily.

And by the way, says curmudgeonly grammarian Geoff, the correct term for this appliance is “cold water heater.” If the water were already hot, we would not need a “hot water heater.” Think deeply about that as you go to sleep tonight.

### One VE4GV Rotor Arrived Curacao July 12

As you saw elsewhere, I came to Curacao on July 12 to install the fiber optic connection. My plan was to be in Ohio during that week before, so I tossed one of the two rebuilt VE4GV Tailtwisters into my checked luggage in Ohio, and that got that rotor to the station at no cost because I have free luggage on American as a million mile Gold member. Customs at Hato gave me some problems but finally let it go through.



The second VE4GV-donated and rebuilt Tailtwister is in Idaho and we’ll take it in free checked luggage in January.

### Photo Strays



A wide angle view of the PJ2T shack. This white, bright look contrasts enormously with the dark olive green room with ugly drapes and ugly floor tile, circa 2000.



June 27 looking north just to the left of the old location of our Europe Beverage. Massive fill has been moved to the top and placed for the road to the future houses. Signal Point is a 90 degree right turn from the point of the photo. The area where our Europe Beverage used to be is now under four meters thick fill dirt.

### Congrats NA2U

On Wednesday, July 6, 2022 at 09:04:02 PM MST, Bob K8IA <[bobk8ia@cox.net](mailto:bobk8ia@cox.net)> wrote:

Although the score database for 2022 ARRL DX CW Contest does not yet appear online, I have solid knowledge that Outlaw Fred NA2U, remoting into KH7M, was #1 World in the DX SOUAB HP category.

It was a very close race with IR2Q (IK2PFL) with Fred finishing about 0.7% ahead:

KH7M (NA2U) - 3,564,480

IR2Q (IK2PFL) - 3,538,356

I will cover the rest of the Outlaw placements as soon as I have a scores database to work with. But, for now, a big CONGRATS to Outlaw Fred!

### Thanks SM4KYN for Contribution

Anders surprised me with a \$100 donation via PayPal as soon as I arrived July 12 to do the fiber project. He noted that I had spent quite a bit out of pocket toward this trip and was very kind to provide this help with airfare. Thanks SM4KYN!

### Caution: FCC CORES System Is Changing

The excerpt below is from the July 7 *ARRL Letter*. Be sure to follow the directions available online and create an FCC account with a username and password if you have not already done so. I did it just now for my three FRNs, and it all worked easily. -Ed

### FCC Legacy CORES System to be Retired

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will retire the [Legacy version](#) of its COMmission REGistration System (CORES) on July 15, 2022. CORES is the FCC's public-facing database that enables and tracks certain types of FCC and FCC applicant actions, including amateur radio applications and licenses. Its implementation has enabled routine amateur applications and licenses to be issued overnight instead of over weeks, as was the case with earlier methods. ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® advises the amateur radio community to transition to the [updated version of CORES](#) as soon as possible.



### Bug Men on Site July 9

Maintenance continues at Signal Point, even when I'm not on site. Big thanks to Zoom for arranging to have the exterminators on site to spray last weekend. The bugs get crazy and eat trees in the dry season. This was Naf1 250 well spent.

### DXE Video

As most everyone knows, DX Engineering produces an excellent series of interviews with unsuspecting

hams who wander into their net and are plunked in front of a camera. That happened to me on September 1, 2016, when I met K3LR in Akron for our occasional lunches together and he shanghaied me to come back to the office for an interview. I had no idea what this would be about, and had done zero preparation, but went ahead with it anyway.

If you're new to CCC you might enjoy seeing this brief video interview because it provides some of the history that led up to establishment of Signal Point.

I apologize for one major factual error in the video. The first Caribbean contest I went to was the 1994 VP5VW memorial to W9VW operation, not VP5FXB as I said in the video. This is what happens when you're caught flatfooted, and have to try to recall things on the fly. VP5FXB was also a memorial, that to Al Slater, G3FXB. VP5CW came later.

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=1079875142108689&external\\_log\\_id=91a595ef-eb95-4adc-8da5-381dbbdd7d29&q=signal%20point%20-%20pj2t](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=1079875142108689&external_log_id=91a595ef-eb95-4adc-8da5-381dbbdd7d29&q=signal%20point%20-%20pj2t)

### PJ2Y On the Air

As I write this on July 14 three youth and six chaperones are in the air bound for the island. They will be here through July 19 signing PJ2Y. Thanks DL8OBQ for hosting the youth group. News and photos about this will be in the next newsletter because I will not be able to report on that activity on the same day that I'm working with the fiber installation crew.

### Member Spotlight – Chuck Patellis, W8PT



W8PT

My journey in Amateur Radio started when I was 15 years old. That would be the summer of 1962. I had a transistor radio that I would play softly every night, tuned to WHOT, the local rock station. It helped me get to sleep. Well, that radio finally failed and my

parents asked me what I wanted for my birthday (July 4th). I asked for a replacement for my radio.

They found and bought me an RCA transistor radio that also had a chrome telescoping antenna and a switch to receive shortwave. A couple of nights later I was listening to it and switched over to SW and pulled up the antenna. I heard a guy from Twinsburg (Harry Steffan - W8RHZ) talking to a guy in Missouri. I was fascinated with what I was hearing. The guy in Twinsburg had a loud signal and I could hear everything he was saying. I have since forgotten what he was talking about but that night I was hooked.

The next day I was outside sitting at our picnic table when my best friend, Duane Spatar, K8DI SK (ex WA8FHP; NG8D) came over. I told him he had to listen to what was on the radio. Sure enough we were able to tune in other HAMS. We made the decision right then to find a way to do what these guys were doing. He went home and called me to tell me that his dad was taking him to the local "candy store" (Armies Electronics in Youngstown) to get a license manual and study for the test. Did I want to come along? YOU BET!

That summer he got his novice license (WN8FHP) and I got mine (WN8FQK). Now you know why I have W8PT. Who would want to go through contests with WA8FQK? But for many years that was my call.

That summer was the best summer I had had in my short life up until then. An Eico 720 and an SX-110 receiver with a long wire antenna. My parents never had to wonder where I was. I was in my room talking to the world by CW.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

PS: January 21, 1964, I had a QSO with Harry on 6m and was able to tell him what role he played in getting me into Amateur Radio. His QSL card is very special to me.

73 - Chuck W8PT

*Editor's note: Chuck mentions radio station WHOT, Youngstown. For six months in 1971 and two more in 1973 I was transmitter operator at WHOT and did the midnight to 6 AM deejay show posing as "Big Al Knight." The whole thing was canned and semi-automated, but I had fun making it sound like a live deejay show. Yes K8ND, believe it or not, there was a time I stayed up all night every night.*