



# Signals From The Point

Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium  
Editor: W0CG

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## Remembering Steve

All but our newest members knew Steve, the radio cat. He wandered into Signal Point as a young post-kitten and chose to stick around. Dorothy and I took him to be “fixed,” and he forgave us and stayed affectionate in spite of what the vet did to him.

I have been around cats all my life, and this is the smartest one I’ve ever seen. The first time we had to depart for a long time back in the States we figured we would never see him again. But he kept surviving and returning.

Outdoors, he was in a survival situation, and necessarily on guard at all times. But indoors he seemed to profoundly understand that he could relax and let his fur down, and he slept for hours in positions like this that seemed uncomfortable to us but beat a bed of rocks and cactus. He has now disappeared, but we all remember him fondly.



Steve, December 19, 2013, photo by SM4KYN

## CQWW SSB

W0CG, W3ACO, W7MAH, K0PZH, VE4GV, WX4W, W5GAI, W4IPC, and KG5XR are ready to go for the October trip. All except one have turned in their

flight arrangements. We look forward to meeting new folks and greeting old friends. This team includes three college age ops, dramatically pulling down the average age of the team. Since they’re young, we’ll work them harder in the shift schedule <grin>. We’ll also be remoting some of the operating hours.

## CQWW CW Planning Update

I’m seeing some of the lowest airfares to Curacao in a very long time. We are waiting to see if two tentatively signed operators will indeed be able to confirm their trips. If they do not, then we will have three available bedrooms and a staffing problem. If they do confirm, that will still leave one open bedroom. As soon as I hear from them one way or the other I’ll recruit aggressively to try to fill out this team.

As is becoming normal PJ2T contesting practice, we expect to have some operating hours filled via the remote station on CW as well in the above SSB contest.

See the WW CW preplanning panel at <http://www.pj2t.org/ccc/cqww.cw.2023.preplanning.htm>.

As usual, we will have a full Thanksgiving dinner served by the pool thanks to Dorothy’s generous efforts.

## Call for Operators: ARRL DX CW February 2024

The CW contest is February 17-18, 2024, with operator arrivals planned on Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> and departures the following Tuesday, February 20. We got dished by the owner of the Moran pool house in that he rented it to someone who wanted a very long term rental, on the order of two months. Thus we will be renting Coral Cliff #7, two doors up the hill from the Moran house. That house has three queen bedrooms, each with its own bathroom. The third queen room also

has a bunk bed. So we can comfortably put three couples or four guys in that house.

Presently we have NF9V, K7TQ, and myself committed. Dorothy will be on site. Last year we absolutely killed this contest, scoring by far the most QSOs and achieving the highest score of any station, anywhere. Let's try for that again. Please E-mail me if you can come to this one.

The preplanning panel for ARRL DX CW is at <http://www.pj2t.org/ccc/ARRLCW2024/arrl.cw.2024.preplanning.htm> .

### Monthly Update: Backup Power Project

Work of the backup power committee slowed somewhat in this past month. I had hoped that this would proceed under its own momentum without electing a leader, but we will do so in the coming weeks and hopefully have something to report in the next newsletter.



This project is trickier than you might imagine because our house wiring is based on our three phase 50 Hz service. But we have no three phase loads in the QTH, and have to design accordingly. Also, our voltage stepdown system for the radio gear has to be taken into account. W8WTS and I discussed all of this at his QTH last week, and Jim has some good ideas that he will research.

### Who Likes Which Headset?

I have always used Heil headsets out of habit, not a good reason, and in personal respect for Bob Heil, a very cool guy, also probably not a good reason.

CCC member Skip, W5GAI, recently polled contesters on the PJ2T list for their preferences, and here's the result.

- 7 Inrad W1*
- 6 Heil ProSet HC4*
- 3 Heil Pro7*
- 2 Radiosport*
- 2 Hamilton Buhl HA-7M*
- 1 Heil Proset Dynamic*
- 1 Yamaha CM500*

Thanks to everyone who responded to Skip's survey. (Looks like I should be trying the Inrad, pictured below.)



### QSL Manager News

Thanks to CCC President K8ND for all the work he has done to resolve our problem with a QSL Manager. Joe Arcure, W3HNC, has served faithfully and very professionally for many years. Strangely, he seems to have vanished, and efforts are underway now to try to trace down where he went. Joe's son Paul is in touch with K8ND, and is also trying to reach his father. Meanwhile, our new QSL Manager is Steve Wheatley, KU9C, Mount Freedom, NJ. Steve is very highly experienced. From a K8ND E-mail: "He [Steve] relates that "Steve is a member of the 'QSL Manager's Society' (<https://www.qsl.net/qslmanagers/>), which seems to be a positive indication of his willingness to do the job right." He is reachable by email at [ku9c@yahoo.com](mailto:ku9c@yahoo.com)! Steve tells us that "I am honored and glad to be involved with PJ2T."

K8ND has obtained about six pounds of unanswered bureau cards for PJ2T. All of our remaining blank QSL stock was at W3HNC, so we have to assume that we may not be able to get those cards to KU9C. I (W0CG) worked intensively in mid-August with our printer, QSL Concepts, Vancouver, to get another print run of our cards. They are now on order and will, of course, list our new card manager.

KU9C is our fourth QSL manager, following the good work of KN7Y, N9AG (SK), and W3HNC.

### CCC Veterans' Lunch, September 7

I bought the QTH on November 1, 2000. It was a total unserviceable wreck when I took possession. But thanks to heroic work efforts by W9EFL (SK), K4LT, me, and KP2L (now W0NB), we managed to get on

the air three weeks later and make a good showing in CQWW CW 2000.

Jim Livengood, W0NB, was a member in those early years, and much of the success we enjoy now is owed to his hard work and expertise in all things. PJ2T would not be what it is now without Jim's efforts, including a period of years when he served as our president. He's pictured at the left at Signal Point with W9EFL (SK) in 2001.



W0NB and Noel, W9EFL (SK) in 2001

Jim started at the bottom as a kid at an AM broadcast station in Burlington, Iowa, and ended up owning the place together with other business ventures. In that time, he learned to keep the broadcast station on with a lot of good old fashioned common engineering sense, and became a true jack of all trades. He applied those skills to great advantage at PJ2T, and was always that rare person who would see a need, go find tools, do the job independently, document it, and then ask "What's next?"

I'm also in Jim's debt for the extremely generous and kind support he and Mary rendered to me and Cindy during a few months in early 2000 when we lived in St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands, within eyeshot of Jim's side-by-side homes there.

Unfortunately, there came a time when it was no longer practical for Jim to make the trips to Curacao. He and Mary settled into retirement in Iowa, and I feared I might never see him again. Then a happy coincidence of fate intervened, and the Livengoods ended up moving to Northeast Ohio to be near kids, in-laws, and grandkids, and he became my neighbor. W8WTS lives even closer to Jim and Mary than I. On September 7 we managed to get together at Jim's home in Chagrin Falls and walked into the village for lunch

and to get caught up. The photo shows us in Jim's yard with his invisible antenna. (You don't see it, right?)



W0CG, W0NB, W8WTS, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, September 7, 2023.

The invisible antenna gets out very nicely, and that very morning Jim had worked Signal Point with WM5H operating via the remote station.



Chagrin Falls is a delightful historic community about an hour's drive north of my W0CG QTH.

Jim is 82 and still extremely active in all things, including the extended stays in France that he and Mary have loved so well for so many years. For our next reunion we'll get together so that Jim can see the WTS monster antenna project. W8WTS is only 20 minutes away from W0NB. Small world indeed.

### **K8ND Arrival August 22**

Jeff arrived in Curacao on schedule August 22, hefting the KPA-1500 amplifier back, padded in wads of Signal Point bath towels in his luggage. Because of his careful preparation on the outbound leg, there was no duty charged to return that amp. Without this prep we

could have been charged approximately \$750 duty at the airport. Jeff will be at Signal Point until October 18. He kindly scheduled his trip so that he would be able to collect me and Dorothy at the airport on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and so that we would have no continuity break in our very long term eight month car lease.

PJ2ND is frequently heard on the bands, NOT via the remote these days, and Jeff has been a great help keeping the plants alive and defending the place (and himself) against the pack of unwanted dogs.

The 10 or so wild dogs hang around the neighborhood because our neighbor feeds them daily. Jeff sent this photo on September 10 of an array of nine feeding dishes just outside the Signal Point wall. The dogs are messing in the yard, worrying visitors to the AirBnbs, preventing at least one neighbor from making her morning hikes, chasing our cats, and generally making themselves unwelcome. Some of them were even on the shack roof yesterday chasing cats and damaging the anti-leak seals.

A group of the owners have, with an owner-lawyer as spokesman, asked that the feeding be moved a mile or so away, but so far that neighborhood is not cooperating. Police intervention may be next.



Dog food bowls adjacent to PJ2T

### ARRL DX CW Log Checking Report

Here are the numbers from ARRL on our accuracy performance in 2023 ARRL DX CW this past February. As you see, these are excellent. We have a good track record of very high accuracy over the years in this contest, and that streak continues. Hats off to ops NF9V, W0CG, W9NJY, WI9WI, KB7Q, N7IR, and K7TQ for the good work.

9295 Raw QSO before checking (does not include duplicates or missing exchanges)  
9163 Final QSO after checking reductions

27885 Raw QSO points  
27162 Final QSO points

344 Raw mults  
343 Final mults

9592440 Raw score  
9316566 Final score

1.4% error rate based on raw and final qso counts

2.9% score reduction  
14 (0.2%) not in log  
95 (1.0%) incorrect calls  
23 (0.2%) incorrect exchanges  
0 (0.0%) missing exchanges  
338 (3.5%) duplicates removed  
70 (0.8%) calls unique to this log (not removed)

### Progress on Remote Station Filters

The boxes from Gary arrived at my Ohio QTH on August 24.



A K3 and parts for the remote bandpass filter system from N7IR as delivered in Ohio at W0CG

One box was an unrelated purchase from E-Bay, and the others contained our repaired remote station K3, four N7IR custom built bandpass filters, four coax switch modules, the N6TV Y-box, DC control cables and plugs, and a Bandmaster donated by K8ND. I will add the six bandpass filters I brought from Curacao in April and lots of coax jumpers. W8WTS and I will construct two modules on aluminum plates that will fit precisely into the available spaces on the wall adjacent to the remote station. I took everything to Jim last week, and he is presently working the project on top of all of his other commitments. After testing with the K3

I'll pack everything for my checked baggage to Curacao for my October 16 trip.

We owe N7IR a gigantic thanks for taking the time to build and align the filters for 30, 17, 12, and 6 meters, and to painstakingly construct all of the necessary interconnecting DC control cables. He also sent professional documentation in the form of a schematic and a wire list, and packed all the parts extremely carefully. Thanks also for his repair of the blown front end of the remote K3. A significant part of the need for this filter panel is to prevent such accidents in the future.

### End of Month Treasury Balance

Per CCC treasurer W8WTS the balance in the Station Support fund on July 31 was \$11393.08. I'll report the August balance in the next newsletter.

### W8WTS Mega-Station Project

CCC Treasurer and past-President Jim Galm has been planning a mega-station for years. He has 37 acres of beautiful flat ground in Northeast Ohio near Chagrin Falls, and has now assembled most of the components for a serious antenna system.

The concrete work is finished and awaits erection of a 200 foot rotating tower. This will be an extremely beefy system, generously engineered and built by a master designer. Jim's hope is that the unstable Ohio weather will permit him enough time to get the system in the air this Fall season.

Everything is big. The photo shows Jim dwarfed by the reel of 1 5/8 inch feedline that will connect the stacks to the shack.



You know he's serious when the feedline looks like water pipe.

The tower will be populated by three stacked trapless tribanders and two four element 40 meter yagis. These

antennas are almost all assembled and ready. Future plans call for WARC and 30 meter yagis to be added. These are on hand in Jim's barn, and will hopefully go up in 2024.

You can see from the next photo how big the 40 meter yagis are in comparison to the coil of hardline.



One 40 meter yagi is so huge that it dwarfs the huge coil of hardline.

It's exciting and gratifying to see Jim finally executing on his long-held dream. As you know, 22 years ago he co-founded a company with an idea and a clear vision, and now many years later Layer Zero Power Systems has grown into a dominant force in its market space and employs over 150 people.

See <https://www.layerzero.com/>

Business is so good that they are presently building additional buildings to support the manufacturing needed to meet demand for their products. Finally, after achieving this enormous success, Jim has reduced to just two days a week at work, and is able to turn his attention to the WTS station. He plans to single op from home and, when he has an appetite for team contesting, to continue to make the short drive to K8AZ as he has done for years. We'll update you here as this project moves forward.

### Remote Station Status Check

The remote station continues to work perfectly without the KPA-1500 amplifier. K8ND returned himself and the freshly repaired amp to the island on August 22. In October I'll re-install the amp and put the original K3 back in service, and the remote station will be back to normal. Sometime after that, working around the demands of supporting the WW SSB crew, I'll install and test the new bandpass filter module.

At that point the remote station will be fully complete and fully mature, and we hope that it will serve faithfully for many years. It will be in service during most if not all of the upcoming season's contests, supporting CCC ops who join our teams from a distance.

In addition to those recognized last month, we also thank W5MJ and SM4KYN for their recent donations to the cost of shipping the amp and the K3 for repairs and a return to the island.

### **Internet Outage 6 – 11 September**

K8ND was watching a video a few evenings ago and suddenly everything stopped. After working through all of the obvious troubleshooting steps, Gene and Jeff and I finally recommended that Jeff call in service from the Internet provider, Flow. This whole process was longer than it might have been because I was out of touch for several days with multiple commitments here and in Pennsylvania.

Flow was quite responsive, and the technician arrived on Monday, the 11<sup>th</sup> and replaced the Sercomm optical modem and router. He said that they recently had had several of those fail, and that we were just one more such case. The tech departed, and then Gene and Jeff went heads down to configure the new box to support all of our unique requirements, including extensive port forwarding arrangements for the remote station, Ring cameras, Foscam cameras, and our customized addressing schemes. In anticipation of just such a crisis I had carefully and fully documented all of the technical setup details in March, so Jeff and Gene were able to get going fairly quickly while I was unavailable Monday afternoon in meetings.

Many thanks to Gene for his continuing patient support of PJ2T technical issues from his home in Bozeman, Montana. We'd be a far less capable station without his presence.

### **CQWW SSB 2021 World #1 Plaque, Multi/Multi**

We won the big one in October of 2021. The arrival of this plaque in Idaho in early August was a nice surprise (next column).



Congrats to NN3W, KL2A, G4BVY, G4XUM, M5RIC, K8PGJ, ND8L, N2BA, and W0CG, World #1 in the Big One, October, 2021

### **The New K3S**

As reported last month, N7IR has our new K3S (PJ2T's 9th), and has been checking it out. He has discovered that it will need to go to Elecraft for module updates, as he explains below on August 24.

*I have initiated a request to update the recently acquired K3S to the most recent revisions of the low power and final amplifiers. Unfortunately the module swap program was terminated since last December when I did a similar update to my personal K3S. Now I will have to return the entire radio to Elecraft to get this service work done. Keith, the K3 tech at Elecraft, says he is only running about a month behind since their backlog of K4 orders has been filled. That will be enough time to get it back before mid-November if I ship it within the next week. I should be able to generate enough money selling the accessories that we don't need to cover most of the cost. Unless I hear otherwise I will carry on with the upgrades.*

So again we find ourselves thanking N7IR, PJ2T's Station Equipment Lead, for all of his work and skill.

### **SM4KYN Christmas Trip Cancellation**

With great regret Anders and Ingela had to cancel their long awaited COVID delayed return to Signal Point. It came up that he needs to have cataract surgery, and thus needs to be in place at home so that he can respond to those two surgery opportunities when they come up in the Swedish health care system.

K8ND came to the rescue and re-booked his airline arrangements to arrive November 23 and stay through January 31. This is a great help to the club because it prevents lost club revenue during the weeks that SM4KYN had booked and also protects the long

