



Signals From The Point

Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium
 Editor: W0CG

Volume 24, Number 2

February 15, 2023

Dayton Hamvention CCC Meeting Announcement

The 2024 Annual Meeting of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium (PJ2T) will be held during the Dayton Hamvention on Friday May 17, 3:00 to 5:00 PM. The meeting will be held at the Hope Hotel in the P-51 Mustang Room as in the past two years. The Hope Hotel is adjacent to Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

Mark your calendars, and make plans to attend! (This is the first of many reminders to come.)

*CCC Annual Meeting
 Friday May 17, 2024
 3:00 -5:30 PM*

*Hope Hotel & Conference Center
 P-51 Mustang Room
 10823 Chidlaw Rd # A, Dayton, OH 4543*

*73, Jeff PJ2ND K8ND
 President, Caribbean Contesting Consortium*

Results of CQ 160 CW Contest

W8WTS made the trip from Ohio to join K8ND at Signal Point for this, their favorite operating event of the year. Regrettably, they and most others around the globe reported that these were the worst conditions in the 160 contest that they have ever experienced.

Jeff and Jim have won this event many times in the past, but as you will see in the 3830 claimed scores (next column), they will likely settle for 3rd as more and more Europeans realize and take advantage of the huge geographic advantage they have in this and many other contests. The likely winner, IG9/S57DX, was in African Italy, a great place from which to operate in this contest. Since they are in Zone 33 they are technically in Africa, even though the host country is Italy. This would be as if we were able to operate from

Havana, yet have it count as a separate continent with the big points advantage that results.

This is NOT sour grapes – these guys are to be commended for a smart, large scale operation, taking advantage of this geographical quirk and assembling a team of nine operators to tackle the huge logistics of setting up a Field Day type operation on a small island in the Mediterranean. We'd do the same if we were in that part of the world.

Multi-Op HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	State/Prov	Countries	Op Time	Score
IG9/S57DX			1490	39	77	34	1,724,340
OM7M			1455	39	82	36	1,047,376
PJ2T			916	51	62	24:42	1,026,266
S50C			1462	41	75	33:10	1,007,692
OK5Z			1406	38	76		908,922
II2Q			1220	40	75	32.5	800,285
HG8DX(@HA8DZ)			1301	30	78	33	788,616
E7DX(@E77DX)			1337	34	70		788,528
K1LZ	S02R	x	1194	56	70	31	751,212
S50W			1223	38	72	32.5	735,680

Preparation for the contest began with our checking out the two Beverage antennas. W0CG did the full maintenance on the Europe Beverage, pulling off vines and downed trees and bringing all 1000 feet of the wire up to snuff. Later in the day, W8WTS and I did the same on the US/JA Beverage, finding that the far end termination had gone bad, just as K8ND's educated ear had suspected. With 470 ohms at the far end instead of the 36 meg that we initially measured, that Beverage performed well.

A high point of the radio year for us is setting up the DXE 4-SQ RX antenna for this contest. Owing to COVID, the tragic illness of Jim's XYL, and other life events, it had been several years since we got out that antenna and set it up on the field west of the QTH. We thought for a time that we might never do it again. But January 25 found us happily out in the field laying out the "square."



W8WTS unsuccessfully dodging raindrops with the 4-SQ center post and controller at his right, January 25, 2024.



Jim the second night, surrounded by SDRs, skimmer computers and servers, and big monitors. Somewhere in there there's even a radio.

On Sunday afternoon we "redeployed" the four square. This is pleasant duty as you can see by the seaside location of the south whip just before I took it down.



Expedient field shim provided by Father Nature

You don't want to hear this up north, but the sun and heat out in this antenna field really tested us. But it sure beats shoveling snow.

K8ND opened the contest, and he and Jim alternated three hour shifts.



Curacao's unique juxtaposition of desert plants and turquoise ocean, with the whip at the left center.



K8ND early in the contest



Jim and Jeff fabbed these portable concrete bases for the whips years ago.



Minus the feedline and DC wire, here's the whole antenna at the road, awaiting arrival of the car to take us back to the shack.

of RG-6 onto the reel.

The 4-SQ is now stowed and awaiting next year. Thanks to K9SG for his generous help in acquiring this antenna.

Congratulations to K8ND and W8WTS on a superb score in very trying conditions!

59 Years Ago: Working KY7M

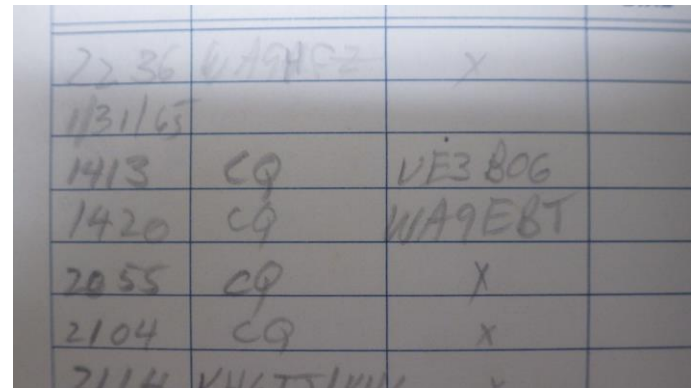
Last year when I found out that former CCC member and former *NCJ* editor Lee, KY7M, used to hold callsign WA9EBT, a light came on. I was all but certain that he and I had enjoyed many QSOs in the 1960s, and remembered his crisp CW and loud signal.

Today, January 18, I looked through a couple of my old logs that are stored at my Ohio home and sure enough found that we had first worked on January 31, 1965, on 7.027 MHz..



Jeff, Jim, and Dorothy teaming up to reel the 1000 feet of RG-6 coax in from the field.

Jim designed and fabricated a clever scheme to make the above job fast and easy. He machined an aluminum hub that mated with one side of a plastic cable reel, attaching that hub to a battery powered drill motor. One person stands outside the wall to tug in the coax, another (Jeff) manages it over the wall using a towel to prevent abrasion, Jim runs the drill and manages the layering on the reel, and Dorothy was there to hold it all in alignment. This reduces a tedious hours long job to about 10 minutes. Repeat with the 1000 feet of #20 insulated DC control wire.



WA9EBT (KY7M) in the W0CG (WA8KUW) log in 1965

At that time I was running 50 watts to a 12 foot high dipole with a Knight T-50 at the bottom of a valley in Wheeling, West Virginia. It's a wonder I could work *anything*. I have to admit that I vehemently dislike being an Old Timer, far from ready to accept old age, but sometimes looking back through the years can be heart warming and entertaining.

ARRL DX SSB Team Update

Our strong team consists of K8PGJ, N0OJ, ND8L, K4QD, K5LD, W9NJY, K4JC, and WX4W. In addition CT1EAT happens to be on the island that weekend on a business trip and will augment our team. If he does not spend Saturday night on site, we still have one bed available.



Happy W8WTS just after having tamed the 1000 feet

In addition to the contest, W9NJY will be doing the tricky surgery on the, you guessed it, W9NJY Ridge

coax switch box to replace two relays that gave their lives to lightning. This will be a difficult job and we're grateful to have the designer and builder here to do it. After the repair that box will again support four remotely selectable antenna ports instead of the present two. That repair will also restore this antenna to availability by remote operators.

We have the Moran pool house for this contest, and Dorothy will be on site with her smiles, so it will be a great time.

CQ WPX SSB 2024 Update

I cancelled our Moran pool house reservation for WPX SSB on January 23, due to lack of interest in operators traveling to Curacao. N7NR is assembling a team of friends to do the contest remotely as a Multi/Single. WI9WI and W0CG will be on site to add a few shift hours to this contest effort. N7NR has offered to make a contribution to the club accounts that equals or exceeds what we'd have received if we'd had a full team of operators on site. In this way, Dave is making the CCC coffer whole when it looked as if we might lose out on this contest entirely.

AL-1200 (6) Repairs Completed

In December the T/R relay in this amplifier began hanging in TX. This is a common problem with these amps, and we had spare new T/R relay boards on hand at the station. K8ND began the replacement of that board, a tiresome and tedious process that requires unsoldering and then reconnecting 15 wires, two of which are coax. I finished the install and checkout on late January, and we tested the amplifier.

It did not work. The RF came through fine, but the amp would not key into transmit when we grounded the PTT line. W8WTS then got into the act, patiently reverse engineering the schematic for the T/R circuitry, which was not shown in detail on the AL-1200 documentation.



W8WTS working on the amp, 24 January 2024

This schematic led to the conclusion that there was either a broken wire in the 12 VDC path or a blown diode. It turned out to be a lead on a diode that penetrated the circuit board but did not make electrical connection. It was probably that way as it was supplied by Ameritron. A quick solder tack, and the amp was back in business, quickly working Clipperton on 160. This difficult repair was a good three way team effort, and further points up why we love these field repairable amplifiers.

As always in cases like this we carefully stored the new schematic and updated the detailed maintenance notes on this amplifier.

W8WTS is taking home three of our bad AL-1200 T/R boards. He will reverse engineer them, get some duplicate boards printed, and populate those boards with cheap and easily available components. This upcoming stock of inexpensive home-brewed T/R boards will keep our amps on the air well into the future. Thanks Jim!

CCC Polo Shirts Mailed January 17

The Idaho embroiderer came through with only a day to spare. Dorothy picked them up on January 16 and mailed them the 17th using the addressed envelopes I left for her on January 5. These are a gift to new members.



CCC shirts laid out and ready to mail from Idaho January 17

I have now heard from several ops that their shirts arrived OK. Project complete.

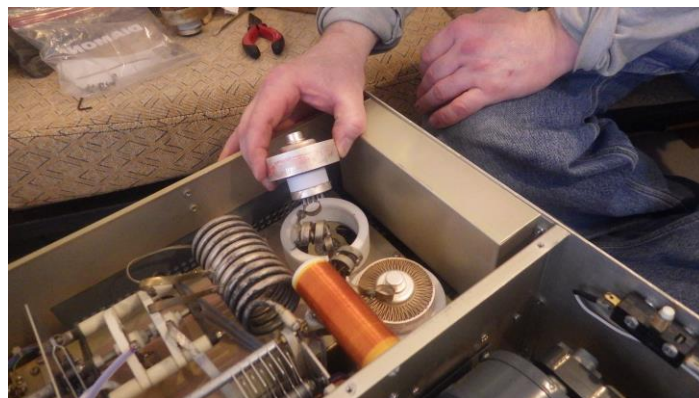
N7IR Found Two 3CPX800A7s, and More!

On January 15 N7IR found a pair of 3CPX800A7 tubes for sale from a reputable ham in the Philadelphia area. Bob said they had been lightly used, and test good in his amp, making full 1500 watts of output with about 40 watts of drive. At \$975 they are not cheap, but in fact that's a pretty good price.

The seller shipped them quickly to W8WTS in Ohio after receiving the PayPal payment from N7IR. Jim packed them very carefully and brought them to the island in his checked luggage on January 23.

Buying used tubes is always a risk. We installed them in the HF-2500 on January 24, and they test good, very healthy. We'll run them for a while in that amplifier to gain confidence.

Thanks N7IR for making this happen!



W8WTS installing the new tubes into the HF-2500, January 24, 2024.

We were still on the lookout for additional 3CPX800A7 tubes, although with a touch less urgency. Rather quickly, K8ND received a reply to his "wanted" inquiry on E-ham, and we decided to buy another pair of 3CPX800A7s, these from N0NR, who appears to be a highly credible seller. They were shipped to N1ZZ, who brought them to Curacao on February 13. We'll report on the testing of those tubes as soon as possible.

We expended ~\$2000 buying these four tubes, but it is money very well spent because these were the single most-needed items to assure our viability on the air going forward. Thanks again for your Station Support dues that made this possible.

After installing the K3AC tubes we found that the amp is still running too hot. It does not feel like the squirrel cage blower is really blowing much, so we took the cover back off, and Dorothy patiently cleaned the vanes making good use of her long, thin fingers.



In over an hour Dorothy got out a huge glob of fuzz, lint, and dust using Q-tips and tweezers.



Icky stuff from the squirrel cage

The airflow now was much better, but still not good enough. On February 10 VE3CX and I took the amp apart again and determined that the air path from the blower to the underside of the RF deck was completely clear. But we did find a considerable quantity of caked dust on the inside of the blower casing, and cleaned all of that out (below).



W0CG meticulously picking gunk out of the blower. (Photo VE3CX)

I reinstalled the tubes after cleaning thoroughly, and we're now making QSOs with the amp. It is definitely running cooler, but not cool enough. Thus, I set the amp aside for later evaluation and swapped in AL-1200 (7) for the contest.

FLASH NEWS: ARRL DX CW

We are understaffed with only six operators for this multi/multi event because of a short notice cancellation from N0VD. There is one unoccupied bedroom with a private bath going unused in the Sea Glass #7 rental house. This represents an unfortunate waste of resources.

Luckily, K8ND, N7WA, and N7NR will be taking on heavy numbers of hours via the remote.

This was W9VA's (SK) favorite contest, by far, and we will be celebrating Bill's memory all this week.

End of Month Treasury Balance

The end of January balance in the Station Support fund is \$10717.50.

Remoting Use Contributions Paid

W0CG, W8WTS, NA2U, SM4KYN, N7WA, W5MJ paid as of 31 January. These funds will be transferred to the house fund to be applied to the electric bills going forward.

DL5SDN Visits Signal Point

We immensely enjoyed the visit to Signal Point on Friday, February 2, of Werner Henle, Mayor of Oetischein, Germany, and his XYL Petra Klein. These avid SCUBA divers were here on their third visit to Curacao, staying at All-West Diving Apartments in Westpunt. They had visited Signal Point before, hosted by SM4KYN, but this was our first chance to meet them.

Werner hopped onto 15 meter SSB in order to meet his friend DL3OH in a sked. That was enormously successful, and he was amazed and thrilled at the good signals in both directions.

Our visit was great fun as both are very worldly travelers. Petra is a recently retired industrial chemist who has worked all over the world, and Werner has been mayor for over 20 years of Oetischein, a town of about 5000 near Stuttgart.



DL5SDN, Mayor of Oteschein, running the show

Obviously, his is a killer job, far exceeding five eight hour days weekly. He's counting the months until he can retire in August of 2026 and spend more time enjoying his Stepp-IR and 50 foot tower at home.



Werner, DL5SDN, and Petra , February 2, 2024



We sent Werner home with a PJ2T QSL and a welcome package of gifts, kindly furnished by K8ND.

Station 1 Filter System Repair Completed

The 80 meter bandpass filter was blown, and 20 and 10 possibly compromised late last year when these 200 watt filters were inadvertently subjected to 500 watts of RF. These are part of the system of W3NQN bandpass filters that are automatically invoked at Station 1 (and Station 2) using an IBS-1 band decoder that drives an Array Solutions FM-1 coax relay box.

Three new Cauer filters were bought (thanks K8ND for donating) and transported to Curacao (thanks W8WTS), and I did the repair on February 3.

This turned out to require several hours of work to tear down the old filter block, individually test all the filters before rebuilding the block, clean, de-corrode, and electrically lube everything, and put it all back together. Here's Dorothy with the result. As you see, the new filters are slightly smaller (bottom layer.)



Station 1 filter system, rebuilt and ready to install, February 3, 2024

After installation I ran tests on all bands with good result. This system should be trouble free for another 20+ years.

We'll ship the bad filter to N7IR for evaluation, repair, and realignment. Thanks Gary.

160 Meter Inverted L Repaired

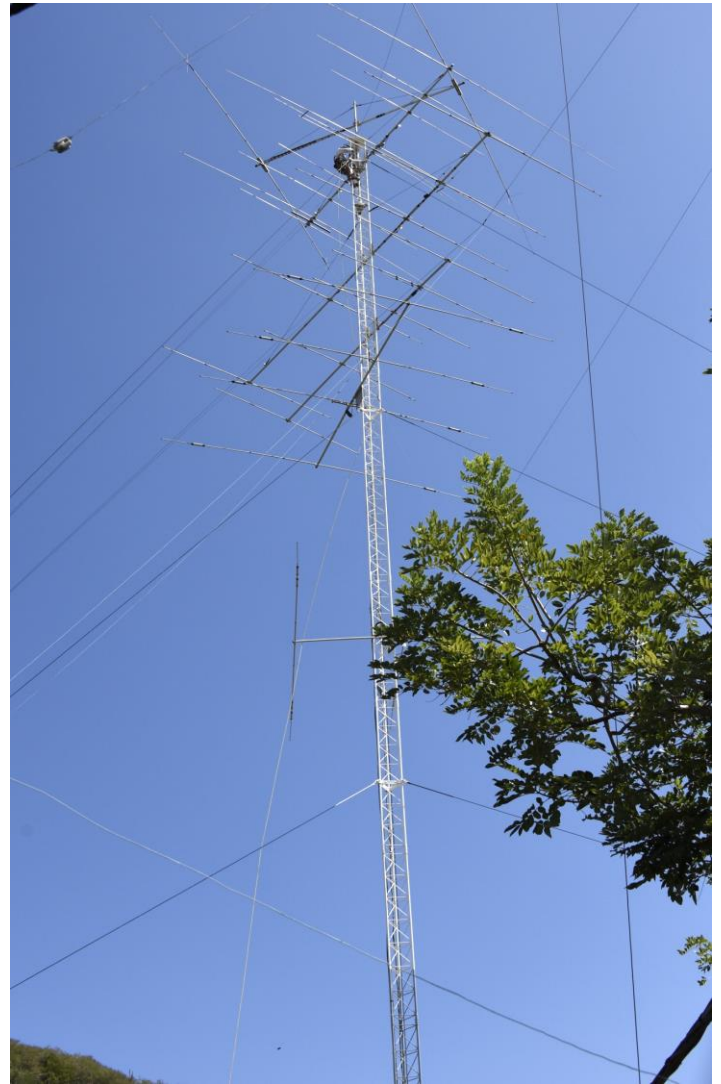
K8ND discovered much of the 160 meter transmit antenna on the ground in the middle of 2023, and other parts draped over trees and hanging from the 100 foot tower. One rope broke (next page) causing all this chaos.



Broken insulator rope (center, in focus) (Photo K8ND)

This break was at the top of the vertical part of the radiator where it turns diagonally up toward the top of the 100 foot tower. Jeff secured the downed antenna safely out of reach of critters and lawn mowers. Then, when DL8OBQ arrived in mid-summer Uli tacked the antenna back in the air in a modified, but usable shape, and we used it for several contests.

But it was never quite right. On January 29, after the 160 CW contest, W8WTS, K8ND, and I tackled the repair. With two climbers it was straightforward, yet awkward. I went to the top of the 100 foot tower (next column) to untie the top support rope and slacken the radiating wire about 15 feet.



W0CG at the top of the 100 foot Europe tower, January 29, 2024 (Photo K8ND)

After slacking the antenna, Jim was able to reach the broken rope at the direction-changing insulator, work it to the tower, and make the repair. This was not easy, requiring incredible body contortions to get into position on the tower. I had the easier assignment. All I had to do was relax at the top of the big tower, watch, and wish Jim well. I had my camera up there hoping to get an action shot looking down, but the darned battery was dead.



W8WTS near the top of the WARC tower, 55 feet, patiently stringing a replacement rope



W0CG and W8WTS just after I came down

Job complete! Thanks VE3CX for the superb Sala harness Jim is wearing in this photo.

KPA-500 Is Back in Mothballs

K8ND's amplifier served very well during the period that AL-1200 (6) was inoperative. That amp is now fixed, so Jeff has restashed his Elecraft amp. It's on site if we need it again.

Hard to Admit: We Got Scammed

On January 31, the morning of K8ND's departure, someone answered Jeff's want-ad for 3CX1200A7s. The seller appeared to be a credible Tucson-based ham. In his response he explained that he had once had a Henry 8-K, and that the tubes were really never used for that amp. A photo of the tubes was included. At an asking price of \$1250 for the pair we decided to proceed. K8ND was donating the full cost of these tubes as a generous offset to the hours he has put on PJ2T's AL-1200s during his long visits to Signal Point. During this last visit, for example, he reports making over 12,000 QSOs.

Jeff tried to pay for the tubes via Payal, working in a great hurry to enact this transaction while he was hurriedly packing to go to the airport. The PayPal would not go through, but the seller suggested Zelle. Jeff does not have Zelle access, but I told him that I do and could send the payment.

This followed a series of quick and strange E-mails trying to get a Zelle address to work. I finally succeeded in sending the first \$500 in payment. Watching this E-mail thread from the sideline, N7IR was jumping up and down and yelling "Scam! Scam!" but we did not pick up his messages until too late.

It turns out that the Tucson seller knows nothing of any tubes for sale, the scammer cleverly made himself look like the Tucson guy, found a file photo online of the pair of tubes (discovered by N7IR), and is in fact probably a young Eastern European male. This is not PJ2T club money, but K8ND is out-of-pocket \$500, a portion of which I covered for him.

Lesson learned: know your seller better, and don't be in such a hurry!

K8ND's 2023 Curacao Stats

As you know, in 2023 CCC President Jeff Maass, K8ND/PJ2ND took up residence this year at Signal Point as practically his second home. He made four separate trips to the island. Here are the numbers from Jeff (next page).

PJ2ND 2023 Days on Curacao: 162
PJ2ND 2023 Weeks on Curacao: 23
PJ2ND 2023 Months on Curacao: 5.4
PJ2ND 2023 QSOs From Curacao: 34293
PJ2ND 2023 QSOs Using Remote: 10101
PJ2ND 2023 QSOs Total: 44394

The above QSO totals don't include even more contacts that PJ2ND made in contest events.

Jeff is a legal resident of Curacao, and he has become immensely knowledgeable about Curacao news, history, culture, and governmental procedures.

Jeff stays here with absolute and complete justification based on a provision in the CCC policies. I wrote that provision into the CCC membership terms many years ago that, as a perquisite, members could stay at the QTH for non-major contest weeks at a very small rental rate of \$200/week plus reimbursement of metered utility use and the usual \$100 weekly contribution to the Station Support fund. In these many years, nobody has taken advantage of this except for Jeff. (SM4KYN stayed here over Christmas several times, but he's not a dues-paying CCC member, so that was on different terms.)

The low cost member rental provision was never intended to result in someone practically taking up long term residence. The infrastructure and facilities at Signal Point are fragile and life-limited, and need to be conserved so that they will be available when we need them for contest season. Also, things are constantly breaking here and need aggressive frequent repair and maintenance. Long term visits consume life of the refrigerator, air conditioners, water heater, fans and lights, towels and linens, computers, monitors, radios, and linear amplifiers. But there are also benefits of having someone here, including better security and a "man on the ground" in case of special problems. So it cuts both ways.

As owner I have the authority to set these visitor rules and terms by fiat. But I would much prefer that we discuss it as a group. We need to preserve the facility. K8ND has very kindly offered to buy a new tube for one of the AL-1200s (mentioned above) as a counterbalance to his very heavy use of the gear. He also replaced a monitor out of pocket when it failed. That's a help, but not a total solution.

We need to do a groupthink about how to preserve the club facility for all members when they need it to contest. We also want it to be available for non-contests whenever they want it. What to do? Ask long

term visitors to bring their own radio equipment? Increase the rental reimbursement amount to make replacement of appliances and other assets affordable when needed? Change the policy to limit visits to a shorter duration? We'll put this discussion topic on the agenda for the CCC Annual Meeting in May and very much welcome group input.

TUI Blue Hotel Construction Has Begun

We hoped it would never happen, but after five years of delay construction is finally underway. One indication was the almost immediate destruction by a backhoe on February 1 of our fiber trunk to the neighborhood. The other is the rapid arrival of construction equipment, materials, and containers at the site.

The first building will be a 300 room hotel near the site of the old Sunset Waters main building. There will be a marina, a much-improved beach, and many other facilities with new roads, better security, and greatly heightened property values in our neighborhood. The target is an opening in 2026. This is a joint venture with Tui, the budget Dutch airline and tourism company, and the target market will be tourists from Holland, Belgium, and Scandinavia.

On February 4 Dorothy and I happened to meet the Comptroller of the hotel company, together with his XYL. I saw them parked near the house taking photos, and we invited them in for a delightful 90 minute visit and a tour of the station. They were non-threatening, and very sincerely interested by and amazed in what we do here. It also turns out that we have quite a few friends in common. Willem said that the plan calls for houses to be built along the coastline in our "Flats," ending all the way at our QTH, but that this is some 10 years out at a minimum.

Wire Tracer – How Is It??

W8WTS brought the buried wire tracer with him in January. We had only limited time to evaluate its usefulness, and I'll tackle that after the CW contest.

New Construction in the Neighborhood

Construction of the eight apartments across the street is temporarily stopped. We are told that one of the residents in the neighborhood has consulted an attorney, and that these multi-unit buildings are completely illegal here in the neighborhood. They have laid a lien on the site and a temporary stop order. Who knows what will happen next?

Signal Point's Endless Maintenance

True, it does seem like Paradise: 100 feet of oceanfront in the deep Caribbean. But the flip side is that this climate, with humidity, extreme solar UV, and dense salt air takes a tremendous toll on the house. Things that should last a very long time don't. Stuff that should never break does. Pipes that should never leak do. Plastic parts melt.

Last week I noticed a copper fitting in the back corner of the laundry room that had turned the unwelcome green color of copper oxide. Closer investigation in that dark back corner revealed a leaking pipe that had obviously been dripping for months, and piles of black goo on the wall below, a destroyed cardboard box on the spare water heater, and all the awful signs of unchecked moisture on the floor, never a good thing in the tropics. It was clear that this had to be fixed, and soon.

It took the better part of a morning to figure out exactly where the water was coming from because everything was caked in the black goo, and it was very dark and very inaccessible back there. There was a water expansion air tube adjacent to one of the shelves on the hot side line exiting the cold water heater. [No: there should be no such thing as a "hot water heater." Think about it. If the water is already hot, who needs a heater?!] The copper reducer connecting that expansion tube had sprung a leak. Wipe off the water, wait about 30 seconds, and a small stream reappeared running down the tube.

Fixing this required two nearly full days of work, made trickier by the mix of ½ inch American copper tubing and 15 mm European sizes. To get at the bad tube I had to disassemble the hacksaw, thread the blade into place, put the saw back together among all the tubing and crowd back there, and then cut with only about a two inch stroke in the corner. It worked, though, and luckily the hardware store had what I needed, and it's all fixed and now dry. It required two trips to the store, the second of which took 90 minutes just to get one final 15 mm \$1.97 coupler. Dorothy caught this shot of me (next column) in a contorted position needed to sand old paint and corrosion off the tube.



Getting my stretching exercise cleaning a fitting.

It is simply not possible to pick up the phone and call a plumber here and get anyone to show up, much less have the high skill level needed for a tricky job such as this.

Earlier last week I happened to glance up at a light fixture on the northwest corner of the house, shocked to see that the lampholder mount had broken and our security lights were hanging by wires only. SM4KYN had done a beautiful job years ago installing this fixture, but plastic always fails here in the heat, and the neck of the lampholder had broken off cleanly under its own weight. The photo shows the old (broken) fixture at the left.



Broken white lampholder at left

Incredibly, this required half a day of focused work because I had to adapt the mounting hardware, drill out some seized screws, and repair the new Bell lampholders (made in India) that came out of their sealed new package with missing and failed hardware.

These lights are back in business now, turning on two bright LED spots when motion at the side gate triggers them. They are disabled by day.

Goodie! New Furniture

Dorothy and I live in the East Sunroom. The old sofa and loveseat in there had become unusable and were massively uncomfortable after 16 years in our heat. We decided to wimp out and buy new ones rather than go to the trouble of difficult restringing repairs. Here are the new pieces arriving on February 8. They are really comfy.



New sofa and loveseat arriving, with the old ones in the left foreground

Zoom took the old pieces to donate to friends.

Asserting the Property Line

The Tui Blue hotel people have been seen in the past two weeks clearing brush very aggressively all the way to their easternmost property line on the Ridge. Our cables are just three meters beyond that line. I have been putting up property line markers for two years, but last week I installed a much more permanent marked line using some quality black antenna rope. This may sound easy, but on very uneven terrain, near the cliff edge, surrounded by sticky bushes and cacti, on a hot hot day, it's a tricky three hour job.

Here's what it looks like (next column), very clearly visible to the workers up there. They have seen and are respecting the line.



Part of our property line marker on the Ridge

Welcome W4IPC to the Remote

Connor was lucky enough to be able to obtain a K3/0-Mini. This week he showed up on the remote for the first time, running a string of QSOs on 20 SSB for starters. He worked from KB7Q's excellent instruction manual and was up and running on SSB in just a couple of hours with no significant assistance. This is testimony to the quality of Gene's documentation as well as to a sharp, sharp operator.

A couple of the guys watched as he got underway to be sure all was OK with the amp and Connor's technique with the equipment and remote system, and he was *perfect*, first time out of the gate. Welcome to Connor.

70 Hour Internet Outage

At about 2:30 PM on Thursday, February 1, all data stopped flowing. I was sick in bed with a bad cold watching Gustavo Dudamel, but he froze in motion and never got to the end of Ravel's Bolero, Los Angeles Philharmonic. We were told that it was an island-wide outage, and to sit tight and be patient. The trouble lines to the telecomm provider were so choked that they were not taking calls.

We found out on Saturday that it was not island-wide at all, but that an idiot backhoe operator at the hotel construction site had dug up the fiber trunk to the neighborhood. Projected repair was Tuesday, but to our vast surprise things started working again Sunday shortly after noon. I investigated the next day to find that Flow has installed this splice block (next page). Our speed still is good, 152 mb/sec, and we're hoping that now the operator will remember where the cable is.

