Signals From The Point

Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium
Editor: W0CG

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Report on Successful Youth Effort -- CQWW SSB 2025

PHEW! I can breathe now. We got all the people here, got them all into rooms and beds, got the vehicles going, got all the equipment working, fixed the critical antenna problems, and made it on the air. So many things could have gone wrong, but here we are now with the operation successfully behind us, a lot of happy team members, and an excellent score. My stress-o-meter was on 100+, but that needle is now coming down. And we got through the 48 hours with no equipment problems. This was substantially thanks to the great help from AG3I the week prior to the contest, and to excellent tower work by DL3ON and W7EY.

Conditions seemed better than last year. You can read Connor's 3830 post here.

https://www.3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=RvYizV7nnD7u7U

Band	QSOs	Zones	Countries	
160:	155	14	31	
80:	598	18	72	
40:	2106	31	117	
20:	3225	38	137	
15:	3717	38	143	
10:	4093	36	140	
Total:	**13894**	**175**	**640**	Total Score **33,148,495**

M/M HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Zones	Countries	Op Time	Score
K3LR			14010	196	751	48	35,194,308
V26B			16207	178	664	48	34,006,696
PJ2T			13894	175	640	48	33,148,495
M6T			15299	193	780	48	28,832,909
LP1H(@LU5HM)			9912	158	529	48	19,497,060
K1TTT			7768	169	654	48	17,154,612
KH6J(@KH6YY)			8658	173	491	48	16,535,592
K3EST(@N6RO)	SO2R	x	4464	169	551	48	8,460,720
WG3J			3085	138	477	40	5,335,125
KC1XX			2300	153	525	14	4,497,174

This interim 3830 report does not yet include CN3A, who will be heads above all the other M/Ms.

L-R: James (W7EY) (top), Violetta (KN2P), Grace (K8LG), Pim (PC8M), Leon (DL3ON), Connor (W4IPC), Megan (EI5LA), Max (N4ML), Rob (VE4GV), Levi (KG5XR), Pete (K8PGJ).

One of our primary challenges came from the meteorological weather. On Saturday and Monday before the contest week we received inches upon inches of rain from what was then Tropical Storm Melissa. Days afterward we had very high humidity, grey sky, and almost no wind as the after effects of the slow moving storm continued to bother Curacao.

Once the contest started the storm had become a hurricane and had slowly moved off to the northwest. That placed it between us and most of the U.S., causing tremendous QRN on all bands, particularly the low bands. To survive the heat and humidity, we used lavish amounts of air conditioning, more than ever before, to the tune of about $650 electricity consumed in the contest week.

Connor and the team shot considerable video, and I also harvested video all week as the raw material for an extensive YouTube documentary of this youth effort. I'll not be able to work on it until Christmas when I have some time at home in Idaho, but the material is safe here on multiple drives until then.

The arrangements for food were somewhat disjoint, but we got by thanks to wonderful meals a couple of nights by PC8M, a proficient chef. It was a successful but chaotic week at Signal Point, pointing out yet again how badly we miss Dorothy and all that she does for our teams.

Thanks AG3I

With only a week until the trip, AG3I offered to come to Curacao with me for a few days to help set up the stations for CQWW SSB. He knew that I was not confident that I could do everything without Dorothy or Melissa on site. His story of that visit follows after mine.

Marty met me in Miami on Tuesday, October 14 and American flew us to Curacao. In the ensuing four days he was absolutely incredible helping with every imaginable kind of task from setting up stations, digging silt out of the driveway, climbing the Ridge, cutting and hauling brush, retuning the Ridge inverted vee, and everything in between. By the time he departed on Saturday the place was in vastly better condition than we found it, and ready for the arrival of the SSB team the following Tuesday.

AG3I renewing the property line markers at our Beverage feedpoint area on the Ridge.

Marty is in stellar physical condition, and was able to easily tackle tasks in the heat and humidity that are difficult or impossible for me now working alone.

He also made ~1000 QSOs, helping us gain confidence in the new shack setup that we built together.

AG3I on 10 meters

Even though this was a subsidizable work trip, he picked up all of his travel costs and then made a sizeable contribution to the treasury at the end of the trip.

Best of all, he kept me smiling and positive as I whined about having to be here without Dorothy for 3+ weeks. THANKS CCC President AG3I!

An Eye Opener and Rewarding, by AG3I

It was actually just the tip of the iceberg, but it was nonetheless a real eye opener! I had the opportunity to arrive in Curacao last month on the same flight as Geoff and consequently got to see the beginnings of all the efforts required to prepare PJ2T for the upcoming contest season!

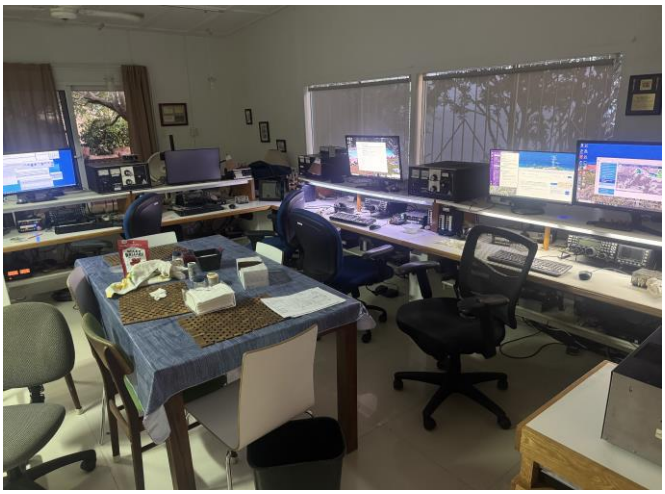
When we arrived there was, as Geoff has shared with all of us in the newsletters, a 'healthy list' of fix/improvement projects lined up for the beginning of this year's contest season. However, before any of these could be tackled there was another long list of more mundane work that needed to be done. I understand this is work that Geoff and Dorothy have been doing together at the beginning of each contest season forever.

To say it's a lot of work would not be an overstatement and I had heard from Geoff that it was not the most enjoyable set of tasks. Geoff was kind enough to let me join him for this work this year.

We arrived at the station late Tuesday afternoon after a stop at the grocery store, on the way from the airport, for some food to hold us until Saturday. This reminded me of what I had heard years ago, "... an army marches on its stomach …".

As you would imagine, Geoff had prepared a nice list of the tasks for the first couple of days which included cleaning (i.e. dusting, sweeping and 'wiping down') as well as unpacking furniture (indoor and outdoor tables, chairs, etc) that are packed away efficiently in the east bedroom at the end of each contest season. Also, outdoor work which included repair of the automated entry gate, shoveling and carting sediment from the entry gate area that is consistently washed to a place that prevents proper operation of the gate as well as other yard work (e.g. grass cutting) was intertwined with the inside tasks to periodically create a 'change of scenery'.

Other inside tasks included amplifier inspection, maintenance and rotation. Before any power was applied, each of the AL1200 amps was opened, inspected for things like leaky capacitors and thoroughly 'dusted' to remove an amazing amount of stuff that had accumulated since last year's cleaning. Once cleaned each of these amps was 'rotated' to another station or switched with amps in storage per Geoff's 'formula', and documented on his master equipment maintenance/inventory spreadsheet. All I will add is… those amps are Heavy, hi hi.


All stations operational!

By late Thursday afternoon we were able to start tackling some of the antenna work and the 30 meter antenna was repaired and restored to operation. Thanks to the remote ops for testing!

By Thursday night Geoff reported that he was feeling pretty good about the progress and suggested that we could consider climbing the ridge Friday morning, if I was up for it, to begin maintenance work there. I said yes, most definitely. I was looking forward to it! Later Thursday I was given the OK to make a few hundred QSOs to run each of the radios, amps, switches and antennas through their paces. That was fun!

By Friday morning I was a bit excited to get a chance to get up the ridge and see the antennas in spite of Geoff's warnings about the stickers on pretty much everything there and on the way there. Friday was a hot day but we climbed the ridge and did some work including mundane tasks like tying a hundred or so bright pink plastic ribbons to the cable runs along the property lines and cut back large quantities of sticker laden vegetation (cactus and small bushes/trees), which would make the pathway much easier to access for subsequent work parties on the ridge.


Geoff leads the way up the ridge along the European Beverage

Then later Friday, as a little bit of a reward for ourselves, Geoff and I headed out for a short tour of the island and a bite to eat at a nice outdoor restaurant near the water. A nice treat!

In addition to an eye opening experience and the satisfaction of work accomplishments that will help the CCC efforts, I greatly enjoyed the education on the overall operation of PJ2T as well as a good dose of history from Geoff's memory bank. And with that, I won't bore you with any more than to say it was really good fun :) 73, Marty AG3I

CQWW CW Event Is Around the Corner

Our November CW team is set: W0CG, W7JET+W7EVE, PA2DK, G3AKX, W8WTS+Gale, VE7KW, VA7DX, VE7NZ+Daniela, and AG3I. We'll also have considerable help via the remote station from NA2U, K8ND, and hopefully W4IPC. This is a top-notch, talented team. Dorothy will be here, and we have the Moran pool house reserved.

I expect by then to have all the remaining nagging technical problems ironed out, so we will have an enjoyable, low stress week, and will also enjoy celebrating U.S.Thanksgiving together.

Call for Operators: ARRL DX CW, February, 2026

ARRL DX CW is February 21-22, 2026. WI9WI and KA9DOC will arrive early and run the WPX RTTY contest the weekend before.

N7WA, NF9V, and W4SO have booked. We have the pool house reserved. Can you join us for the best ABC island weather of the year and a fun and relaxing contest?

The Plan for ARRL 10 Meter Contest

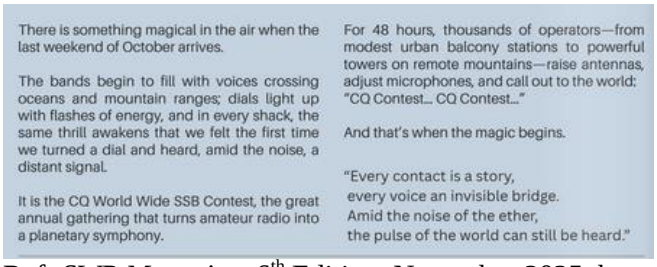
Normally N7NR informally organizes and leads the remote operation team for this contest. He plans to do so again this December. But there are four empty beds at the QTH, and Dorothy and I will be on site if you'd like to come and enjoy these great 10 meter conditions in person, while they last. Drop me or Dave an E-mail?

Check Out *SWR Magazine*

This is worth your time. *SWR* is a new digital magazine out of KP4. It is magnificent. The writing, layout, photography, and topic selections are world class.

https://online.fliphtml5.com/kqkyd/grfo/#p=1

Particularly check out the wonderfully written article about the CQWW SSB contest. (pp. 6-8) This is incredibly good writing and captures the spirit and essence of the contest.



There is something magical in the air when the last weekend of October arrives.

The bands begin to fill with voices crossing oceans and mountain ranges; dials light up with flashes of energy, and in every shack, the same thrill awakens that we felt the first time we turned a dial and heard, amid the noise, a distant signal.

It is the CQ World Wide SSB Contest, the great annual gathering that turns amateur radio into a planetary symphony.

For 48 hours, thousands of operators—from modest urban balcony stations to powerful towers on remote mountains—raise antennas, adjust microphones, and call out to the world: "CQ Contest... CQ Contest..."

And that's when the magic begins.

"Every contact is a story,
every voice an invisible bridge.
Amid the noise of the ether,
the pulse of the world can still be heard."

Ref: *SWR Magazine*, 6th Edition, November 2025, by the editorial team.

Broken Ridge Tribander Is Repaired

The west half of the 20 meter driven element on the Ridge tribander broke off in February of 2024. My foster son and I repaired it in March using DX Engineering tubing that he brought from Ohio as checked luggage. Then in February of 2025 the east end of the DE broke off at the same spot because of accumulated corrosion products at the element spacer. I couldn't fix it then working alone, so I put the broken element in the East Bedroom and waited for a posse.

The posse arrived in the form of the CQWW SSB young operators. Leon (DL3ON) and James (W7EY) happily offered to help. During the week prior I fabricated a new driven element with AG3I's help, working on the East Porch during a massive downpour of rain from Tropical Storm Melissa.

Arm-rack method to transport the yagi parts to the Ridge path

Leon and James and I packed up three back packs of tools and parts and hauled it all to the Ridge Tribander. They went up the tower and managed fairly quickly to get the broken element to the ground where we could work on it.

DL3ON and W7EY working on removing the 20 meter driven element.

After about two and a half hours of measuring, hacksawing, lubricating, drilling, and riveting, the new element was assembled and back up on the antenna. As a final step James and Leon painstakingly removed the corroded and broken driven element feed straps and installed two new ones supplied by DX Engineering.This required great patience and ingenuity, but James and Leon succeeded.

Initial on-air tests showed the repaired antenna to be good, but the next morning we began getting intense hash on 10 and 15 when transmitting on 20 on the repaired antenna. Rather than be discouraged, W7EY and DL3ON put on smiles and climbing harnesses and went back up to the Ridge. After some very clever inspection at the feedpoint they found that the wires from the Bencher balun to the feed strap were invisibly burned inside the insulation, creating a spark gap. Our manipulations of those wires the day before had caused the brittle and old conductors to break inside.

Back at the shack I showed off our PJ2T inventory system by quickly materializing a new Skyhawk balun from “Box 7” in our parts collection. Another trip up, the balun is installed, and the antenna is working well and fully healed. All of us in CCC owe a giant thanks to Leon and James for their skill and patience in doing this work that is no longer advisable for me to undertake.

Full Maintenance of Beverages Completed

I thank the huge crew pictured below who took to the Ridge, split into three teams, and did the full maintenance on both Beverage antennas.

Ridge Crew, October 22, 2025: KG5XR, W4IPC, N4ML, K8LG, EI8LA, DL3ON, W7EY.

They were undaunted by my warnings about how difficult this work is with extreme heat and humidity. They all came back feeling fine, job done, and ready for more work. Both Beverages are now fully intact, free of vegetation. And the termination resistors on both checked to be healthy.

New Rotor in Europe Tower

In November 2021 VE4GV donated two Tailtwster rotors that were in need of rebuild. He shipped them at his expense to Alabama to be rebuilt, and they arrived in beautiful condition at W0CG/Ohio in March of 2022. Each rebuild was ~$445. That July I took them to Curacao in checked luggage and put them into inventoried spares.

On October 16, 2025, I put a coat of epoxy primer on (next page), followed by finish green epoxy the next day.


Fresh epoxy primer, October 16, 2025

On October 23, 2025, I connected the replacement rotor to a controller, and it tested good for rotation. DL3ON and W7EY then installed it in the Europe tower, enabling rotation of the 40 meter beam for the first time in two years. They did a heroic job in extreme heat, and with a learning curve for both of them. I had intentionally not replaced the rotor last March because there was no point in subjecting it to wind for the six months that there were no major contests.

Usually these only last about 18 months to failure here, so we will keep our fingers crossed. Norm in Alabama said he did the best possible rebuild with titanium parts, but the torque of that 40 yagi in our seaside winds at Signal Point is severe.

As I typed this the CQWW SSB ops were enjoying the operational flexibility of being able to rotate the 40 beam.

Repair of 80 3 el Wire Initiated

The 80 meter Europe 3 el transmit antenna fell down, literally. Surprisingly, the cause was that the #14 solid insulated wire that comprised the antenna elements simply broke. After 20+ years of nearly constant motion in the wind, the copper became brittle through work hardening, necked down to a smaller diameter, and finally simply broke. You can pick up any fragment of that wire in the backyard and break it almost like a pencil lead.

This is a very difficult repair because those three elements (loops) hang from a heavy duty nylon line that runs from the top of the US/JA tower to the 80 foot point on the Europe tower. That rope is still intact and still in good condition.

On October 24 Leon went up the Europe tower and installed a pulley and pull rope system that allowed us to lower the north end of that support rope. That did not get the attachment point for the driven element low enough to reach to put on new wire, and we were out of time, so we left it all dangling in the backyard.

The next step, when we have another climber here, will be to do the same thing at the south end, lower the overhead rope, replace the loop wires, and haul it all back into the air. Once airborne, it will be straightforward to fashion the new loop elements working from the ground. We'll use insulated stranded wire for the new loops.

This antenna is not critical to our operational needs, but it's nice to have it for backup and diversity.

Windows 11 Is Here, Darn It

This creates a bit of a crisis for us. During the week prior to CQWW SSB, W7EY went through every single computer at Signal Point to determine what was good, what was trash, and what will still work for us into the future. James is an IT professional for Salesforce. I have wanted to do a full PC triage at Signal Point for some time, and the arrival of Windows 11 catalyzed that.

Windows 11

Unfortunately, in the name of progress (?), Windows 11 requires machines with Trusted Platform Module 2.0, 8th Gen processors, the UEFI secure boot firmware, and a 64 bit architecture.

James found that only a few of our vintage machines meet those requirements and, further, that only one or two of the old circa-2011 Windows 7 machines will even boot any more. Some of the remaining PCs here that do still work were registered to allow one more year of Windows 10 support, thanks to the efforts of

K8PGJ. So we have a reprieve, but it is only temporary. Thus, it was time to face reality and pitch out all the computers that are worthless to us, or to anyone else.

Here's most of the discard pile of PCs. There are 11 machines altogether that will be tossed. None of these will boot anyway, and are so hopelessly obsolete that there's no point in even attempting to fix them

Funeral pyre at PJ2T: Some of the dead PCs and the dead Europe rotor.

In late September I ordered a refurbished Windows 11 machine for testing. Dorothy brought it to Signal Point. Here's what has been done since then, as you have seen in E-mail streams of late.

- I bought that one Dell 7060 small form factor as a test, and Dorothy brought it from Idaho last month. I installed Windows 11, Hamachi VPN, and N1MM+ and put it on the shack network at Station 3 with five other Windows 10 PCs. That all worked perfectly.

- I solicited advice from our experts who said to buy refurbished PCs, and to do half of them now and half early next year. Several including K5PI, W5GAI, and ND8L had excellent advice on where to buy.

- AG3I, W7JET, and W8WTS are coming to CQWW CW. They offered to cart PCs down here in luggage, so on October 9 I shipped two to WTS, two to JET, and one to AG3I. They will arrive in plenty of time to make the trip to Curacao in two weeks.

- Without *anyone* being asked, ND8L, W7EY, N5BR, W5XU, N7NR, KE3VV, and NA2U offered to donate the cost of one PC each!! N0OJ is donating two. So the net outlay from the Station Support Fund of PJ2T thus far is zero. Wow! This warms my heart to see this kind of generosity and team effort to keep PJ2T going strong.

So heck, progress and reality have caught up with us in the form of Windows 11, but we are meeting that challenge. I will reluctantly admit that my initial impression of Windows 11 is very good. It is a clean, logical interface design and appears initially to be easier to use than Windows 10, save for the even worse massive intrusiveness of the Edge browser.

I'll keep you posted here on this big computer project.

AL-1200 Crop Rotation

Every three or so years I rotate the in-service AL-1200s back into storage and install amps that have been dormant for a couple of years. This was the year. Beginning on October 15 Marty (AG3I) and I opened up every single AL-1200 on site (over 30 screws per amp) and cleaned and inspected. We then put different amps at all stations except the 40 meter position. I could not have handled this without his lifting strength.

After the swaps, AL-1200 (7) at the 20 meter position was making unwanted AC sounds, like loose laminations in the transformer. And AL-1200 (8) which I had put at the 80 meter position, after working fine and making lots of RF, was at idle when it exploded an electrolytic capacitor in the HV string. There was visible flame, and it sprayed acid on the HV board.

Prior to graduating from Mississippi State in E.E. last year, CCC member KG5XR was a tech at Ameritron in Starkville, specializing in the amps. Since loss of these HV supplies is commonplace, we had plenty of new replacement caps and 50K equalizing resistors on site. Levi and I agreed that all eight caps and eight voltage equalizing resistors should be replaced.

He did the tricky surgery over a period of several hours, and now AL-1200 (8) is running perfectly.

Special thanks to CCC veteran N7IR for seeing to it that we had an abundance of these parts on site.

We did use AL-1200 (7) on 20 meters in CQWW SSB, and by the end of the contest the lamination sounds had gone away, as hoped.

Thanks K8PGJ for New Monitor

We were down on spare monitors to the point that the monitor at the spare PC table by the lamp was all we had extra, and it had a giant unreadable blob in the middle of the screen, shaped like an amoeba.

Prior to CQWW SSB I sought and received approval from the CCC officers and board to get a new monitor. That approval was for $450.00. I was shocked when I went to Better Deals and found a beautiful monitor for only $188. That's cheap for Curacao. What we bought was a 24 inch Samsung Odyssey G3 HDMI monitor. I was very surprised at the excellent image quality and usage flexibility of this monitor at such a good price.

Samsung Odyssey G3 24 inch monitor

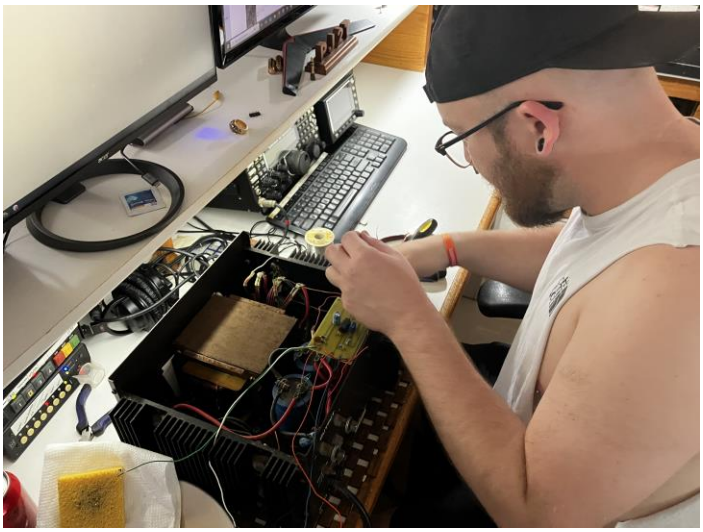
But K8PGJ had offered at the time of the spending approval to pick up the cost of that monitor out of his pocket! Since Pete covered that one, and we had spending authority, I bought a second one on October 30. This is too good a deal to pass up. Thanks Pete!

Astron 50 Amp Supply Repaired

In June DL8OBQ reported that the Astron RS-50A power supply had failed. Voltage regulation was lost and he measured almost 18 volts out. This is the monster supply that runs our entire antenna switching system and the Station 1 12 volt loads, including the K3. Uli connected the spare switching supply that I had in place, and all was well.

This ancient supply came with the house, and has probably been here for 45 years. It's rusty inside and ugly looking, but it is a brute that I much prefer over switching supplies that have noisy fans and are under-designed.

CCC member Levi, KG5XR tackled the repair, armed with parts that I had brought in my October luggage. It turned out to be a challenging repair, and he finally ended up replacing the entire voltage regulator board, of which we had spares. While troubleshooting, we found a note from W9EFL (SK) and N1ZZ detailing a repair they had made in 2006! Noel even drew out the schematic by hand in full accurate detail.



Levi, KG5XR, with lots and lots of wires disconnected while changing the regulator board, October 22, 2025.

We used that supply in CQWW SSB and it performed flawlessly. The backup switcher is in place, if needed, but not connected. Thanks Levi!

CCC Financial Report

Per Treasurer W8WTS the end of October balance in the Station Support fund is $7460.88.

Surprise Mail from Curacao's Regulators

Yesterday (October 28) I received two thick evenlopes in the Signal Point mailbox from the Regulatory Authority of Curacao. This big bureaucracy has replaced the previous big bureacuracy, Bureau Telecommunicatie. Over many years I have found the people working there to be professional and kind and friendly, although some of the processes are really slow and complex.

The thick envelopes contained bills for back fees for 2021-25 for both PJ2T and PJ2DX. The PJ2T fees were CG 50/year and PJ2DX's were CG 25/year. Maybe somebody in a new position at RAC discovered that the Authority was missing out on some revenue, and started sending out these statements. The amounts are reasonable, as is the principle. I paid them immediately by electronic transfer, a real pain because each of the 10 transfers required a lot of numbers and a lot of careful attention. Now, after two hours at my desk doing this, I can go back to the real work of Signal Point.

A detail, granted, but this was one of the many necessary details that enable us to give out ~14K QSOs in a weekend, as in CQWW SSB just completed.

Equipment Status Report After CQWW SSB

This contest is always scary because it's the first heavy duty test of the station in a new contest season.

The station came through well, with no equipment failures or outages and no new antenna problems. All of the recently repaired equipment made it just fine.

One nagging pre-contest problem remains. The 10 meter StackMatch either has a switching fault or an indicator fault. K8ND had seen this problem off and on in the summer. As my time allows I'll evaluate this and figure out a fix.

We also experienced some crossband interference early in the contest. There was about 30 feet of broken wire from the ruined 80 3 el array hanging from the driven element of the South America yagi. I removed this and the trouble went away. I'll evaluate more once the CW team arrives for testing.

As a whole, your club station is in excellent shape for the next big test, CQWW CW.

K3 (10) Is in Place at Signal Point

Our tenth K3 transceiver has had a torturous journey to Curacao. It was shipped from AA7A's QTH in Phoenix via very expensive UPS air so that it would arrive in Florida in time for the ARRL SSB guys from Melbourne to bring it down. UPS failed to make the promised date. No refund followed, of course.

K4JC kept it at his house in Florida for many months, and eventually shipped it to W0CG in Ohio. I took it to Idaho in checked luggage in September then, finally, from Idaho to Curacao on October 12/13.

The baggage inspectors in Curacao stopped me and had me open the suitcase, but after some discussion they allowed me to bring the radio, and many other items, in without duty.

Now that CQWW SSB is over and the crowd is gone I put it on the air here at Station 4 (80 meters). We'll give it a testing workout in the weeks before the CW contest. Thanks N7NR for making this all happen.

The Things We Do for Love, Part II

The varnish is in hand at Signal Point now. Total cost of three gallons was $501 to purchase in Michigan and ship to Miami, plus $188 to ship from Miami to Curacao including duty, taxes, and other fees. That's $229.66/gallon, but we paid about $175/gallon when it was available here, and the three gallons will last here for years. Importing mission accomplished. Here's a poor selfie of me (next page) and the varnish when I picked it up at the cargo processor in Curacao on October 30.

With the varnish from Detroit, finally on the island

At the time of this photo the local temperature was 100F and I had been stuck in very slow traffic for over an hour. Not happy.

This is the best varnish in the galaxy. We now have three gallons of it on hand, a supply for around five years.

Generator Usage Report

Marty and I ran the generator for six hours with load on October 14 with no problems and perfect voltages. Dipstick measurements showed that it used about ¾ inch of fuel.

PJ2T Power and Light Company

ND8L presented me with this surprise at Dayton (next page) in recognition of the completed generator project. I brought it to Curacao from Idaho, and here it is on the wall adjacent to the oven pantry. Thanks Ray!

Now PJ2T is a utility company!

A New Chair Is Coming

As he was leaving the QTH VE4GV (Rob) offered to donate a new operator chair. Years back he donated one of the three blue chairs we have here now. When time allows and the temperatures get back down below 90 I'll go shopping and see what's out there that's affordable. Stay tuned, and thanks Rob!

AL-1200 HV Electrolytics Ordered

As you saw above, we rebuilt the HV supply in AL-1200 (8) in October. This was possible because we had lots of spare electrolytics and equalizing resistors in stock thanks to the forethought of N7IR three years ago.

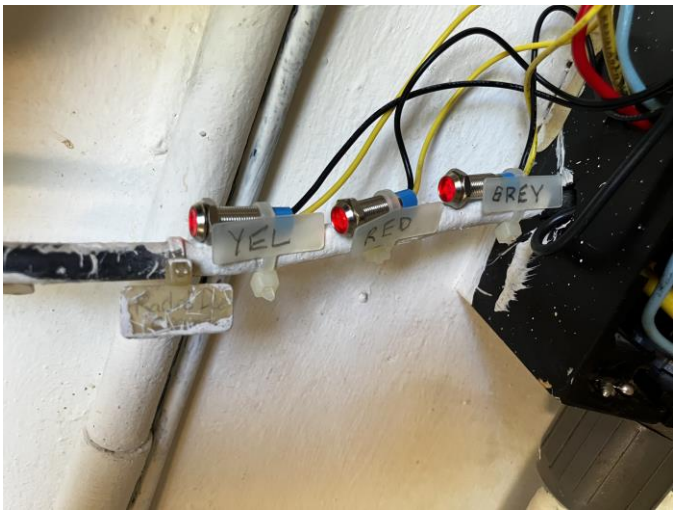
But most of those spares are now used up, so in mid-November I ordered 16 270 uf 550 volt electrolytics, plus two more in case of bad stock. K8ND will bring those to the island in early January to bolster the spares inventory. We spent $190.75 on these, grabbing them while they still are available. This is a great use of your Station Support dues.

These automotive electrolytics work very well in our amps. Thanks K8ND and K1LT for locating these at Mouser. (The photo is not the exact item we ordered.) Our new caps will give the AL-1200 HV strings 800 volts of additional headroom over the stock OEM caps from Ameritron. Those caps arrived at K8ND on November 13.

Aqualectra "Power On" Lights Installed

This may seem silly, but one of the harder things about operating on our generator is knowing when the commercial power has come back on! This is especially hard in daylight because we can't look around the neighborhood and see that the lights are back. The transfer switch does not tell us anything because when we are on the generator source, the commercial mains are switched open to the transfer switch. Thus the only way to know the power is back is to take a cover off the fuse box, a real pain, and put a VTVM on it.

Something had to be done, so last week I added this high tech sophisticated indicator system (next page) to our power system. These three LEDs are hard-wired to the incoming commercial power before the whole house master switch, so all one needs to do now is glance at these LEDs. If they are on bright red, commercial power is back. This is particularly useful because it will show that all three phases: grey, red, and yellow are on. This matters because sometimes one or two phases go out and one remains.



Three bright red LEDs = Commercial power is on

Crude, but totally effective. I did the install so that we can easily replace these LEDs without opening the fuse box or de-energizing the whole house.

About the New Hotel

Dorothy found this on Facebook. Take a look at our coming new neighbor.

https://www.facebook.com/TUIBLUE.Curacao1/

Deep Condolences to W5XU

This is at the end of the newsletter not because it is unimportant, but because it came in just prior to publication. I greatly regret to report that CCCer David Assaf, W5XU, lost his XYL Paula in September. They had been married for 56 years!

Some of you met David on a past contest trip to PJ2T, and others of you will recall that he was instrumental on our generator committee in pointing us to some very important right decisions about what to buy.

In addition to the tragedy with Paula, 19 months ago he underwent epic surgery on his pancreas, stomach, and GI tract. On November 12 he had additional surgery to correct a blocked vein, so it has been a couple of very bad years in his world. We send him best wishes. He is determined to recover and make it back to Signal Point. David is one of those great, multi-capable people who sees something that needs to be done, quietly makes it happen, puts the tools away, and may not even mention what he did. ☺

David joins W8WTS, W1FJ, N5OT and N7WA in having lost spouses, tragedies to all of us in our CCC community.

WAE RTTY Contest Report

See below. Connor braved all kinds of frustrations and still managed this excellent score, running the remote station on RTTY November 8-9.

The KPA-1500 definitely does not like RTTY, with the temperatures becoming very much too high now and then. But Connor was very attentive and throttled back when needed.

This was a part time proof of concept effort, and it showed that we need to work on finding a better way to remote on TTY.

Good work and good patience by W4IPC!

Call: **PJ2/W4IPC**
Operator(s): W4IPC
Station: PJ2T

Class: **Single Op HP**
QTH: SA
Operating Time (hrs): 15
Location: South America

Summary: Compare Scores

Band	QSOs	QTCs	Mults	
80:	37	10	18	
40:	231	160	47	
20:	106	80	32	
15:	115	90	32	
10:	114	42	440	
Total:	**603**	**425**	**780**	Total Score **587,775**

New Gas Range at Signal Point

The Frigidaire gas range has been here since I bought it new in November of 2000. The oven has quit working yet again, and I'm tired of replacing the igniter and thermocouple modules time after time.

On November 14 we took delivery on a new, very simple propane range, made in Mexico. It uses no electricity, has no switches, igniter, thermocouple, or solenoid controlled gas valve that can fail. In this climate, simple is better, and we will light it with the butane stick. Also, Dorothy selected one that is all black enamel (white is not available) that will not rust like stainless steel does in this seaside location.

Installing it required completely disassembling Station 5, then putting it back together and testing. But we're good now.

Maintenance Work on Entry Gate

The front and side man gates are custom made from mahogany. Every two years or so I recoat them with very high quality varnish. This is especially important for the inside of the driveway gate because it is in fierce direct sun all day every day.

Every eight years or so the condition becomes so bad that I have to sand off all varnish down to bare wood and re-coat. This is that year. Our old Makita orbital sander failed in March and we ran out of quality varnish. We now have imported three gallons of superb varnish from Detroit (above), and brought a new Makita sander in checked luggage. I was also very lucky so buy about 50 of the perfect sanding pads in an Idaho garage sale for $5.00.

The sanding is very laborious, and one pad will only last for about 15 minutes. I've been sanding a couple hours per day in the cooler morning and evening hours, and in one more day will have the back side ready for varnish. The coating has to be done in the wee hours, around 1:00 AM so that the varnish is dry before the sun hits it at about 8:30 AM, or it will bubble and be ruined. Also, weed pods and other airborne crud are much more a problem in the daylight wind, much less so at night. So I set up a light and set my alarm clock and varnish when 160 is open.

November 12: all of the right panel and about half of the left is sanded.

November 13: The part remaining to be sanded shows clearly here. Note the black stains in places. This maintenance will clear those up completely. Finishing this last part of sanding will take about five hours, believe it or not.

New PVC Furniture Cushions Ordered

The 19 year old chair cushions for our four larger PVC chairs have finally failed beyond repair. We drove into the driveway of the house in Willemstad where these are custom made on November 12 and, astonishingly, the lady came out, stared for a moment, and pointed to me and said "Geoff Howard, right?" How's THAT for stellar customer relations?

Needless to say we ordered four new custom cushions, and they should be ready in a couple of weeks. These are expensive, but this tubular PVC furniture lasts better than anythng else in the severe climate.

Trim Strip Painting

On November 12 I had a quart of custom blue exterior latex paint mixed at Building Depot. This is for the blue trim board across both the front and back of the soffits. I have it about half done now, and will finish when it is cooler because some of this needs to be done lying on the roof and reaching down over the edge. This is not something to do in the heat of day.

Road Cleanup Complete

The utility system construction this past winter was enormously disruptive in the road, and resulted in giant messes of dirt, gravel, and ruined plants and grass. I spent a few hours on November 14, cleaning up the mess, digging out ruined plants, and hauling off seven wheelbarrows full of crud. The front façade of the perimeter now looks prettty good again!

Carefully dissecting a sticky plant that had grown out into the road right of way. November 14, 2025.

When we have some time and energy, we'll put a fresh coat of paint on that front wall. This will complement the artwork that N1ZZ painted on that wall in March.

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