Signals From The Point

Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Contesting Consortium
Editor: W0CG

Volume 26, Number 3 **March 15, 2026**

CCC Annual Meeting: May 15

Mark your calendar. Our annual meeting will be at the Hamvention from 3:00 – 5:00 PM, Friday, May 15, in the Mustang Room at Hope Hotel. This is the same time, day, and location as in several past years. We thank Tim, K3LR, for providing this room for us free of charge.

I WILL NOT BE AT THE HAMVENTION EXCEPT FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING.

ARRL DX SSB Contest Is in the Books

Band	Mode	QSOs	Pts
1.8	LSB	68	204
3.5	LSB	444	1332
7	LSB	1441	4320
14	USB	2337	7002
21	USB	2164	6489
28	USB	2722	8154
Total	Both	9176	27501

The total score was 8,800,320. This was a World #2 claimed score behind CN3A. Congratulations to our incredibly hard working team of N5BR, W0CG, AC7DC, KD0BTO, W2APF, K0PZH, N7NR, and K8LG.

The full story is on 3830 at https://www.3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=RvYizV7neLLeeU .

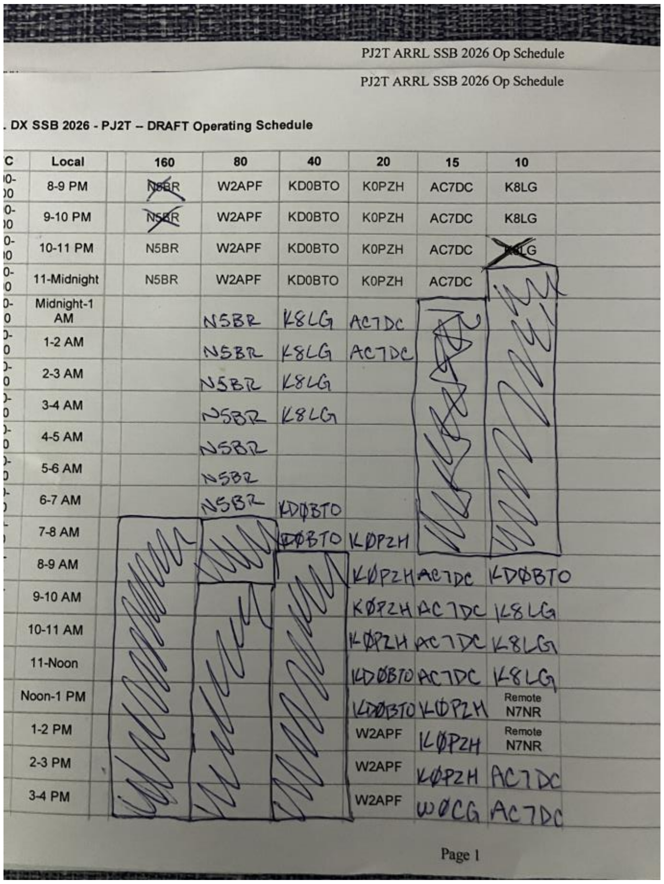
Our team was plagued by cancellations. The entire originally planned team from PCARS cancelled on 8 December. This was a shocker because the planning for a fully staffed contest had been proceeding as in a normal year. But this gave us enough lead time to search for other operators.

Literally 400 E-mail messages later we had managed to find an excellent group of contesters to replace the Melbourne group, and planning for this contest was back on track. This staffing was very materially helped by CCC member Rich, W3ACO, who recruited three YL operators and offered to heavily subsidize their costs.

Then bad luck hit us again when one of the YLs cancelled, even after booking a flight. Rich then recruited a replacement YL, offering the same subsidy, she accepted, and then she cancelled. The icing on the contest was that the day of planned arrival in Curacao two of our now diminished team also cancelled. All of these cancellations were for good reasons, most involving medical crises.

Thus, by Wednesday of the contest week 5 operators arrived in Curacao as opposed to the 12 originally planned. One of these five had essentially never operated a contest. But these five people, plus Curacao resident W2APF, remote operator N7NR, and me, actually operating, pitched in and worked very hard and did a heroic job of salvaging the operation and scoring magnificently. Except for some bad luck of propagation conditions, the team nearly won the world!

The biggest energy and leadership of the team came from Grace Papay, K8LG. I dropped the operating scheduling into their laps after cancellations had wrecked the original planned schedule. Grace and Paige got out their pencil and eraser and in a long negotiating session with the team came up with a new, very ambitious schedule. That schedule still had many missing band-hours, but it was extremely adequate given the short staffing.



PJ2T ARRL SSB 2026 Op Schedule

PJ2T ARRL SSB 2026 Op Schedule

. DX SSB 2026 - PJ2T – DRAFT Operating Schedule

C	Local	160	80	40	20	15	10
	8-9 PM	~~N5BR~~	W2APF	KD0BTO	K0PZH	AC7DC	K8LG
	9-10 PM	~~N5BR~~	W2APF	KD0BTO	K0PZH	AC7DC	K8LG
	10-11 PM	N5BR	W2APF	KD0BTO	K0PZH	AC7DC	~~K8LG~~
	11-Midnight	N5BR	W2APF	KD0BTO	K0PZH	AC7DC	
	Midnight-1 AM		N5BR	K8LG	AC7DC		
	1-2 AM		N5BR	K8LG	AC7DC		
	2-3 AM		N5BR	K8LG			
	3-4 AM		N5BR	K8LG			
	4-5 AM		N5BR				
	5-6 AM		N5BR				
	6-7 AM		N5BR	KDØBTO			
	7-8 AM			KDØBTO	KØPZH		
	8-9 AM				KØPZH	AC7DC	KDØBTO
	9-10 AM				KØPZH	AC7DC	K8LG
	10-11 AM				KØPZH	AC7DC	K8LG
	11-Noon				KDØBTO	AC7DC	K8LG
	Noon-1 PM				KDØBTO	KØPZH	Remote N7NR
	1-2 PM				W2APF	KØPZH	Remote N7NR
	2-3 PM				W2APF	KØPZH	AC7DC
	3-4 PM				W2APF	WØCG	AC7DC

Page 1

Page 1 of the re-worked schedule. Notice all the empty band-hour boxes.

The contest started, all proceeded well, and when it was time to step up and fill empty hours, folks pitched in, most especially K8LG. She worked very hard in the wee hours of the morning on minimal sleep. At times Grace was the only person in our five station shack in the night hours. She also posted the high rate hour of the contest, logging 292 QSOs in the first hour on 10 meters.

K8LG in her opening 292 hour on 10 meters.

By the end of the contest, she was top on our team in QSOs at 2261. She and YL K0PZH showed incredible skill in passing mults and Qs, in speed and accuracy, and in situational awareness. For example, Paige's first four hours (on 20, below) generated 214, 225, 201, and 173 contacts.

K0PZH in her fantastic four hour opening run on 20.

We thank Rich for recruiting these outstanding operators, and both Rich and N7NR for supporting their costs of participation.

Conditions were as strange as I have ever seen. There were blocks of time such as 19-23Z on Sunday when 15 simply would not produce. We had only about 290 contacts in that period, compared with nearly 800 in that same period on Saturday. 20 was almost as bad. During those hours 10 was superb both days! While we were floundering to find people to work, CN3A was surging ahead of in the online scoreboard. At times we had a lead on them, but when the strange Sunday partial blackout came we lost the lead and never got it back. This is unheard of for a station in that part of the world to do so well in the ARRL contest. But you take your licks when propagation is bad, and the team did an INCREDIBLE job.

I thank YLs K8LG and K0PZH for their skill and tireless efforts on the air. Thanks to Thaire, W2APF, who worked shift hours far beyond his original plan, commuting back and forth from his Curacao home, an hour and a half round trip. We're in debt to Cal, N5BR, who at age 87 gamely volunteered to handle overnight shift hours that nobody else really wanted.

CCC member Cal, N5BR, logging QSOs on 80 meters in the wee hours. At 87 he is still actively involved with his businesses.

Jay, AC7DC, was an unstoppable QSO machine, pounding out hour after hour of contacts and seeming never to tire.

A study in concentration, AC7DC digging signals out of the QRM on 40.

Dave, N7NR, made an amazing 557 QSOs on the remote station during a very busy family birthday event at his home in California. And KD0BTO, a new and novice contester, learned very fast, turning in over 700 contacts. He loved his time here, and I believe we now have a new and avid contester in the community. This team had great fun, a lot of laughs, learned a lot, and prevailed over significant obstacles of staffing and conditions!

The equipment was solid. Our new Windows 11 machines worked perfectly all weekend. There were no transceiver or amp problems. We made good use of the rebuilt 80 meter loop array which produced hundreds of Qs.

Only a ham would see the beauty in this, a corner of the rebuilt 80 meter loop driven element as it was producing Qs at 3 AM in the moonlight.

And we almost completely eliminated bothersome interstation interference by smart selection of operating frequencies and antenna combinations. The station performed great.

Night action: AC7DC on 160, K8LG on 15, W2APF (hidden) on 40, KD0BTO on 80.

We also ate well. Dorothy once again was heroic in planning, shopping, and serving nearly all meals for the team. When she is not on site we are lost. W2APF, a serious chef, helped Dorothy materially, particularly by doing the Tuesday evening arrival dinner.

CCC member Thaire Bryant, W2APF, Tuesday dinner

ARRL 2026, World #2 M/M, DX Side: K0PZH, KD0BTO, W2APF, N5BR, K8LG, AC7DC one minute after the end. (N7NR and W0CG not in photo.)

Official Team Photo: AC7DC, W2APF, N5BR, W0CG, K0PZH, K8LG, KD0BTO, 9 March 2026. (Wall logo re-painted by N1ZZ.)

Tropical beauty from poolside the day after the contest. Note the top of the Europe tower.

Report on WPX RTTY 2026

SOAB Classic HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score
YU9A(YT3D)			1626	733	23	4,284,385
PJ2T(WI9WI)			1642	659	24	3,991,563
RG9A			1353	644	24	3,122,756
S53R			1342	658	24	3,115,630
OM2ADM(@OM8A)		x	1349	656	24	2,988,080
GWØA(GW4SKA)			1418	652	24	2,782,084
NR4M(K4PZZ)			1309	591	24	2,353,953
IK2YCW			1153	600	20:47	2,329,800
TM5T(F5VKT)			922	515	19	1,528,005
K4SO			979	476	20:04	1,249,024

WI9WI and KA9DOC arrived as planned on February 11. As you see he scored World #2 in the SOAB Classic category, but was edged out by the easier number of multipliers in Europe.

ARRL DX CW Contest Report: A Win

The team was just beginning travel at the time of the last newsletter. I'm happy to report that that contest is now history, and that VE3CX, W2APF, WI9WI, W0CG, NF9V, K7TQ, PA5PR, AG3I, and N7WA won the World #1 M/M title. We made more QSOs from this shack than any other station in any category anywhere in the world. Note that the stateside and VE stations listed below are in another contest. They work the world whereas we can only work US and VE. So we are by far the top M/M station on the DX side.

M/M HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score
K3LR			8120	629	48	15,320,553
K1TTT		x	6762	588	48	11,868,192
PJ2T		x	8347	352	48	8,790,144
K4NDX(@W7WZ)			5194	525	48	8,180,550
KH6J(@KH6YY)			6277	345	48	6,496,695
N6RO		x	4101	471	48	5,794,713
9A1P			5912	323	46	5,722,914
K1KI			3671	468	45.5	5,126,004
K1KP		x	3311	442	42	4,385,082
WA2DNI		x	1337	388	33	1,555,104

Our CW team was understaffed. It is harder and harder to find people who are willing to travel, even to a world class station by the sea like PJ2T. Perennial ARRL contester Tom, VE3CX once again this year made the trek south, escaping serial days of sub-zero temps in Thunder Bay. WI9WI remained on site after the WPX RTTY contest and contributed greatly to the CW effort. Tireless op and CCC member Rudy, NF9V was once again here to push the team to new heights. Randy, K7TQ, made the grueling trip here from Moscow, Idaho. He is president of my local club, the Spokane DX Association, but somehow managed the time to be away from his duties to contribute to this contest effort. CCC president Marty, AG3I, again kindly made a quick extended weekend trip to help the team, arriving on Thursday and flying out Monday to get back to his responsibilities running his businesses and as ARRL Atlantic Division Director.

We welcomed Pim, PA5PR from the PI4CC contest club. He's the third member of that group to visit Signal Point, and we're grateful for his making the long trip to join in here. Finally, we were very happy to have Dink, N7WA on site again. He has been through the wringer after many years as a caregiver, eventually losing his wife Diane. In those years he was unable to travel to PJ2T or much of anywhere else, but he kept in close touch with the happenings here and provided very generous financial support in that era. We congratulate him and Michelle on their marriage last December and on the happiness and freedom of movement Dink now enjoys.

Dink's most used phrase at Signal Point was "What can I do?" Over and over, project after project he jumped in and helped. He was barely in the door from travel when he went to work on the Microham Stack Switch box for 10 meters. The old switch box had failed last fall season, AG3I found and donated a replacement, and I brought it to the island. It did not work right, though, and I quickly figured out that it needed the firmware to be reconfigured. Dink downloaded the configuration utility, patiently unraveled its mysteries, and soon had the new StackMatch switch box working right and in service on 10 meters.

Our signature project was the almost total rebuild of the collapsed 80 meter 3-el Europe delta loop array. The story on that project follows. Dink was of great help on that big project as well as on mundane but important work such as fixing broken lamps and chairs. It all needed to be done, and he was fantastic helping.

We had some challenges during the contest. The stations had been almost entirely clean of interstation QRM in my tests the week before. But during the weekend we had to compromise because of 20 getting into 10 and 40 badly into 15. After the team left I started to troubleshoot only to find that the problem had gone away again. Either we had an intermittent somewhere or one of the team's devices was emitting RFI.

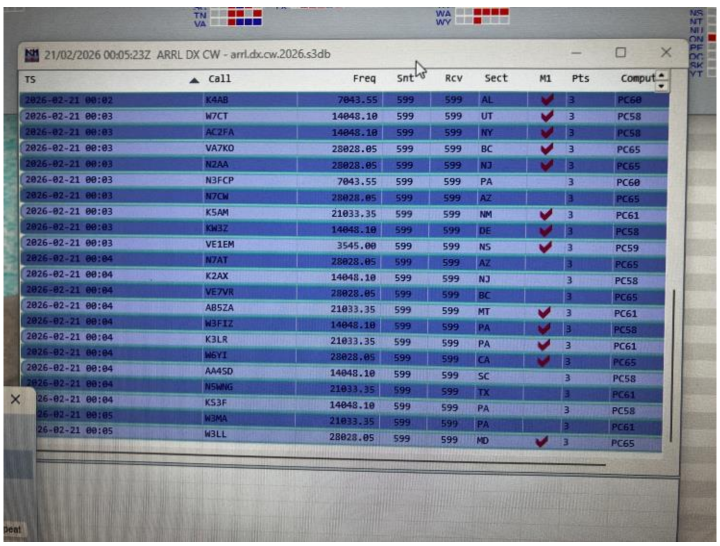
The 80 meter station seemed a bit unstable on Saturday, sometimes with the power dropping to about 400 watts, then right back up to normal. At around 3 AM Sunday morning the problem had evolved to the dramatic bright sparking and arcing from the band switch that I described elsewhere. We quickly swapped in a good amplifier and the balance of the contest was fine. We finished the 48 hours with great rates on all bands, topping last year's score and almost certainly winning the world #1 plaque.

Another bugaboo was occasional popup dialog boxes from N1MM that required a restart. That was later found to be a release bug and went away after the contest. Our new Windows 11 network was not at fault.

Thanks to the entire team for a great effort, and particularly to remote operators N7NR and K8ND. Jeff did both nights, all night, on 160 and scored extremely well. Dave covered many daytime high rate hours, and our effort would have not been possible in M/M without their help.

I thank W2APF and VE3CX for substantial donations over and above the weekend's costs. This is the kind of generosity that keeps PJ2T on the air year after year.

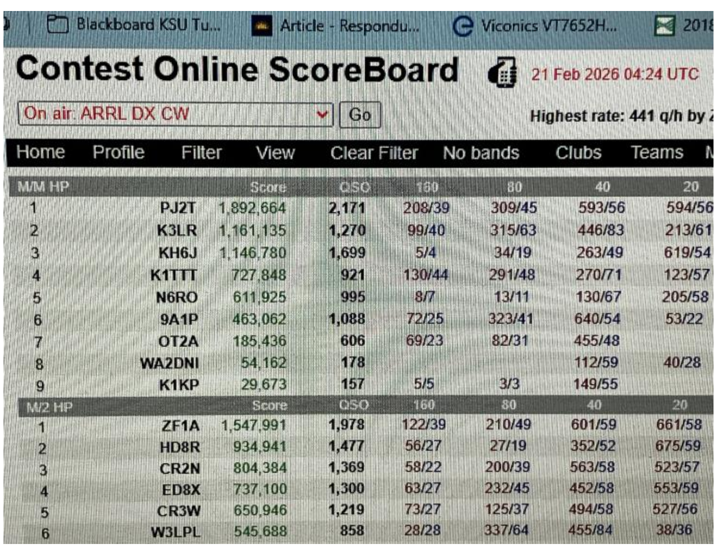
CW team member VE3CX knows how to fill a plate!



21/02/2026 00:05:23Z ARRL DX CW - arrl.dx.cw.2026.s3db

TS	Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Sect	M1	Pts	Comput
2026-02-21 00:02	K4AB	7043.55	599	599	AL	✓	3	PC60
2026-02-21 00:03	W7CT	14048.10	599	599	UT	✓	3	PC58
2026-02-21 00:03	AC2FA	14048.10	599	599	NY	✓	3	PC58
2026-02-21 00:03	VA7KO	28028.05	599	599	BC	✓	3	PC65
2026-02-21 00:03	N2AA	28028.05	599	599	NJ	✓	3	PC65
2026-02-21 00:03	N3FCP	7043.55	599	599	PA		3	PC60
2026-02-21 00:03	N7CW	28028.05	599	599	AZ		3	PC65
2026-02-21 00:03	K5AM	21033.35	599	599	NM	✓	3	PC61
2026-02-21 00:03	KW3Z	14048.10	599	599	DE	✓	3	PC58
2026-02-21 00:03	VE1EM	3545.00	599	599	NS	✓	3	PC59
2026-02-21 00:04	N7AT	28028.05	599	599	AZ		3	PC65
2026-02-21 00:04	K2AX	14048.10	599	599	NJ		3	PC58
2026-02-21 00:04	VE7VR	28028.05	599	599	BC		3	PC65
2026-02-21 00:04	AB5ZA	21033.35	599	599	MT	✓	3	PC61
2026-02-21 00:04	W3FIZ	14048.10	599	599	PA	✓	3	PC58
2026-02-21 00:04	K3LR	21033.35	599	599	PA	✓	3	PC61
2026-02-21 00:04	W6YI	28028.05	599	599	CA	✓	3	PC65
2026-02-21 00:04	AA4SD	14048.10	599	599	SC		3	PC58
2026-02-21 00:04	N5WNG	21033.35	599	599	TX		3	PC61
26-02-21 00:04	KS3F	14048.10	599	599	PA		3	PC58
26-02-21 00:05	W3MA	21033.35	599	599	PA		3	PC61
26-02-21 00:05	W3LL	28028.05	599	599	MD	✓	3	PC65

The log two minutes into the CW contest



Blackboard KSU Tu... Article - Respondu... Viconics VT7652H... 2018

Contest Online ScoreBoard 21 Feb 2026 04:24 UTC

On air: ARRL DX CW Go Highest rate: 441 q/h by

Home Profile Filter View Clear Filter No bands Clubs Teams

M/M HP		Score	QSO	160	80	40	20
1	PJ2T	1,892,664	2,171	208/39	309/45	593/56	594/56
2	K3LR	1,161,135	1,270	99/40	315/63	446/83	213/61
3	KH6J	1,146,780	1,699	5/4	34/19	263/49	619/54
4	K1TTT	727,848	921	130/44	291/48	270/71	123/57
5	N6RO	611,925	995	8/7	13/11	130/67	205/58
6	9A1P	463,062	1,088	72/25	323/41	640/54	53/22
7	OT2A	185,436	606	69/23	82/31	455/48	
8	WA2DNI	54,162	178			112/59	40/28
9	K1KP	29,673	157	5/5	3/3	149/55	
M/2 HP		Score	QSO	160	80	40	20
1	ZF1A	1,547,991	1,978	122/39	210/49	601/59	661/58
2	HD8R	934,941	1,477	56/27	27/19	352/52	675/59
3	CR2N	804,384	1,369	58/22	200/39	563/58	523/57
4	ED8X	737,100	1,300	63/27	232/45	452/58	553/59
5	CR3W	650,946	1,219	73/27	125/37	494/58	527/56
6	W3LPL	545,688	858	28/28	337/64	455/84	38/36

PJ2T on top slightly after midnight local

CCC president AG3I on 40

Pim (PA5PR) on 80 and Rudy (NF9V) on 20 in the wee hours Sunday

One minute after the end: Pim (PA5PR), Dink (N7WA), Tom (VE3CX), Thaire (W2APF), Randy (K7TQ), Rudy (NF9V), Geoff (W0CG), Marty

(AG3I), Jim (WI9WI), missing from photo N7NR, K8ND.

World #1 Team Photo: Jim (WI9WI), Rudy (NF9V), Tom (VE3CX), Geoff (W0CG), Pim (PA5PR), Dink (N7WA), Randy (K7TQ), Marty (AG3I). The team shirts were a gift from K7TQ.

Fuel that helped us win: A feaste prepared by W2APF Thursday before the contest.

PJ2T Club License Renewal

The club license expires March 30, a five year term. I made application for renewal on January 23. After a long wait and some reminders to the RAC, their inspector showed up at Signal Point on March 6.

With the RAC inspector on Friday, March 6.

Regulatory Authority of Curaçao

He made the usual notes on our equipment, photographed the towers and serial number nameplates on four of our K3s and amplifiers, and went on his way after commenting on the beauty of Signal Point's ocean views. The inspection must have been satisfactory because on March 12 I received a payment invoice for CG200 ($114.28) and promptly paid by local bank transfer. I'm hoping to receive the renewed licenses soon by E-mail. I renewed my local PJ2DX license concurrent with our club license.

Hamvention Lodging Reaches the Stratosphere

If attendance is down at Dayton this year it will be little wonder why. The lodging companies are becoming greedy on Hamvention weekend.

Hilton Garden Inn Beavercreek $339
Holiday Inn Express Beavercreek $329
Courtyard Marriot Beavercreek $269
Extended Stay America Suites Fairborn $237
Clarion Inn Fairborn $232
Wyndham Fairborn $336
Tru by Hilton Beavercreek $289
La Quinta Fairborn $229

CCC Financial Report

Per Treasurer W8WTS the end of February 2026 balance in the Station Support fund is $8381.71. This figure does not yet reflect income to the club from the ARRL contests.

General Maintenance: Work Progress Report

Routine work continues almost full time each day. We bought and installed a new water faucet for the sink at the East outdoor shower sink. That 20 year old butterfly valve faucet was leaking and not fixable. This required teamwork because I had to take the sink off the wall to make the replacement. I also put in a new fill tube while we had it all apart.

Dorothy's style sense dominated and she convinced me that we should repaint the perimeter wall left and right of the side man gate on both the inside and outside walls. She cleaned up and tossed much of the saved ceramic tile that was stacked out there, then we cleaned and painted, using about 1.5 gallons of Comotex. That entry area now looks very much better. To cap it off she mixed up some pastel blue paint and made the old bare ceramic moon a beautiful blue. The sun will be next.

Before (right) and after (left)

I spent nearly three full days working on problems in the irrigation system, as mentioned last month. This required a lot of investigative digging, but I finally found and replaced a buried plastic coupler, then cleaned all 85+ drip heads. The system is now working perfectly.

The toilet in the West Bedroom had been leaking out the bottom for many weeks. Once the CW team departed I took advantage of the access and replaced the wax ring (photo next column). This was also a good time to put in a new threaded valve body and 20 inch fill tube. It's all finished now and leak free.

Replacing wax ring in toilet, West Bedroom, February 27. This stopped the leak.

We're also continuing work on these items: replacing rotted trim on the front gate, then caulking; painting markers on the outer wall so that the backhoes won't dig up our guy anchors; sanding and varnishing the man gate and replacing bad trim; total epoxy touchup of both towers; inspection and painting of subsurface parts of guy anchors; cleaning and spot painting in the generator case; replacing bad landscape lights; regrouting leaky roof terrace joints; troubleshooting the Titan 425; cleaning the triplexer filters; inspection and securing of the cable drop over the Ridge including our feedlines and the neighborhood fibre trunk.

CCCers at 3Y0K

Note that CCC members W7EY and N4ML were on the Bouvet DXpedition. A dream of a lifetime, but it makes me cold and seasick just to think about it. Go for it guys!!!

80 3 el Europe Delta Loop Is Back in Service

This antenna failed about two years ago after 23 years in the air. It consists of three full wave 80 meter delta loops hung from a nylon rope at 80 feet strung between the towers. I knew that someday this thing would break, and knew equally well that it would be very difficult to fix. The surprise was that the antenna wire itself, not the rope, was what failed. The elements were made from insulated solid #14 THHN wire, and the years of swinging in the wind had work-hardened the copper to the point where it was thin and brittle, almost like a pencil lead. The wires broke in multiple places and the whole mess ended up partly on the ground and partly draped on high trees, other antenna wires, guy wires, and shrubs. What a challenge to fix.

Repair began in October when DL3ON went up the Europe tower with a down rope and a carabiner preparatory to lowering the north end of the support rope. Then in February N7WA, K7TQ and I continued the work. Prior to the ARRL CW team's arrival I went up the US tower with a pulley, carabiner, and 250 foot pull rope and connected the south end of the overhead support rope. I again then went up the Europe tower with another rope and pulley setup and connected those to the north end of the 40 meter inverted vee so that we could lower that antenna out of the way of the repairs.

Once the CW team arrived, Dink and I let each end of the support rope down at both ends until we were luckily able to reach the driven element attachment rope (photo) with the 8 foot step ladder.

N7WA attaching the top of the new driven element loop.

We used brand new DX Engineering #14 stranded insulated black antenna wire to pre-fab about 300 feet for the new driven element. After attaching the top of the loop to the overhead support rope we were able to raise the rope back up to a point where the south end of the rope was close to the US tower. I then went back to the top of that tower, pulled the permanent end of the support rope to the tower, and attached it in final permanent position to that tower, taking time to weatherproof the wounded epoxy paint at that location.

At this point we spent a couple of hours untangling the support rope and reflector element (undamaged) out of the high branches of several trees, freeing the support rope to go higher. I then went up the Europe tower again and pulled up the north end of the support rope, carefully dragging it over the 2nd Director of the Pacific tribander, finally getting it in position and then attached permanently to the tower. We then repositioned the 40 meter vee, and I reattached that rope to the permanent position on the tower.

From that point it was fairly straightforward, but very time consuming, for Dink and N7TQ and PA5AP to position the corners and bottom of the driven element loop, connect the coax at the corner feedpoint, and put on a tuning wire.

Below, W0CG preparing to solder in the feedpoint.

After some iterations we got the antenna happy at 3.740 MHz, accepting a KW of RF with an SWR of about 1.3:1.

All of that occupied an entire day (Wednesday, February 18), and we then spent about half a day on Thursday dressing the elements and feedline, trimming tree branches where we could reach, and weatherproofing here and there.

After the contest we put in most of Monday morning, when I again went up the Europe tower, this time with both sides of the Director element on my harness, threaded it through guy brackets and other antennas as necessary, and installed it in position from the support rope about three feet from the tower. Then with the help of the ground folks we arranged the legs of the loop. For the Director we used #14 stranded blue insulated THHN. After about another hour we had the loop in position at the corners and joined at the bottom, trimmed some more tree branches, and declared this big project complete. Special thanks to N7WA for his patient and tireless partnership in working this difficult project.

Celebrating Our Generator

AC7DC triggered the generator project in 2024 with a surprise donation of $5000. He finally got to see the finished product this March.

Jay, AC7DC, finally getting to see the powerplant, March 4, 2026.

The ARRL SSB team with the generator and Jay at center with Reddy Kilowatt that he brought from home. PJ2T Power and Light is in business now.

In the week before the contest Jay and I drained the remaining year-old diesel fuel from the tank, flushed it with fresh fuel, closed off the valve, and refilled the tank with almost 90 liters of new fuel. With this and the changed oil we are in good shape for a calendar year.

WARC Beam

AC7DC recently saw an A3WS for sale local to him at a good price. He offered any part of it to PJ2T, and I asked him to bring down the six traps and the center insulator. Thanks to Jay for yet another donation to the station.

AC7DC with the traps and driven element insulator

Amplifier Diagnoses and Repairs

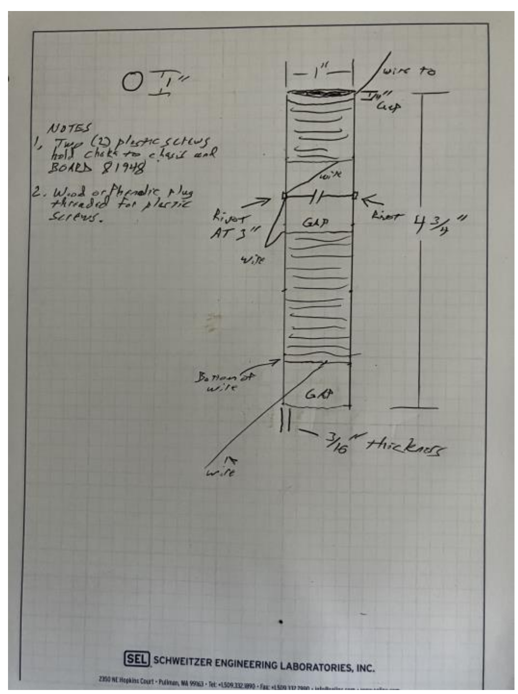
AC7DC offered to have a look at our four amps that have been needing expertise and concerted diagnostic time for years. He printed manuals and large form schematics on his plotter at home and brought these along as an aid.

I set up an amp repair station in place of the loveseat, complete with an FT-2000 driver and all cabling and power needed to test the amps on the air.

Fairly quickly Jay found the problem with the Titan III, which has been in the closet since November of 2017. Careful checking found that the lead at the bottom of the plate choke was burned and very brittle, and when Jay touched it lightly it broke off. This was on the back side of the choke, not visible.

The broken off lead (at the right) from the plate choke. (The caps are OK.)

After extensive searching Jay determined that no replacement choke is available, so he is going to fabricate one at home based on this engineering sketch.



AC7DC's sketch of the Titan III choke

The amp is now safely stowed in the closet awaiting parts. We have high confidence that this will bring this excellent amplifier back into service.

Next, Jay took a look at the AL-1200 (8) that we removed from service on 80 at 3 AM Sunday morning of the ARRL DX CW contest. The power output was very erratic, and we observed severe bright light arcs from the area of the band switch.

I was afraid that the band switch would be toast, but Jay employed his best troubleshooting tool: a pair of critical eyes. He discovered a manufacturing error in that the assembler at Ameritron had installed one of the tank choke straps too close to a metal rotating detent plate on the band switch. In the 80 meter position that placed the RF tank strap about a millimeter from the plate, which was at ground potential. Additionally, he found that at one point in the rotation of the band switch, the RF strap actually contacted the metal plate. Our high power contest operation on 80 finally triggered arcing and severe burning in that area of the band switch.

I had some time at 1:30 AM Sunday morning during the contest, assembled my tools, and managed to unsolder the strap from the band switch and clean up all the damage with sandpaper and Q-tips. The operators on shift probably thought I was nuts, but it was a quiet time for me to do a couple hours of work. I managed to reposition that tank strap so that it was spaced about 5 mm away from the offending part. After the contest Jay and I put the amp back in service, and it tested perfectly at high power on 80 with zero arcing. Problem solved.

AC7DC Amp Tube Donation

Jay has already donated two good 3CX1200A7 tubes for our AL-1200 spares collection. Amazingly, he found and donated a third tube and brought it for the ARRL SSB contest. I installed that new tube in the 80 meter amp I had been working on, and then left it powered on all day Sunday during the contest without plate voltage to be sure it was seasoned and ready for RF testing.

Tube seasoning underway in the corner during the contest.

On Monday after the contest I hooked up the plate connection, and Jay and I put that amp into test at Station 4. The new tube is very good and produces full output. Jay ran a string of European Qs on 17 SSB on the new tube, then we removed it, put it in secure storage as a spare, and reinstalled the original tube. We are now in a very solid position with five good spare AL-1200 tubes on site. Thanks to Jay and others who located and/or donated these hard to find spares.

WPX Plaques Renewed

Thanks to W8WTS for taking care of the renewal of the WPX contest plaques CCC has sponsored for years.

WPX SSB SOAB WORLD LP

WPX CW SOAB WORLD LP

More PJ2T / Signal Point Tourist Visitors

VE3SMA and Raina, Burlington, Ontario, March 3, 2026

Vlatko, 9A9R, Rijeka, Croatia, March 6, 2026.

Running 15 CW while his XYL records the video.

New Remote Station PC Installed

Our new Dell Optiplex 7020 computer is now in service at the remote station. The old computer was working fine but quite old. It runs 24/7/365 in a hot house, and a failure would leave us without the remote capability possibly for months. Logic dictated buying a brand new computer rather than a refurb. This new machine (PC66) is an i5. We did not need high speed because the computing load on this computer is low.

I configured the PC in Idaho for operation in Curacao by doing file transfers using Anydesk, and also set it up to autostart if there were a power failure and not to require a PIN at login. All that worked fine when I got on site. The COM ports aligned differently, but that was easy to adapt to, even when the KPA-1500 initially refused to connect. I worked all that out, but the PC was running very hot.

Even while doing very little the case temperature was running slightly over 82C as shown by a hardware monitor. After many hours of research and a very frustrating time entering the BIOS I tried turning off “Intel Turbo Boost.” That immediately and dramatically reduced the operating temperature to about 47C, which is the factory expected “package” temperature.

We’ve been running for a couple days now on the new machine and the functionality is excellent. Everything works exactly as before except for a change in the Anydesk address, which I’ve provided to you by E-mail. K8ND and I have done several power failure simulations, and in every case Jeff was able to bring the remote PC back up and configure it for service from Columbus. Project complete.

Curacao License Plates of Note

I was born on September 9, 1949. (Photo by VE3CX)

Our CQWW SSB contest exchange.

Strays

The amp repair workshop I set up before the SSB contest. It actually could make contacts using any of the PJ2T antennas. That's an FT-2000 at the right.

Prior photo: VE3CX bought us lunch on the East End just prior to dropping him at the airport after the CW contest. February 26, 2026.


March 14, 2026

The yellow-gold cable is ¼ inch EHS guy wire with a coat of epoxy primer drying in the sun. W2APF offered a couple days of on-site work help so we made up this cable. Tomorrow we will put finish paint on it and it will then replace the broken messenger cable for the coax bundle from the house to the US/JA tower.


W0CG with the epoxy primer brush and W2APF on the shovel, March 14.

Thaire dug down about five inches at each of the six accessible guy anchors to do a periodic sub-surface inspection. The guy rods for the Rohn towers are in good shape, but I put on a coat of epoxy anyway. The rods for the WARC tower showed a lot of corrosion and reduction in diameter sub-surface. We cleaned these up with the Makita angle grinder and then put on primer. The finish paint will follow tomorrow.

A primed WARC tower guy rod.

While we had the primer mixed I also touched up rusty areas on the lawn mower, string trimmer, security bars, front gate, and my left elbow. Thanks to Thaire for his willingness to get dirty and hot and pitch in.

Dorothy applying chemical stripper to the man gate. We’ll put new varnish on this tomorrow. After working with these noxious chemicals she’ll probably grow a third arm.

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