

ACARA Athens County Amateur Radio Association

John's family has asked me to say a few words about his contributions to and his influences on the local amateur radio community. It is an honor to do so. I'd like to look at NC8V as operator, technologist, organizer, and teacher. Let's look at these individually.

John was probably the best operator I ever saw. He could send and receive Morse code faster than most of us can type. When it came to operating phone contests, it was common for John to make as many as 100 contacts in a single hour. He set an example worthy of our emulation.

John was quite the technologist. Amateur radio involves many theories. John enjoyed putting a great number of these theories into practice. He enjoyed resurrecting old rigs, and bringing them to like-new operation. One of his favorite activities was the design and construction of antenna systems that he could take with him to far-off places. This allowed him to operate while he was on vacation in locales like Alaska, the Cayman Islands, and Bermuda. During these excursions, John contacted thousands of people all over the globe; many of us enjoyed making contact with him.

John was an organizer. For many years, he had a pivotal role in staffing the various aid stations for the Athens Marathon. During the marathon, John made it a point to visit each aid station to ensure that everything was going as it should. Field Day is a major amateur radio event. Here again John's skill as an organizer was evident. Many of us enjoyed operating Field Day from John's Caboose. Each year, ACARA holds its annual Hamfest. To quote John "We make running a Hamfest look as easy as rolling off a log." Many of us have since assumed responsibility for planning these events, and it is the example John set that allows us to do so. He made it all look easy.

John's favorite role as a radio amateur was that of teacher. I look around the room and there are so many of us who were in the classes that John offered. We were initially licensed or upgraded an existing license as a result of John's efforts as a teacher and volunteer examiner. A few years after getting his license, one young ham exclaimed, "That was probably the best class I ever took." Teaching extended beyond the classroom for John. Each year when we set up for Field Day, John took time to explain everything that we were doing. Many of us can get a signal on the air very quickly during an emergency because of participating in Field Day, and the knowledge that John shared. In addition to the above, learning how to use logging software, to read a schematic diagram, to exchange QSL cards are but a few of the things that many learned from John.

There would never be sufficient time to speak of the contributions to and the influences on the local amateur radio community that John Cornwell NC8V made. I think it is accurate to say that every amateur radio-related activity in Athens County has some of John Cornwell in it. He was a trusted guide into and through the world of amateur radio. We will all miss him.