

CHARLES J. "CHUCK" WARD TRIBUTE KJ4RV

April 11, 1948 – August 7, 2021



The following article was submitted
BY **Fred Deem** -N4ZCG.

I first met Chuck Ward in the summer of 1988. At the time I was running a BBS on my Atari 1040ST for the local Atari Users Group. I had known Joe Parker KB4IH(SK) for many years and Joe had tried to get me interested in Amateur Radio , as we had once been on 11 meters from back in the 1970's, but I was still young and was only interested in girls at that time. Joe went and took his tests and got his license, and we sorta lost touch. But I digress.



I came across a Morse Code program for the Atari and started playing around with it.

This particular program taught you two letters at a time, and before long I had most of the alphabet learned and started learning the numbers and some of the punctuation. I said to myself "What the heck." and started thinking about seeing if there was a club here in town that I could contact and taking a test. I knew nothing about what was required. I had known Harry Binder who ran Golden Star Electronics over behind Eutaw Shopping Center from my 11 meter days and stopped by to see him. He gave me the contact information for Burt Vander Clute - N4ERM, who I found out was the President of the Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society.



Burt invited me to come to breakfast at the K&W Restaurant that Saturday and he would put me in touch with the right people who could get me started. Lee Brown - N4DTB(SK) was there when I arrived. Lee gave me a lot of info about the club, and as other people arrived, he introduced them to me. Finally, Burt got there, and he told me what was required for me to take a test. I told him I was still learning the code, and looking for a book to start studying the questions for the written test. Burt introduced me to Chuck, who said he had a Novice book I could borrow, and when I felt I was ready, I could contact him and he would set up a test.

When the day finally came that I thought I was ready, Chuck and his neighbor, Jody Odem - NR9A, sat me down in Chuck's shack. Chuck had a cassette tape player with the code test on it, gave me a sheet of paper, told me to relax, and just copy as much as I could. I copied pretty much all of what was on the tape, and he told me I had passed that part. Now came the written test. That took a little bit longer, but Jody graded that part and congratulated me on passing. They said it should take about 6 to 8 weeks for me to get my license. Exactly 8 weeks later I was awarded my Novice call KC4PLS.

My meandering here is intended to show how much Chuck enjoyed teaching new hams and introducing them to a hobby that he cared for very much. Since then Chuck and I became close friends. I visited him many times at the Ham Factory on Fort Bragg when he was teaching classes out there. I visited him in his home many times. We worked together at Radio Shack for a few years. We spent time together at many Hamfests over the years. We operated a few Ten-Ten contests together from his shack.

We had a common interest in computers, NASCAR, new and interesting digital modes to try on Amateur Radio like NOS, packet, SSTV on 2 meters, and finally serving as VE's for the club. We would constantly pick each other's brains about this and that. We spent many Friday nights on Field Day weekend out at Methodist College sitting around listening to the bands. I have been a member of CFARS for 33 years now. Over that time we have lost a lot of good members, more than I care to count, many dear friends in the last few years. Too damned many. Lee, Sarge, The Judge, Art, Daryll, Dan, Bill K, Bill F, Joyce and Jay, John, Bud, Kelly, Gordon and Karen, Fred, January Jim, Papa Joe and Susan, Carl, Pete and Lou, Bob, Joe, AJ, Donnie, Rickey, Leland, Gene and Pat, Harold, and now Chuck. Some of these names you might not know, but I knew them all. My only consolation is that I know that they are all in a better place. Thank You for letting me share my memories of my good friend - Charles S Ward.

Respectfully Submitted

Fred B Deem, III (N4ZCG)



Most people don't realize that Chuck was left handed. However, he operated morse code with his right hand so that he could write with his left.

“Anything over 5 watts is a waste of power” Chuck KJ4RV



I first met Chuck when I came to Ft. Bragg in 1984. We participated in the club activities and became friends. I was transferred to Ft. Campbell, Ky in 1986 and returned to Fayetteville when I retired from the Army in September, 1989. I took a job teaching Basic Electronics and Radio communications for FTTC on Ft. Bragg. In 1991, I took a job with a Military Contractor company and I recruited Chuck to replace me teaching the class, He took it. He is well remembered by those who took the class.

I continued working for the company on Ft. Bragg and progressed to a

supervisor position in the desktop support shop. I needed a good technician to fill a vacancy so I again called my friend Chuck. He was one of my prized team members for many years.

I could always depend on Chuck.

The company came to me for a recommendation of someone for a special position, you guessed it, I recommended Chuck.

I retired in March 2011, after 20 years there and Chuck continued in his new job until he retired.

I have a vacancy in my circle of friends now, it is an empty space, I am afraid it will be empty for a long, long time.

I will miss Chuck more than people will know but one day we will see each other again.

Thank you Lord for a great friend named Chuck Ward.

Isn't it ironic that his initials are "CW".

Perry Brock, N4LBB.



Just Some Thoughts From Someone Who WILL NEVER FORGET

Chuck

So true the man I've known for 20 plus years Chuck Ward
KJ4RV

Any time you had a question he was one of the very first to be there and see if he could Assist.

Any time you had a crazy idea he would be the first one there to Assist. Anytime you were frustrated he knew it he would be the first one there. When I was a General Class He gave me that push to upgrade and he followed up in such a way that you didn't feel like you were being pressured and then when you accomplished your task he was there with A way to go adda boy or a girl.

If you got on 2 meters and frequency was quiet and put your call out he was there.

He would answer your call and he would talk about anything you wanted to talk about.

Chuck was more than just our Ambassador for Fayetteville North Carolina.

He is our Ambassador for the Cape Fear amateur radio Society.
If something needed to be done and no volunteers showed up he was there and I can assure you everyday that the repeater is active he is still here.

When Chuck left this world he left something with everyone of us.
A form of respect and pride a Rarity that there are not too many people can do anymore.

Chuck was not the club he was a Club member who loved the club and all the club members.

Regardless he cared individually for each one of us and he will be cared for individually by each one of us.

In his passing he has taught us all to respect one another and help one another and to not look down upon others but to lift others up to try things and not to knock things to try that's our Chuck.

I am blessed and honored to have Chuck as my friend but not just because of ham radio but because who he was.

He was one in a million of personalities in this troubled world.

He could still make you shine and as he would sometimes say take the lemon and make some lemonade.

Don't give up just figure out what we can try to make it work this is NC4XL

K4DOM

KS4GM

Chuck knows them all

Thanks For Being My Friend

Dom



My friend Chuck KJ4RV

Chuck was one of the kindest, friendliest, smartest, least-flappable people I've ever known. We had been proud members of the CFARS CW crew (The "Dream Team") for the last 40 years. He was the rock around which the CFARS CW operation was built.



There were rare occasional times when he could not copy when the sending station had sent an S or an H. He would yell out "Survey Says?!" and we'd sort it out together.

Chuck copied coded by writing with his left hand but sent code with his right hand. He is the only person I had ever met who could use both hands. Marvelous!

During the annual Field Day event, I usually took the least desirable shift from midnight to six am, usually relieving Chuck in the process. Chuck would lie down in his cot (with his dearest friend Bengie) and quickly fall asleep. But in the grey half-awake-half-asleep period, he would still be copying code. I would ask "What was that station's call?" And Chuck would shout out the callsign in question. [I sent Chuck a headstone for Bengie. Wonder if he ever got it?]

Both Chuck's dad and mine were hams. We frequently chatted about how much we had learned from them. Just super.

Chuck loved to do "QRP in the Park." We had done at least 15 different state parks together. He always took time out of his operation to find my location and ask how I was doing. A great friend and fellow ham.

Van (N4ERM)

One of the highlights for me during the past 15 Field Days, was watching Chuck operate. It was so smooth and seemed effortless. I never did figure out how he could send code, write and talk all at the same time. I know that when he got to the other side, Benji was right there waiting on him. Rest in peace my friend, you are missed by so many.

Jim – KI4YRH



From David (K14W)

I started to write this article for the newsletter last month however after August 7 I decided to wait. The article was to be titled "Thirty Years in Amateur Radio." It was 30 years last month I received my amateur radio license in the mail. I remember the day it came one Saturday. Mike KN4XP and I had gone to a Hamfest in High Point and I was waiting on my ticket to arrive. When I got home that day there was my license in the mailbox. In those days prior to high speed internet access or internet access period you could not look up the status of your application, get your call, and get on the air within days of taking your test as you can today. You had to wait until you received your ticket in the mail. From the day I tested until receiving my ticket was about ten weeks. I remember it took as much as thirteen weeks to receive my updated license as I proceeded up the licensing chain to Extra Class. Currently, as you know we have three classes of licenses; Technician, General, and Extra. In 1991 we had Novice, Technician, Technician Plus, General, Advanced, and Extra and CW code testing to go along with the written tests. On August 7 Charles S. "Chuck" Ward KJ4RV left us and what a void he left in the amateur radio community, in the Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society and in our life. After receiving the news Chuck had become a silent key I started thinking about the past 30 years and realized during all those years Chuck was right there with me every step of the way. So I scrapped the idea I had for the original article and decided I would go through the past thirty years and talk about my friend who was there through it all.

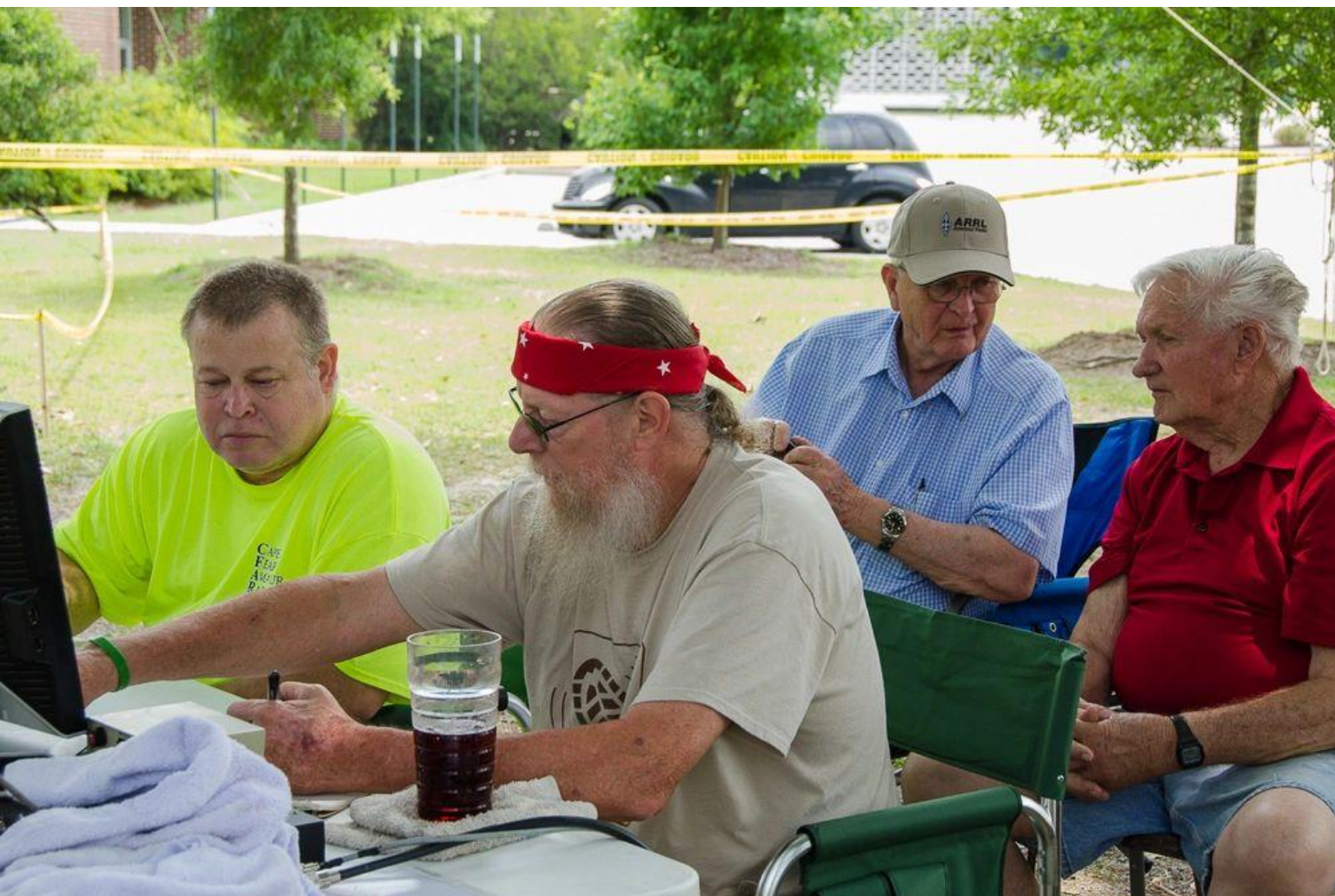
The first time I saw an amateur radio in use was at Field Day 30 years this past June. I had tested and passed both tests and I was in the process of waiting those ten long weeks for that magic ticket. You will I notice I said both tests. In those days one had to take the Novice written test and the Technician Class written test to obtain the no code license which had just came onto the amateur radio scene a few months before. I had already met Bill KU4W who kept me posted on the date of the test sessions and answered my questions leading



up to my testing date. Anyway I come out to Field Day 30 years ago and there was Bill operating CW and Chuck logging at the CW station. I quickly learned that day that these two guys along with Van N4ERM were the CW masters and from that day friendships were formed and a new chapter began

in my life began. From that day 30 years ago until this year I missed two Field Days, one due to having surgery the week of Field Day and one last year due to the COVID-19 shutdown. The next year when I attended my second Field Day I hung out at the CW station and some at the sideband station but did not operate. My hf operating had very limited at that point as I had just gotten hf privileges by passing the five word per minute code test to obtain the Tech Plus license. The next year when I came out to Field Day I logged on Saturday for Chuck, Bill, and Van at the CW station but could not get up the nerve to get behind the key. I go home that Saturday night and Sunday morning early I am back out there logging at the CW station. Chuck looks over at me and asks if I am ready to operate and my response was I didn't think I was quite ready. Chuck says sure you are and gets up and gives me the chair. After a little while Chuck says I knew you could do it and the rest is history. They could hardly pry me out of the chair. At some point over the years our supply of CW operators dwindled and it was myself along with Chuck, Bill, and Van who operated the CW station at Field Day. We four, for a number of years, were the CFARS CW team. We kept that CW station on the air the entire twenty-four hours of Field Day. In the mid-nineties Chuck and I began calling ourselves "The Dream Team" after the Olympic basketball team at the summer games in Spain when they allowed professional basketball players to compete for the first time. As a result we called Chuck the coach of the Dream Team. Chuck wore that title proudly and what a job he did year in and year out at Field Day. Field Day will never be the same for me again and I am sure there are others, especially the guys at the CW station, who feel the same. I would like to back up a little to where I talked about logging at Field Day.

Back in the day we did not log by computer as we do now. The logging was done by pen and paper and after Field Day was over someone had to go back through the log and check for dupes by hand. That someone was Chuck and this was a time consuming job. At the conclusion of Field Day these days we know how many contacts we had by just looking at the computer screen. Prior to computer logging we had to wait a few days until Chuck completed checking the log and gave us the final tally. Some years ago and I could not tell you the year I was there at Field Day when the person logging for Chuck needed a break. I slipped into the logging chair and Chuck made a contact and after he finished the contact he looked over, not noticing he had someone different now logging for him, and said what the information was of the contact he had just completed. I told him I got it in the log and he said sorry I didn't know it was you sitting there meaning he trusted that I had the correct information in the log. I thought to myself I have truly arrived because the CW master had just paid me the ultimate compliment. I have had 30 years of Field Days and 31 will not be the same for none of us especially at the CW station.





Chuck was the voice of Fridays on the CFARS two meter repeater. He was the net control for the Possum Trot Net and for the Evening Net. I am not sure when he began those duties but 30 years ago he was there when I came into the hobby. Back some years ago Chuck gave

up the Friday night net control when he began working part time at the Radio Shack at the mall. At the time I did not have a night to call so I took the Friday night net control and when Chuck decided he had enough of working in the evenings I relinquished Friday night back to Chuck and took another night that had just become vacant. Over the years I have had the privilege of being the net control for every day of the week except Thursday night.

Friday mornings and Friday nights will never again have that voice.

For several years Chuck taught the Novice licensing course for Fayetteville Technical Community College on Fort Bragg. Chuck affectionately called it the "Ham Factory." During the time Chuck was teaching this course Cumberland County produced more Novice licensees than anywhere else in the United States.

As a result Chuck was named ARRL Instructor of the Year in 1994. If I am not mistaken that was the same year I became a volunteer examiner and joined the CFARS VE Team. Chuck, of course was already a VE, and there were many test sessions where I joined Chuck along with Van N4ERM, Bill KU4W, and Fred N4ZCG in the code testing room up until the FCC eliminated the code requirement. We had great times in the code room on many a Saturday morning.

Hams are known to improvise and there was one Saturday morning we found that the ARRL had forgot to send the five word per minute code tape. Yes we used cassette tapes back then. We started talking it over and came up with the idea we could send the code test by hand. We had the written text but needed a way to send it. Since I lived closest to Methodist University I went home and brought back a keyer and paddles.

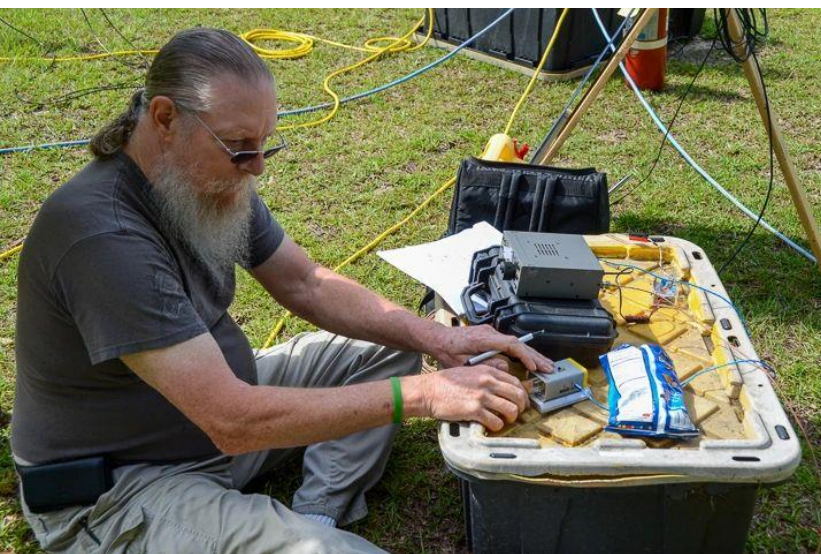
Before the guys came over to the code room to test Chuck and I played with the keyer and somehow Chuck timed me as I sent the code and got me to a rhythm where I was at five words per minute. After the guys who were testing finished their written tests they came over to the code room and we manually sent the code and it worked. Another time our cassette player bit the dust right before we were going to begin the test. I am not sure if it was Chuck or Van that came up with the idea but someone asked if anyone had a cassette player in their vehicle. Of course I think we all did but Van had a minivan so we all piled into it and that is where we administered the code test that day. Good times and great memories.

Chuck enjoyed Hamfests like the rest of us did. All those times at Charlotte, Raleigh, Shelby, Benson, and at our own Swapfest and others were great times.

I attended four Hamfests before I received my license. The first Hamfest I attended was Raleigh and I thought I had died and gone to heaven with rows and rows of neat stuff. If you were at a Hamfest and needed information Chuck was one of our main go to guys for technical advice. If you told him what you were looking for or what you thought you needed to make something work he had the answer.

One of Chuck's passions was QRP operation and his enthusiasm for this facet of our hobby sure was contagious. A number of us became involved in QRP and portable operating with his guidance. Chuck, Van, and Bob WA4WHV were operating portable from parks long before parks became the cool thing to do. I was able to join them on one outing in between retiring from local and before going to work for the feds. What a great time we had at Raven Rock State Park and the lunch that followed.

In addition to Field Day our other operating event is the North Carolina QSO Party. This event lasts ten hours instead of twenty-four like Field Day and this event was right in Chuck's wheelhouse. Those last two hours of the QSO party when 80 meters opened up was when it was Chuck's time to shine. When we first started participating in this event Chuck and I would alternate who would operate at the end and get the most contacts



that last hour. It was close but the CW master was in his element and he usually had more. We won the North Carolina QSO Party every year in our category and all those CW contacts Chuck made contributed heavily to our success.

Once I obtained my hf privileges your first right of passage in those days was to get on ten meters and collect Ten-Ten numbers so you could be issued your own number. Once you had your number you joined the Possum Trot Chapter of Ten-Ten International and you participated in the contests. These were big events for the club and still are but back then we really had a much larger turnout. There was one contest where I had 52 locals in my log. It sure would be nice to see that again. Chuck placed first place in the world on more than one occasion in the Ten-Ten CW contests and was consistently in the top five worldwide. I managed to place first one time but my records do not hold a candle to Chuck's accomplishments both in the CW and SSB contests. I will miss seeing that 37776 in my Ten-Ten contest log.

One of Chuck's greatest assets was the ability to teach and educate all things related to amateur radio. Amateur radio was his passion, especially CW, as we all know. Chuck was always there for the amateur radio demonstrations to youth groups and the Boy Scout events. I had the privilege of working with Chuck at one of those events at Methodist University just a few months prior to the COVID-19 shutdown. Those kids were captivated by Chuck as he explained the code to them as he let them try to send their name in code.

For over twenty years Chuck served as Secretary/Treasurer for the Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society. As Bob will attest the books were always in pristine shape on each audit. It took two signatures on the checks to pay the club's bills.



Front Row (L to R) – W4EHF, Bill Finch; KU4W, Bill Kelchner; KB4WC, Bill Freeman; N4EWG, Kelly Kanode; N4LBB, Perry Brock
Back Row (L to R) – KJ4RV, Chuck Ward; K4MN, Graham Harrison; N4ERM, Burt “Van” VanderClute; KB4IH, Joe Parker; WB4WZH, Art Donneson; N4GYX, Octavius Iglesias; KK4UZ, Bob McElligott

My signature was the second one. There were many days where Chuck came by work and I would sign the checks as needed. There were also times when I would stop by Chuck’s house when I was out for lunch and sign the checks as well. Chuck would meet me outside with the checkbook and Benji would follow him outside.

There were many days when I would go to lunch out on Bragg Boulevard and I would call Chuck on the repeater and tell him I was passing by his backyard. Chuck and I collaborated on maintaining the CFARS membership roster and keeping it current as I am the Membership Chairman and contact person for the club.

I apologize for this lengthy article but there aren’t enough words to express how much we will miss our friend KJ4RV. Within eighteen months we have lost two of the cornerstones of our club with the loss of Chuck and Bill KU4W. They are irreplaceable. Y’all that know me know I can get long winded when I do newsletter articles but this one will never be long enough to adequately do justice to celebrating the life of our good friend Chuck KJ4RV so I will end with this. I have enjoyed 30 years in amateur radio and I am glad I had KJ4RV along with me for the ride teaching, guiding, giving advice, and being a friend to all.

30 yrs tnx Chuck es 73 de ki4w ... _._

I’ve only known Chuck since I got my license in 2015. He taught me a lot but there’s one thing that I’ll miss hearing every night on the net.

“ That’s my story and I’m stickin’ to it. This is Kaaay J4RV smilin’ at ya. I’ll be listenin’ . “

I know he will be..... George (KM4ODS)