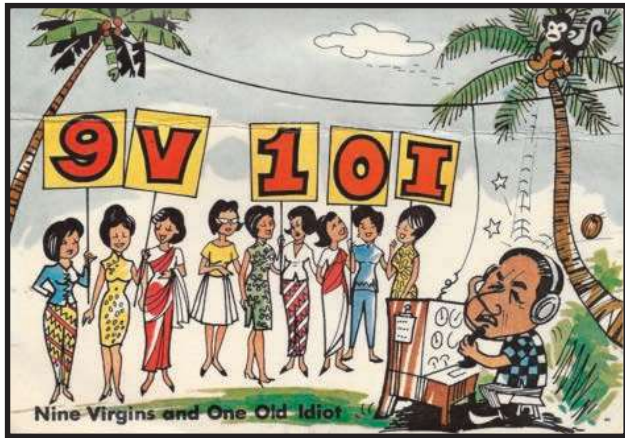


Meet Lew Holt, W7AAI (Continued from March 2021 eJournal)

Some time after I got my novice license, I made the big plunge to buy a commercial transmitter.

The DX-35 and my new conditional license opened up a whole new world with ham radio. Instead of being crystal controlled I used a VFO with the DX-35, which allowed me to zero beat a station to be on his frequency. Because I lived over 150 miles from the FCC office in Portland, I was allowed to take the conditional CW and written test in North Bend, given by two licensed hams. Ernie Ellis and Nate Olson witnessed me taking the test. The license was called a "conditional" license. I was not satisfied with the conditional so several years later I went to Portland to take the test at the FCC office. Passing the test there, I now had a general license, no more privileges over the conditional license, just the pride of having a general license. Then the years that followed, I passed a tougher exam for the Advanced license, and the 20 wpm and yet a tougher test for an Extra Class license. Now I had gone from a novice to the Conditional, General, Advanced and Extra Class license.



Over the years as I upgraded my station from AM to SSB, I worked CW and RTTY, higher power, better receivers and my many ham radio experiences expanded.

I went through several years of working all states and working many DX stations. I have over 100 different countries confirmed with QSL cards.

My favorite QSL card I received was actually from a neighbor who was a civilian in Viet Nam or in that region – 9V1OI. (Nine Virgins One Old Idiot) I worked him one time from my car when I was parked in my driveway – a very rare DX contact with many stations waiting to contact him. We chatted (I had been his daughter's teacher) talking about old times. The pile up wanting to work this rare call was deep.

I had a transmitter and receiver in my car, worked all continents, even from my mobile. I went from ARC 5s powered by dynamotors to SSB gear. Along came MARS – Military Affiliated Radio Service – operating on military frequencies out of the ham bands. I passed a lot of traffic during the Viet Nam war. I received my share of military surplus radio gear "for free." A great motivator such as this generator.

Along came two meters, good for local hamming, except for repeaters high on top of mountains that we could use to send our signal all over Oregon. My son Steve at OSU at Corvallis surprised me when he got his tech license, which gave him 2 meters privileges. We talked almost every evening going through the repeater at the 4000-foot level on top of Mary's Peak, which was near by him. But now years later, we write every evening on email.



I had a 2-meter repeater in my shack with a 60 ft pole in the back yard for the antenna. The repeater allowed us easy contact around the Coos Bay area.

At Christmas times I would drape many lights from the top of the 60-foot pole extending out to maybe 60 feet across at the bottom in an inverted V. In the back of my picture, it shows across the dip to the Sherman Ave, which gave a good view of the lights. Many cars would stop to look or drive closer. They had never seen the pole before so couldn't imagine how the lights were suspended.

One time when I was at the top of my 60-foot pole working on my Tri-band beam, I heard an airplane sound that was different. I looked to the north out across the bay. I saw a B-17 followed by a P-51 fighter behind it. I hurried



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