

Mr. Don Zaines  
Assistant news editor  
News-Journal  
Wilmington, Delaware,

4/15/96

Dear Mr. Zaines,

My sister who still lives in Wilmington sent me the Talk of the Town column reporting that you made the cover of I take QST. It carried me way back, to probably before you were born, when I was a ham, on the News, and delivered what got that year's Pulitzer to the Journal whose city editor sold it to the Bulletin-which got the Pulitzer.

And I doubt he got paid.

I know he left the Journal, as I recall almost as soon as the Pulitzers were announced.

I'm 83 now, in impaired health, an expert on a controversial subject and I'm spending every minute I can trying to perfect the record for our history but I'll enjoy recalling what I can now recall of that business of more than 60 years ago and perhaps you and some of the others at the paper might.

I covered Newark, the University and filled in in Wilmington.

Don Hutchinson, who I understand is still alive, was the copy boy then. The City editor (who had no assistant), Carl Wise, called me "son" to distinguish me from "boy!" then the call for copy boys.

(Please excuse my typing. It cannot be any better.)

In about 1932 or 3 a hurricane hit the entire east coast. All communications south of Wilmington were cut. As were all the fingers of my right hand, all sticthed up and ~~rising~~ rigid.

With neither Wise nor the then managing editor, Charlie Gray, due at work for hours I started covering the storm as best I could with Ham friends. I did not get to bed for several days. I began with Howard Layton, W3AIS, a chiropodist as they were then called. His shack was in the back room of their three-story storey house in the 800 block of Washington street as I now recall. Howard's mother, with whom he practised, could take care of all the patients who braved that weather so he and I spent some hours with more QRM than you can imagine. He picked up odds and ends of stuff. Even a message from NAA, in Arlington, giving us both temporary "avy commission". I remember he gave me some messages to read to the Philadelphia Navy Yard by phone.

Then ~~he~~ he started getting something that caused him to <sup>give</sup> be a signal to be alert. He started passing me sheets of paper with many gaps in them. It was a dramatic account of the storm on the lower eastern shore, as I recall from a Berlin ham. It was by the papers' Salisbury correspondent whose name I remember as "ruit or Pruitt. I filled in the gaps as best I could and when Howard had it all while he sought other signals I phoned the <sup>Journal</sup> News. Both papers were then on the second floor of the Orange

Street building, the News toward the back, the Journal in the front.

Harris Samoniski was then the city editor. He copied Ben Hecht and Charlie McCarthy's novel as best he could. When he got the drift of what I was reading he put a steno on the line and I read it all to her.

I was baffled the next day when I did not see it in that evening's Journal.

That next day the weather had eased up a bit so I went into the office and told Gray and Wise about the story I'd phoned to Samoniski that was not in the paper.

They soon learned why and did not tell me. I was a kid and I suppose they did not want to disillusion me.

I learned when that years Pulitzers were announced.

It turned out that Truitt or Pruitt was also a correspondent for the Bulletin and it and he got that Pulitzer.

That the Journal would have had, and should have.

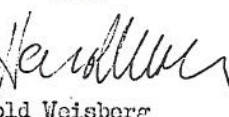
Gray wrote a piece about it, as I recall rather subdued. As I recall it was two columns and at the bottom of the page. I should have kept it but I didn't.

Financially, as I recall, Samoniski was better off after getting fired. He went to work for Ivy Lee in New York.

I doubt that Hutchinson has any reason to remember that. The only other one on the staff who is likely to be alive and might remember it was Clarence Brown.

Don was involved in a Charlie Gray exploit to cover up the appearance before a then important and sensational Senate investigation, of munitions, of the papers' then owner, Pierre du Pont. Charlie, misusing Don, made up a sensation that enabled him to "cover" Pierre's appearance in about a stick. <sup>It</sup> said virtually that Mr. du Pont had appeared before the committee and given it the benefit of his wide knowledge, experience and wisdom.

That was not a reflection of the questions and answers!

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 Harold Weisberg

# TALK <sup>3/20/05</sup> OF THE TOWN <sup>NT</sup>

A roundup of neighborhood  
highlights and sidelights

## FRIENDS & FAMILY

### Broadcast news

You say you missed this month's issue of Amateur Radio magazine? Then you also missed Holly Oak resident Jon Zaimes, who was featured on its cover.

For Zaimes, an assistant news editor at The News Journal, appearing on the cover of the 50,000-circulation national magazine was the latest in a list of radio kudos.

"I usually place in the top 10 in national amateur radio competitions," the Hilltop Manor resident said of his 31-year hobby. "And I've participated in several international competitions."

Zaimes said competition scores are based on the number of exchanges and locales of connections radio operators make via Morse code and voice link. He's made connections — and friendships — with fellow ham operators from London and Brazil.

"It's a fun hobby," he said. "There's nothing quite like it. Even with the advent of computers and the Internet, ham radio is unique."

"In fact, many of the younger ham buffs got their beginnings in the hobby through computers. We don't look at it as competition — just another technical hobby."

Quick News