



PVRC Newsletter

September 2014

President's Letter – Ken KE3X

Well, the kids are back to school and summer is over - that sure went by fast. The official 'End of Summer' event for our club, the Fowlfest, took place Sunday at W3NRJ's - thanks to Jim for another delicious event!

I also hope everyone used this summer to do some station upgrades in advance of the Fall Contest Season. In my case, I upgraded both HF radios: gone are the old matching pair of FT-1000MP's, replaced by a FTdx5000 and a FT-1000MP Mark V. The old A-3 tribander made way for a C-3SS, and the DX Doubler has been properly configured (finally) for PTT mode and headphone mixing at a touch of the 'tilde' key. Do you have a recent station upgrade to talk about? Write it up, and send to K3TN for inclusion in the October newsletter.

NAQP Challenge In The Books

It was great to see all the new participants in NAQP events across this year. Now all 6 events are in the books, and we await the results pending 'Preliminary Scores' posted to the NCJ website and the calculations by NCCC. Regardless of the outcome, I was very proud of PVRC's strong showing, and I hope the experience we all gained across NAQP will be put to good use in SWEEPSTAKES soon!

Have You Hugged a Trustee Recently?

While their work goes largely unnoticed, I would like to personally thank all nine of our Trustees for their help in guiding the Club over the last 8 months. As an incoming President learning the ropes this year, I have benefited much from their wisdom, particularly around discussions of 5-Meg program and our tax status. Our Trustees represent literally hundreds of cumulative years of

club history and span across our Chapters.

Our Trustees are:

- **Ty Stewart, K3MM** (Northwest - MD)
- **Don Lynch, W4ZYT** (Tidewater - VA)
- **Guy Olinger, K2AV** (North Carolina East - NC)
- **Pete Smith, N4ZR** (Northwest - WV)
- **Brian McGinness, N3OC** (Central - MD)
- **Don Daso, K4ZA** (North Carolina West - NC)
- **Jim Nitzberg, WX3B** (Northwest - MD)
- **Tom Gregory, N4NW** (Rappahannock - VA)
- **Joe Palsa, K3WRY** (Central Virginia - VA)

Special thanks also go to our Treasurer, Bill N3RR who has been busily organizing tax documents and preparing our 2014 Financial Summary for distribution to membership. Next time you see these gentlemen, take a moment and tell them 'Thanks' for all they do.

Recruiting Ahead of Sweepstakes

I am happy to report we have welcomed 20 new PVRC members so far in 2014. We will need every one of these 'new recruits' if we want to retain our Sweepstakes crown again! Traditionally in the Fall we begin our final membership drive, so I would ask "Who do **you** know who might like contesting?" How about inviting them to a Chapter meeting in September and October, to get them on board before Sweepstakes?

What's Your Next Challenge?

Finally, I would ask everyone: "What's Your Next Challenge?" As one who gets bored easily, I feel the need to create new goals each year to keep my interest up in contesting. Last year I experimented for the first time ever with RTTY, QRP and WRTC - each of which all greatly increased my enjoyment of radiosport in a different way. Now, as Fall contest season approaches, I am asking: What's next? DXpedition? Single band entry? 24-Hour Classic? Which records are within reach, in what could be the last year of excellent propagation in this cycle? So what's YOUR next challenge going to be?

See you in the pileups ... and Go PVRC!

Ken KE3X

PVRC Officers:

President: KE3X Ken Low
Vice President: K8GU Ethan Miller
Vice President: W3LL Bud Governale
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W3GRF, W4AAV, W4KFC, N0FFZ, W4LUE, W7YS, VP2VI/W0DX, W3IKN, W4KFT

PVRC Website: <http://www.pvrc.org>

WRTC 2014: Radiosport Through a Fire Hose – Nate N4YDU

After contemplating to go all out to qualify for WRTC 2010 and ultimately not putting in the needed effort, I decided to go for it for WRTC 2014.

After getting in as an alternate in March, I was brimming with enthusiasm about competing against so many fantastic radiosport standouts. For me becoming a contestant was similar to the moment in the movie Apollo 13 when Tom Hanks was informed he was going on the next mission. The character Hanks played immediately began preparing for the mission. So did I - I could not sleep and was up late in bed reviewing the rules on line with the laptop used to type this story.

I sent an email to my teammate, N3KS (Kam), who was picked by original NA4E Team Leader NN3W (Rich) who stepped away for personal reasons. Kam was quick to respond and we began getting to know each other. Kam was a spectacular teammate and I would operate with him in any event after getting to know him during the WRTC experience. Kam is not only a talented operator, but also great with logistics, funny and really easy to get along with.

As the start of WRTC drew near, Kam and I swapped many ideas on how to tackle the contest. We did a dry run of the event during ARRL Field Day. We didn't spend a lot of time on the radio, but we got everything running and ready to go for WRTC. We had very few problems and we felt confident about our setup.

I drove back to North Carolina after a successful time at Kam's and my brain continued to work in overdrive about how we could maximize our performance during the contest – it was only two weeks away. It's amazing how the brain works – I wasn't even bothered by the traffic heading back from the DC area.

After tying up a few details it was time to settle on the travel plans. We were concerned about how to get our equipment to WRTC HQ. We were set on flying to the event but we weren't too crazy about sending our equipment on the plane – Dan N3ND to the rescue. Dan lives a few miles from me in North Carolina and was already planning on going to WRTC as a spectator. A long story short, Dan transported our equipment to Westborough and the equipment headache was gone.

Kam and I arrived at WRTC HQ on the afternoon of July 8th. The social pileup, and really the true essence of the event in my opinion, began as soon as we got out of the rental car. The pileup never slowed down and the next week would be one of the fastest, interesting, thrilling and memorable of my life.

While I had met many participants at Dayton in the past, there were far more who I had never met face-to-face. Ham Radio operators share a special bond – and that was never more evident to me than at WRTC2014. It's unique to be so comfortable with people you have never met face-to-face. Looking back at photos taken during the event, it's obvious that everyone is exceptionally happy.

Personal stress and excitement reached all-time high levels for me as the event approached. I relaxed quite a bit after venturing to our site (13A) – a cranberry bog. We couldn't have asked for much more – the nearest site was nine tenths of a mile away.

Station interference was minimal and we had no issues with noise – it may have been the quietest place from which I have operated.

We had a fantastic judge – LY7Z (Andy). He had participated in past WRTCs and was a big supporter of our efforts. Andy was gracious enough to even invite Kam and I to his home QTH.



N4YDU, referee LY7Z and N3KS.

Kam quickly got to work on setting up the station when we arrived at the site late Friday morning. Everything was ready to go pretty quickly. Upon firing up the station a K3 failed upon power-up. We had a spare K3 and quickly put it in line. We were suspicious of our triplexer as well. Rather than worrying about it too much we put in our backup (thanks WX3B!). That was about it for equipment issues. Kam was successful in finding an additional backup – all was good again.

Pre-contest testing was a lot of fun. We worked a couple of hundred stations and returned to HQ by 6 pm and later ran into Ken KE3X while picking up groceries for the main event.

I slept well throughout the week but was unable to do so the night before. I was up at 4:30 a.m. and trying to not wake my roommate (CT1BOH). I didn't need sleep at that point – it was game day and adrenaline easily carried me through the contest.

We were elated to receive K1R as our call. It was one of the calls Kam mentioned in conversation as we drove to the site the morning of the contest. We cheered with excitement when Andy handed us the envelope with 15 minutes before the starting bell. We programed our CW messages and we were ready.

I really enjoyed the flying start. Having the radio silenced and jumping in when the clock struck 12Z was quite a thrill. We were off and running. I think I took my first breath 12 minutes into the contest. I specifically remember taking a huge breath at that point. I started to relax and the QSOs were already piling up for team K1R.

In the end, Kam and I finished 20th out of 59 teams and were sixth overall in QSOs. We discussed what we could have done to improve our score and both agreed on our

miscues. But in the end, it was one heck of an experience. The standings were close and a few mults here or there made a huge difference. I want to congratulate fellow PVRC members Scott K0DQ and KE3X for a fantastic effort. They spent a lot of the contest in the top 10.

Eventual winners KL9A and N6MJ are class guys. They are not just incredible ops but also very personable. In the days before the event KL9A mentioned that he and N6MJ may not be able to participate after the 2014 events because family obligations would make it difficult to carve out time to qualify. KL9A said winning was about the only chance they had to return – needless to say it appears they will get an automatic bid to the next event.

Prior to leaving for WRTC, Will AA4NC, who participated in WRTC 1990, told me the social aspect will mean far more to me than the actual operating. AA4NC was right – I have made many new friends.

I must take a moment thank all of the friends, family, PVRC Members (especially PVRC-NC) who helped me with this event. The support was out of this world – it was not unnoticed and I will be forever grateful for it.

My wife commented that she would be happy to have me back after WRTC – I told her I would miss her, too. She made herself a little clearer by saying, “No honey, it will be nice to have Nate back.” I got it. Needless to say my mind was pretty much one-track for the past few months.

If you ever get the opportunity to participate on any level at a future WRTC – I strongly recommend it. It really is like drinking radiosport through a fire hose.

On a final note, the WRTC2014 organizers did an incredible job of organizing such a gigantic event. If anyone is looking for pointers on how to organize such a large function, I recommend contacting those involved with WRTC2014.



WRTC Medal Winners: (1) N6MJ KL9A (2) OM3BH, OM3BI (3) DJ5MW, DL1IAO

On the Ground at WRTC 2014 : Behind the Scenes – Dave K3ZJ

The best part of contesting and amateur radio is the people one meets and the friendships one forms.

As a tender 16-year old almost 5 decades ago I first left the United States for a foreign land. On that trip, and many times since, I experienced unequalled hospitality and generosity from fellow hams. Their open doors greatly enriched my visits to their countries, and later I was pleased to have hams visit me here in the United States – including some of the same hams I first met in their own countries.

So of course I volunteered to help when contesters in New England decided to host hams from all over the world for WRTC 2014. Friendships were renewed there with some that I had only heard on the air for decades, UA9MA and F6BEE prominent among them. I still have pictures of Gennady and his wife with my then year-old son at my mountain shack back in the mountains of West Virginia.

So in Westborough we gathered, individuals among more than 500 hams becoming acquainted and re-acquainted in the context of a great competition. My view was that of an on-the-ground volunteer, trying to make sure everything in my “sector” ran smoothly to help ensure the success of the overall enterprise.

PREPARATIONS

Despite an already over-loaded schedule, in 14 months I managed to make four trips north to New England from my home in Virginia for WRTC. Since I live relatively distant (450 miles/725 km), station set-up and management seemed the most fitting volunteer activity because it did not require my personal presence in New England on a regular basis. All was ready after some conference calls, on-the-site training and testing in May and July of 2013, and an on-site update in May of 2014.

On my trips north I met a wide cross-section of volunteers. Some are contesters whose call signs I hear regularly, and some are not contesters and have call signs I never have heard. But everyone was enthusiastic and went all-in. Together we trained for on-site set-up and antennas. We also provided constant feedback up the chain to an organization that consistently focused on implementing improvements to ensure a good experience by all participants and volunteers.

The final WRTC station sites stretched in an arc west of Boston, from very southern New Hampshire to Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth, just off Cape Cod, Massachusetts. An interactive map of the final station locations is [here](#).

After “basic training” in May of 2013, I returned in July for on-site trials during the IARU contest. There I gained experience pitching the operating tent, setting up the equipment inside the tent, and working with the generator. I also helped the W1KM beam team and learned the set-up details, and during the contest itself helped operate one of the testing stations with N11L and N2MG. But perhaps the most important thing learned was to bring my all-wheel drive van instead of my low-slung Prius! Most sites were in secluded forested areas with access only on narrow and rarely-used access paths.

The focus of the 2013 IARU operating was not scores, but comparative analyses. Every station adhered to a strict schedule. At specific hours we stopped running to switch to a designated band with a specified antenna heading so that special skimmer software could record comparative signal strengths worldwide from all of our locations. This site testing provided several hundreds of thousands of comparative signal reports from various candidate sites and generally validated the HFTA analyses.

This labor-intensive work ensured that all 65 WRTC sites (59 + 6 spares) would be set up identically and on time, and that the stations themselves radiated as equal as possible on all five bands given the hilly terrain in New England. And indeed, throughout WRTC hams from a variety of locations reported the different signals to be of comparable strength. The winning team was at a site down the road from mine at Myles Standish and in the middle of the tight pack based upon the pre-contest HFTA analysis. (See September/October NCJ article by K1CC for a description of the process used to evaluate WRTC sites. A pre-publication description is [here](#).)

THE RUN-UP

Weather immediately before the competition was of great concern. Remnants of Hurricane Arthur dumped 7-8 inches of rain on the Myles Standish sites one week before the competition, and a rare tornado touched down north of Boston just two days before we started erecting antennas.

Nevertheless Greg W1KM ably managed the situation at Myles Standish – spending a significant portion of his Fourth of July weekend overseeing the much-needed brush hogging of many of the Myles Standish sites. WRTC relied greatly on Myles Standish, with 17 of the 59 competition sites located there. Negotiating with Government management to get gates unlocked and mowing done was no mean trick. We were in an environmentally sensitive state forest with lots of oversight and rules – both formal and informal. The short version is that Greg and Tom K1KI successfully navigated through the process and Greg succeeded in overseeing the essential brush hogging so that we could drive into sites and not operate in 3-foot (1-meter) high grass. The tractor had to cut its way into some of the sites, which allowed normal cars to make it through to all the sites on competition weekend. Fortunately the post-storm weather remained beautiful, sunny, and in the high 70's (27 - 28 C) throughout the week and until the day **after** WRTC, so we didn't have to deal with any cars stuck in mud.

By July, I not only had agreed to manage five of the competition sites at Myles Standish during the four days of their existence, but I also had agreed to be trustee for one of the special event authorizations (W1M) and to drive some participants from New York to Massachusetts. On my way from Virginia I stopped long enough on Long Island, New York, to pick up Dusan YU1EA, Luc PY8AZT (two of the WRTC referees) and Gail, K2RED, Managing Editor of CQ Magazine.

ON THE WAY

I don't think Luc, Dusan and Gail will forget the beginning of our drive from New York to Westborough. I have an EZ-Pass (RFID) and am used to paying tolls without stopping, and often at full speed such as on the Dulles Toll Road and NJ Turnpike. The toll plaza leaving Long Island, however, had a barrier and they expect you to come almost to a stop (I guess). So as I headed through it at about 20 mph, it appeared as though the

gate was going to hit the windshield. Of course it went up in time and all was well, but I can imagine that my passengers' first impression might have been "are we going to make it to WRTC safely with this crazy driver?"

Our trip also coincided with the World Cup match between Brazil and Germany. We kept trying to tune in on AM or FM (I don't have Sirius in this van), and when we did find an ESPN AM radio channel, I'm afraid the news was not good for my passenger Luc. We arrived in Westborough before the match was finished, but sadly for Luc it already was over for Brazil.



YU1EA, K3ZJ and PY8AZT at the WRTC HQ hotel

Although I didn't operate during the IARU/WRTC competition itself, I was very busy the next 5 days making sure each site was set up correctly, guarded during the nights, and staffed during the competition itself.

SITE PREPARATIONS

On Wednesday I met up with one of my team, UA9OC, and we visited the 5 sites at Myles Standish that I would be managing. The beam team, under the direction of NN1SS (ex-K1FWE), erected several of the antenna systems on Wednesday and the rest on Thursday. The first site took 5+ hours, but the second was completed in two hours flat! They had it figured out. By Thursday afternoon all five sites were up and running as they should.

I left Plymouth mid-afternoon to see a client near Boston, and ended up at the WRTC barbeque in Westborough and a last night in a soft bed – the next three nights would be camping in a tent at one of the sites, something I hadn't done since my kids were little many years before! The first people I ran into while checking in at WRTC were longtime friends Dave & Barb, W6NL (ex-W6QHS) & K6BL. Dave was central to WRTC 1996 in San Francisco, and at age 77 already had signed up to be a volunteer team driver!

GAME ON

On Thursday morning we had our first and only meeting of the five individual site managers. We did not have a lot of extra hands, and after that meeting each site was constantly manned after antennas were erected to make sure nothing disappeared. Although our five sites were well isolated from the general public campgrounds, hikers and bicyclists occasionally would pass by on the paths and stop to ask about the antennas and tents.

The nearest gas station and store was a 20-minute drive out of the forest on very confusing roads where GPS was wrong as often as right. Many of the roads on GPS were fire trails behind locked gates, adding to confusion in getting from one point to another. The WRTC organizers had visited each site multiple times in the run-up, recorded its exact geographic coordinates, and written detailed driving directions so that each site could be found and to ensure that no two sites were closer than 500 meters to prevent inter-station interference. They also provided signs to mark key turning points. But the need for following the written directions and not GPS was under-appreciated and most, including myself, tried to use GPS at one time or another and got lost.

After set-up was finished Thursday afternoon, site team members erected their own tents and were encouraged to operate from the competition tent to make sure everything was working. There were several reports of malfunctioning antennas at several other sites, but all of ours were tested and found to be in fine shape. Since I was in the market for a prefix better than "N8" for the club station at my WV QTH, I secured WR8TC and we used this call to test the five sites on Thursday evening to make sure the antennas were all operating correctly. Most of us were too tired to spend more than an hour operating, but we could tell from the pile-ups that conditions were great and everything was working. No site had any noise at all, and even on SSB we worked Europe, Asia, and Pacific on the various bands with surprisingly good reports for our 100 watts. All was well.

However, while trying to coordinate bands we found that cell phone signals randomly disappeared. Thankfully most of us had brought 2 meter rigs, because that was our only reliable way to communicate. Cell phones worked one time and not the next. And despite Dave KM3T's best efforts in checking Verizon signal levels at each site for the online automatic score reporting system, many within Myles Standish failed to connect most of the time but the referees were able to get through most of the time by texting scores.

The competitors came out Friday afternoon to set up and test their equipment, and we were able to scrounge up several power converter plugs and cables that were needed to complete installations at my five sites. The competitors returned to the hotel in the early evening for a good night's rest.

Saturday morning all 59 teams made it to their sites and hit the air running at 1200 GMT. The skimmers reported 58 of the 59 almost immediately. The 59th started with both transmitters on SSB and so wasn't picked up until switching one transmitter to CW.

Our site teams' jobs during the competition were to keep the generators running, provide food/drinks to the competitors and referees, keep visitors from bothering the competitors, and generally fix any issue that came up. The teams were busy operating and rarely

emerged from their tents – and I mean maybe once or twice during then entire 24 hours! This was serious “B-I-C”.

My site teams were composed of an eclectic assortment of new and old hams, contesters and non-contesters, campers and non-campers. All of them went beyond what they thought they were signing up for, but kept with it and pulled through. WRTC would not have been successful without them and many others like them that devised solutions on the spot for any issue that popped up. Fortunately at my sites all the issues were small and timely solved.

Running down the list of volunteers at my five sites illustrates the broad array of support for this event from the far corners of the globe:

One volunteer for my site teams travelled all the way from Siberia. UA9OC had just arrived on Tuesday, but was at Myles Standish all day Wednesday in the hot sun helping with antenna work and traveling with me to find each site and erect signs.

Site M was home to N1W (PY2YU & PY2NDX with EA5RS). It was very staffed by K5OT from Texas and N2NC from New Jersey. K5OT stepped in and held down the fort when N2NC, who serves in the military, was deployed out to sea the week before with an uncertain return. N2NC made it in on Saturday and came directly to the site. No problem arose that they didn’t solve.

Site N was home to K1B (W9RE & N5OT with HA6ND). KM1G from MA persevered throughout despite health problems, a real trooper who came through in the pinch. N1MIE from CT helped KM1G man the site Thursday and Friday, bringing probably the best camping equipment at the event – first class tent, shade awning, etc.! Everyone who visited was in awe. He left it behind when he had to return home Friday evening so that KM1G would have comfort, and I dropped the equipment off at his house in CT on my way back to Virginia.

Site O was home to W1V (R9DX & UA9CDV with GM4AFF). KC1ACF and I manned this site. I filled in when a site manager canceled and no other volunteer was available. I wasn’t sure how I was going to juggle responsibilities for all 5 sites while being tied down at one until Wednesday night, when K1KI called with a new volunteer – a brand new ham from one of the local radio clubs. This turned out to be a great addition and exactly what we needed. KC1ACF was very enthusiastic, showed up Thursday morning asking what he could do, and didn’t leave until the last tent came down on Sunday afternoon. I heard him on his cell phone canceling commitments so that he could stay. With no one to spare among the site volunteers, Mark organized the necessary shopping for the food and ice for all five sites that we and the competitors needed throughout the competition, helped as needed at the other four sites, and manned site O with me overnight. Each morning at 5 a.m., and also Saturday evening, I made a run to the nearest coffee shop (a 40-minute round trip) and delivered fresh coffee and bagels to all the competitors and volunteers at the five sites. This took two hours for each run.



R9DX and UA9CDV Operate Through the Night

Site P was home to N1S (LX2A & YO3JR, with KC7V). NX4N and his son Doug flew in from Florida to man this site, and got help from friend Pete, N8PR, also from Florida and a volunteer team driver who arranged to be the driver to this site and help out while the team was there. I'm sure they have some stories!

Site R was home to N1C (IK2NCJ & IK2QEI, with VA2WA). WA1FCN drove from Alabama to attend WRTC and volunteered to man the site from Thursday through Saturday noon, when NI1L took over through to the end. Unfortunately one of the ops became ill early Sunday morning and couldn't continue operating. He was largely recovered later Sunday morning, but some damage to their score obviously had occurred.



K3LR and N2NT observe R9DX and UA9CDV

CONCLUSION

Individual hams joined together collectively to put on one of the best, if not **the** best, WRTCs ever. It was a great effort.

From personal observation, the organizers did an absolutely outstanding job. K1DG must have regularly spent 50-hour weeks on just WRTC, and was ably assisted throughout the multi-year process by K1AR, K5ZD, KM3T, K1KI, K1RX, WC1M, K1TO, N2NT, N6TR and hundreds of other volunteers like myself. Preparations were unbelievably thorough and detailed, headed for the most part by a group of contesters who themselves had competed or otherwise participated in previous WRTCs.

At this time the future of WRTCs is uncertain, with no one having submitted a proposal to host the next one. BCC and aligned clubs in Germany are said to be considering a proposal, and there are a couple of others rumored to be at least mildly interested, but we will have to wait and see. I have suggested that maybe a pan-European effort might more easily rope in the needed talent and resources.

There also is a software game in beta based loosely on WRTC that is intended to entice young gamers into the hobby. Some youngsters at a multi-national youth camp tried it out this summer in Finland under IARU Region 1 and Radio Arcala auspices. I haven't seen an account of the results yet. But maybe the next WRTC will be in the virtual world, who knows?

Concluding Thoughts on the WRTC – Ken KE3X

After returning from WRTC this summer, I wrote a long email to the Reflector to share my initial thoughts. I thought it was important to do a 'brain dump' right away, as a reference point for future learning. For those with PVRC Reflector access, that posting is located [here](#):

In the weeks since the competition ended, there have been a variety of postings on the WRTC reflector about the 'fairness' of the competition relative to the operating sites. In my opinion, some of that commentary was justified while some was just plain 'sour grapes'. Clearly the organizing committee 'Did Their Best' (as we say in Boy Scouts) to ensure all the sites were as similar to each other as possible. Inevitably, however, there were propagation differences between sites, which was measurable through RBN reports afterwards. This is to be expected, as the hills of New England cannot possibly provide a 100% level playing field.



YU1EA operating at WRTC

The truth is that winning WRTC means 'You Were The Best at the WRTC Format That Particular Weekend From The Tent You Got In The Draw'. WRTC is like the 'All Around Competition' in gymnastics. If you have any weaknesses, they will be revealed.

I consider these factors very important:

1. Knowledge of propagation
2. Ability to run CW at high rate with accuracy
3. Ability to hunt multipliers and when to pass them
4. Knowledge of IARU contest strategy / point value
5. Ability to handle the pressure
6. Ability to adapt to conditions (generator noise, QRM from other stations, etc.)
7. Physical stamina (youth has an advantage!)
8. Developing a game plan and sticking to it (the winners checked 10-meters each 15-minute interval for 24 hours)
9. Equal competence at SSB and CW
10. Familiarity with radios and other hardware, to maximize efficiency

I now have my 'homework assignment' for the next few years, including: 1) improve my multiplier-passing and 2) gain more experience with propagation. Whether I ever return to another WRTC, going once was certainly a memorable experience. Kudos to all the organizers!

Membership News – Bud W3LL

PVRC added several new members since the last newsletter. Please welcome:

- Joe N3HEE and Herb W3TM in the Northwest Chapter.
- Dave N3DRL in the Annapolis Chapter

Chapter leaders please remember to complete the [Meeting Attendance Report](#).

Upcoming Contests and Log Due Dates

Contests This Month

- Sept 6 – All Asian SSB
- Sept 7 – NA Sprint CW
- Sep 13 – WAE SSB
- Sept 14 – NA Sprint SSB
- Sept 21 – Scandanavian CW
- Sept 27 – CQ WW RTTY

Logs Due This Month

- Sept 2 – ARRL UHF
- Sept 30 – YO DX

See WA7BNM's [Contest Calendar](#) for more detail and the latest information.

From the PVRC Treasurer – Bill N3RR

PVRC has chosen not to implement an annual Dues requirement. We depend on the generosity of all of our club members to finance our annual budget. In addition, active PVRC members are expected to participate and submit logs for at least two PVRC Club Competition contests per year.

When contemplating your donation to PVRC, each member should consider the benefit you are receiving from PVRC and its many opportunities for your personal growth in our wonderful hobby, then donate accordingly.

Direct donations to PVRC via Credit Card or PayPal may be made by clicking this "Donate" button and clicking the next Donate button that appears on your screen:



The Editor's Last Word – John K3TN

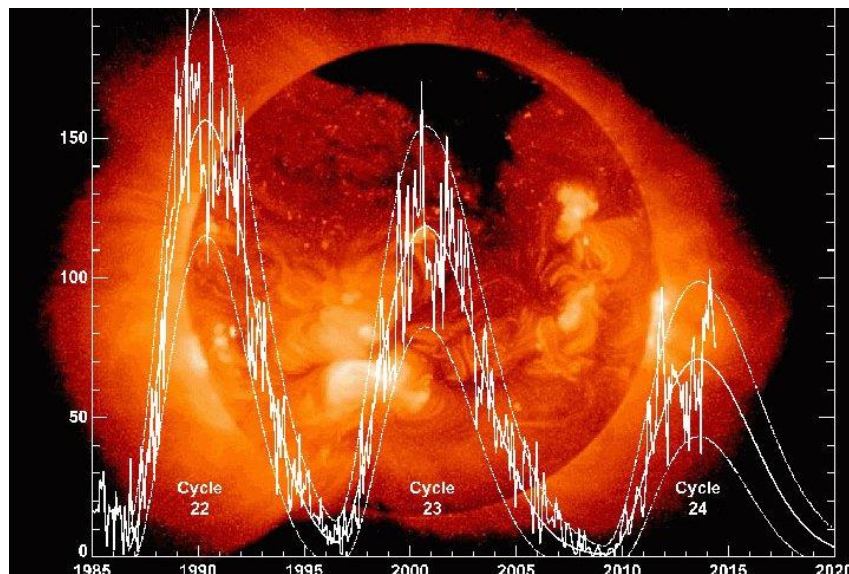
I used the Ohio QSO party as a chance to test out the beta version of N1MM+, the future version of the Logger contest software. It was pretty easy to get it going and configured, and to use it pretty much the same way I used to use the old version, which will forever more be known as *N1MM Classic*. It is still in beta – lots of little bugs and I had the occasional crash. But the impressive N1MM team turned around bugs I noted, and many others, overnight,

There's no real reason to switch away from N1MM Classic but the latest version does get you an expanded Check Partial window, comes with a slashed zero font that I'd always meant to install on my shack PC but never did, and gives you per window font/size/color controls. There are also some "who moved my cheese?" kind of changes, such as the band buttons moving from the Available Mults window to the Entry window.

After trying it out, the change makes sense – keeping the mouse in the entry window as much as possible is a good thing. The callsign box in the Entry window now displays a check mark if the call is found in the Check Partial database – meaning you don't have to look at the Check Call window unless you don't see that check mark. You can tell these are contest-driven changes to contesting-focused software.

Thanks to N4YDU, K3ZJ and KE3X for the great WRTC write-ups. In the October issue we'll have the results of the PVRC On the Air Reunion poll but the major focus will be on the upcoming contest season – have any thoughts/plans or pictures of improvements you made?

Send whatever you can pull together to [jpescatore at aol dot com](mailto:jpescatore@aol.com).



NASA Marshall Space Flight Center – Last 3 Solar Cycles

Eyeball QSO Directions

The latest info on local club meetings and get together will always be sent out on the [PVRC reflector](#) and posted on the PVRC [web site](#).

NW Region: Meetings are generally held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Golden Corral Frederick, MD
5621 Spectrum Dr.
Frederick, MD 21703
PVRC Meets in the BANQUET ROOM
(301) 662-5922

From Interstate 270 south of Frederick, MD
take MD Route 85, "Buckeystown Road" NORTH.
First right on Spectrum Drive.
Restaurant is in a couple of blocks. Most arrive about 6 PM for dinner and informal discussions. The meeting begins at 7:00 PM.

Contact: Jim [WX3B](#)

Central Region: Meets monthly the second Monday of each month, except June, July & August). The location alternates between the below MD and VA locations. Pre-meeting dinners start at 6:00 pm and meetings start at 7:30 pm.

VA LOCATION: Anita's, 521 E. Maple Ave, Vienna, VA. Tel: 703-255-1001. Meets at this location during the months of February, April and October.

Contact: Rich [NN3W](#)

MD LOCATION: Max's Café. 2319 University Blvd W, Wheaton MD 20902. Tel: 301-949-6297 People usually begin arriving at the restaurant around 6:30. Meets at this location during the months of January, March, May, September and November. Contact: Art [K3KU](#)

The Laurel, MD Region: Bill N3XL The PVRC get-together is held at the first [LARC](#) meeting each quarter at the clubhouse.

The Annapolis Crew: Dan K2YWE Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at Broadneck Grill in Annapolis. We gather at about 5:30 PM and order dinner about 6. We break up usually before 8 PM. E-Mail [K2YWE](#) to be put on the e-mail reminder list.

PVRC-NC: The PVRC NC-East chapter meetings are held at [Manchester's Bar and Grill](#) on the 9100 block of Leesville Rd. in North Raleigh, with "QRM" beginning at 6:00pm and the dinner meeting following shortly thereafter. The meeting is held monthly on the 1st Thursday of most months, cancellations or changes usually announced on the [PVRC-NC website](#). [The PVRC NC-West Chapter](#) holds its meetings on the 4th Monday of each month at [the Mellow Mushroom](#), 314 W. 4th St., Winston-Salem, NC. Ragchew at 7:00pm, dinner meeting starts at 7:30pm. All contesters and interested guests are invited!

Central Virginia Contest Club: Ed NW4V Meets the first Tuesday of the month at St. Martins Church, 9000 St. Martin Lane, Richmond VA, (between W. Broad St. and N. Parham Road). Our meeting begins at 7PM.

Over the Hill Bunch: The group meets for lunch at noon alternately in Maryland at the College Park Holiday Hotel Route 1 and the Beltway or in Virginia at the Parkview Marriot near route 50 and the Beltway. Meetings generally are held on the last Wednesday of the month and are subject to change. Meetings are announced by E-Mail. All PVRC members, non-members interested in membership and guests are welcome. For information contact Roger Stephens, K5VRX, 703-658-3991 for Virginia meetings; or Cliff Bedore [W3CB](#) or get on 147.00 for Maryland meetings.

Downtown Lunch Group: Meets on the 3rd Wednesday or Thursday of the month in the downtown area of Washington, DC. Locations occasionally change, but are always Metro accessible. Details are sent out on the PVRC reflector. Feel free to contact Eric W3DQ or Brian WV4V for details and directions.

Southwest VA Chapter: The Southwest VA group meets each Wednesday at about 8:30 AM at Hardees at 20265 Timberlake Road in Lynchburg, VA. This is an informal gathering, but normally has about 10-12 attendees. Contact Mark Sihlanick N2QT, Tel: 434-525-2921

Southern Maryland Chapter: We meet on the last Wednesday of each month at Nicolletti's Pizza located at: 22741 Three Notch Road, California, MD 20619 Phone: 301-863-2233. Check out their menu [here](#).

Talk-in on 145.350 (-) PL-156.7

Meet and Eat 6:30 – 7:30, PVRC meeting afterwards.

Contact the Chapter Chair, Tom Shelton, ND3N at GL1800Winger<at>Verizon<dot>net or (240) 434-3811 with any questions

If you'd like to add or correct a listing, contact K3TN for inclusion in the Newsletter!

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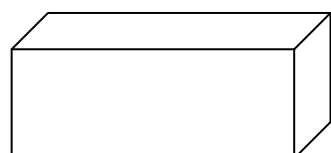
Attention: Contesters

7 Big Problems that are Probably Affecting Your Scores Right Now!

and

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Solve them ALL!



Your Radio

← Mic/PTT cable
RX Audio: L/R cable
From Footswitch →



The RF Connection's
Mike-Link

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Shure BRH440M
Broadcast Headset

Problem #1: Foot Not Near Footswitch, QSO Missed

Solution #1

Use Your Finger Instead!

- Mike-Link finger-touch PTT
- Momentary SPST switch
- Positive tactile feel



Problem #5: Operating CW, you have a "pain in the head" after "Y" hours on-air

Solution #5 - Use Mike-Link

Periodically, Flip the Reverse/Inphase Audio Switch

- Reverses mono audio source for greater listening pleasure



Problem #2: You wear eyeglasses and you have a "pain in the temple" after "X" hours on-air

Problem #3: Brand 'Z' comfortable headset solves problem #2, BUT increases external background noise

Solutions #2 & #3

Use Shure BRM440M
Broadcast Headset

- External background noise isolating
- Closed back—noise isolating
- Gamer-style, circumaural (over-the-ear) ear cup pads



Problem #6: Special microphone is needed for your ICOM radio

Problem #7: External batteries needed when your ICOM-specific headset is used with other radio brands

Solutions #6 & #7

Use Mike-Link & Shure BRM440M

- Built-in, user-selectable, Active ICOM pre-amp
- External power/battery NOT required
- Built-in, user-selectable mic input impedance 2.5K or 10k

Problem #4: "RF in your mic audio OM!"

Solution #4 - Use Mike-Link

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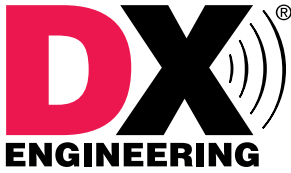
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DX Engineering offers masts perfectly suited to Amateur Radio applications. Available in 2 or 3 inch outside diameters, these [galvanized steel masts](#) have a 1/4" wall thickness for extra rigidity. They are sold in 22' lengths. Despite the large size, ordering and delivery is a hassle-free process, and shipping is only \$109 to the lower 48 states.



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These are perfect for building large Yagi and LPDA antennas, since the clamps' impressive gripping strength will keep your elements from twisting and deforming. The new [narrow Super Duty Saddle Clamps](#) fit tubing from 0.75" to 2.00" O.D. tubing, while the original [wide Super Duty Saddle Clamps](#) fit 2.00" to 3.00" O.D. tubing.

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