



# Potomac Valley Radio Club Newsletter

## Spring 2009 Edition

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### FROM THE PVRC PRESIDENT

#### From DC to Tajikistan to Visalia to Dayton!

What a whirlwind Spring it's been! First, off to Tajikistan, where I was able to operate from EY8MM's QTH for the CQ 160 CW contest. It was off to Visalia, a great gathering. It takes place at one location, and the attendees are exclusively DX and contest types. Check it out some time. It was great to see so many PVRCers at the convention including K0DQ, the banquet speaker on Saturday evening. Scott's presentation was the highlight of the day and included a good natured jab at our west coast friends on behalf of PVRC. Well done OM! I received a number of kudos from the west coast gang on our SS effort but they said to be ready for 2009. We will!

Next up is Dayton. I hope to see you there. Don't forget the Contest Super Suite at the Crowne Plaza. PVRC is sponsoring pizza on Friday night.

This time of the year things tend to be a little slow but we have two events I'd like you to mark on your calendar. The first is WPX CW May 30 & 31. Looking for a little motivation? PVRC has won the club category in North America going back to at least 2005. The club scores before then are not on line. Anyone care to research further back? WPX has something for everyone. If you can, get on, have some fun, and help contribute to the team effort.

The second item is our Reunion the first weekend in June. The rules are being distributed and you will notice we have gone back to the more traditional format. If you can spare some time, get on and help support the event.

That's a wrap for now!

73, Ken K4ZW

### EDITORIAL MUSINGS

Like K4ZW, I too, was in Visalia. For those who haven't been to this annual gathering (2009 was the 60th annual convention), it's very different than Dayton. The attendees are DXers and contesters. There is no flea market. The manufacturer/vendor room is quite small and occupied by those selling to the DXer/contester crowd. Fifteen PVRCers attended this year, and I suspect all of us will be back next year. If you decide to attend, consider taking in the sites in San Francisco or Los Angeles, the easiest and most affordable places to fly into. K9YC, K3NA (see photo inside this issue), and I took a tour of Alcatraz Island the day before the convention and the Point Reyes and Bolinas receive and transmitting sites for the now-closed KPH point-to-point wireless facilities on the way home. These sites are being restored by the Maritime Radio Historical Society <http://www.radiomarine.org/index.html>. For the curious, the YL operator in the YouTube video that W3LPL introduced us to via the PVRC reflector, is Denise Stoops, KI6BBR, a member of MRHS and a veteran of 17 -years as a telegrapher at KPH — and the Coast Guard before that). <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=mXrpkU7CCI>

As the 2008-2009 contest season comes to a close, take the time to connect with your fellow PVRCers and start planning your station upgrades and improvements for next season. It's never too late to start planning. And when you do, consider putting together work parties for your projects and those of your neighbors. The expertise and abilities in the PVRC extends far beyond operating. Take advantage of that expertise and camaraderie!

See you in the pileups! 73, Eric W3DQ

## **RARE WEAK SPOT IN ALPHA 99 AMP**

**(87 and 91B , Too?)** from Ben, N3UM

Padder Cap for 160 Meters in Plate Tank  
Shorts Out, Spouts Soot!

My Alpha 99 amp has been very reliable in 8 years of hard contesting use, pumping out 1500.0 watts hour after hour with no sign of strain or tuning drift and no trouble (except for an early problem with high-voltage divider resistors, which did not affect RF output but only the front-panel HV metering display.)

Late on the first night of the recent CQ WW CW contest I made 16 QSOs on 160 m and picked up 16 mults, no problem.

I tried to do the same thing late on the second night. But, when I did a full-power tuneup on 160 m for a few seconds there was the sickening smell of overheated plastic or circuit board material which every ham dreads, and then BANG - protective shutdown. Checked switch settings, reduced drive, no hope: instant protective shutdown every time the amp was keyed.

I quickly found out that the amp worked fine on 80 m and 20 m. So, I went to bed and finished the contest Sunday using every band but 160 m with no problem. Sunday evening after the CQ WW CW ended, I took the top cover off the amp and soon discovered a spot of black soot about the size of a quarter on the inside bottom of the chassis pan, and just above it a ceramic disc capacitor with a little black 1/16 inch hole in it from which the essential internal smoke had clearly escaped. A multimeter revealed it had turned into a 500 ohm resistor. To my great relief, this component was nowhere near a circuit board or anything else it could have scorched.

Fig. 6 in the Alpha 99 manual, "RF and Power Supply Schematic", shows that the bad cap was one of five 75 pf 6 KV padders strapped in parallel, the total of 375 pf being switched in parallel with the plate tank circuit on 160 meters only. These are designated C26, C27, C28, C29, and C30 on the schematic. Since the HV DC is blocked from the tank by a coupling capacitor, the 6 KV voltage rating should have been more than adequate.

My Alpha 99 was shipped in the spring of 2000. The ceramic disc capacitor which failed, one of 5 identical units, is just under 3/4 inch diameter and about 1/8 inch thick, coated in bright orange plastic, and marked "Cera-Mite 75K U2J 6 KV".

Though I have not checked schematics or looked inside the cover of an Alpha 91B or Alpha 87, I was long ago told that the core RF circuitry in these amps is basically the same as in my Alpha 99. So, I urge any of you with any of these three good popular amps you use on 160 m to check whether they have these padder capacitors, and if so to replace them before the next contest or other operation using 160 m.

I called Alpha Radio Products in Boulder, CO at 303 473 9232 Monday soon after they opened at 0800 MST. They could not possibly have been more helpful or courteous. Anthony answered the phone, said "you need to talk to a technician", and turned me over to Glen.

Glen said "Yep - those orange caps do give out after several years. We have better ones available now - they've been in use for about a year and have given no problems." They charged \$30 for a complete assembly of 5 caps, soldered neatly in a row between an angle bracket and a thin silver-plated flexible strap, plus \$27 for 2nd day air via UPS.

So, on Wednesday afternoon I got the new assembly (caps are bright blue, slightly thicker than the unreliable orange ones, and 18 KV rated). The assembly fastens down with two 6-32 screws and the strap solders easily to the bandswitch terminal. Anyone with reasonable technician skills and a bit of patience to work with extra-long-nose pliers or big tweezers in the crowded space under the bandswitch can do the change. Much easier than working on any recent circuit board!

Glen said Alpha has plenty of the capacitors in stock, but do not always have them soldered neatly into the assembly of 5 in parallel. I was lucky: they had an assembly in stock. If they don't, they will ship you the separate caps and you can solder up the assembly pretty easily, or they can make you an assembly in a few days.

My amp worked fine as soon as I powered it up after the fix, and banged away at the legal limit for 15 hours in the ARRL 160 m contest last weekend with no sign of tuning drift or stress, as I have come to expect.

### *Mark Your Calendar*

May 29-30	CQ WW CW WPX Contest
June 20 (Saturday)	W3LPL Open House
June 27-28	ARRL Field Day

## OLDEST PVRC MEMBER? from Bill, W3AZ

I noticed a little while back there was quite a long discussion on the oldest member in PVRC. The discussions seemed to deal with those that were still with us.

If you include those that are SK, Leo Young, W3WV, who joined PVRC in the 1950s and is the father of Dick Young, W3PZW, is by far the oldest in age and first in license.

Leo was born on January 12, 1891. He told me that he had a station on the air in 1909. Later the government was getting after the guys, who didn't have a license, and he got a license in 1912. For those, who don't know Leo, he played a very important role in the discovery and development of the navy's radar.

## PVRC WEBINARS! from Ken, K4ZW

Starting next month we are going to begin hosting "Webinars", Internet conferences with topics geared towards contesting. The events will be free and open to the entire contest community.

I think this is a great way for the club to promote our sport and support the contest community at large. We can also hold closed conferences, for example SS strategy gatherings later this fall.

The plan is to hold one Webinar per month but with a wide host of topics available, we may decide to increase the frequency. We'll start out with month to month service but I expect this to be a big hit so at some point we may switch to a yearly package, which will also bring down the cost. Here is a look at some of the early presentations we are working on:

- Introduction RTTY Contesting by K4GMH
- Choosing Your First Tower by K4ZA & W2GD
- Long Term Antenna Reliability by W3LPL
- Contest Antennas by N6BV

More details will follow but I wanted to give members a heads up prior to the formal announcement.

*To which Dick, WN3R replied:*

*"I doubt anyone would be interested, but I could do the flip side of Franks' topic: Mine would be **SHORT Term Antenna Reliability (and rotors too) or How To Really Over-spend On Towers and Antennas.***

*Unfortunately, I'm experienced in both. Perhaps, I'll be a real expert after I spend a few more kilobucks.*

## GREAT FREE USMC RADIO OPERATOR REFERENCE MANUAL from Rob, ND3A

*[Originally from Dennis N6KI]*

This information was posted on a Ham Radio message board and may be of interest to those who enjoy the art of electronics:

The PDF version of the USMC Field Antenna Handbook is at URL:  
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/299766/USMC-Field-Antenna-Handbook>)

and also, the Marines Radio Operator's Handbook at URL:  
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/12930898/Marines-Radio-Operators-Handbook>).

Suggestion for active duty members: Do not be seen standing next to the guy who is reading this when you are on a patrol; he and the platoon leader are bullet magnets.

When these items printed they are cumbersome since they both are over 150 pages (single-sided).

These items are available at the USMC publishing division. They apparently will be happy to send you copies. There is no cost nor are there any shipping charges. The Marine Corps is doing its bit to support ham radio :)

Both the antenna manual and operating manual are excellent publications that explain in comprehensible terms antenna and propagation theory along with other topics of interest.

They would be an excellent addition to any library. They do contain some topics specific to military operations but those are interesting as well. If you're interested in receiving these publications, the contact info is below:

Nikki Jamison  
Headquarters, United States Marine Corps Publishing & Logistics Management Section (ARDE)  
(703) 614-2580/DSN 224-2580 EXT 119  
[nikenge.jamison@usmc.mil](mailto:nikenge.jamison@usmc.mil)

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS W6AXX?

from Cliff, W3CB

I've had several requests for Howard's info, so I called and he said it was OK to post here.

Howard Leake  
5922 E. Dodge St  
Mesa, AZ 85205  
480-854-1271



**What does your antenna system look like?  
(this is from Jerusalem, Israel)**

**NOAA: MILD SOLAR STORM SEASON  
PREDICTED**

May 8, 2009

Although its peak is still four years away, a new active period of Earth-threatening solar storms will be the weakest since 1928, predicts an international panel of experts led by NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center and funded by NASA. Despite the prediction, Earth is still vulnerable to a severe solar storm.



Solar storms are eruptions of energy and matter that escape from the sun and may head toward Earth, where even a weak storm can damage satellites and power grids, disrupting communications, the electric power supply and GPS. A single strong blast of "solar wind"

can threaten national security, transportation, financial services and other essential functions.

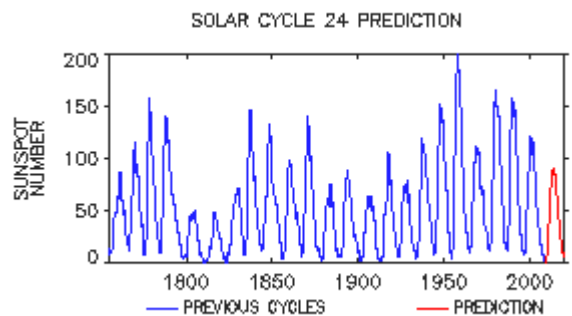
The panel predicts the upcoming Solar Cycle 24 will peak in May 2013 with 90 sunspots per day on average. If the prediction proves true, Solar Cycle 24 will be the weakest cycle since number 16, which peaked at 78 daily sunspots in 1928, and ninth weakest since the 1750s, when numbered cycles began.

The most common measure of a solar cycle's intensity is the number of sunspots—Earth-sized blotches on the sun marking areas of heightened magnetic activity. The more sunspots there are, the more likely it is that solar storms will occur, but a major storm can occur at any time.

"As with hurricanes, whether a cycle is active or weak refers to the number of storms, but everyone needs to remember it only takes one powerful storm to cause huge problems," said NOAA scientist Doug Biesecker, who chairs the panel. "The strongest solar storm on record occurred in 1859 during another below-average cycle."

The 1859 storm shorted out telegraph wires, causing fires in North America and Europe, sent readings of Earth's magnetic field soaring, and produced northern lights so bright that people read newspapers by their light.

A recent report by the National Academy of Sciences found that if a storm that severe occurred today, it could cause \$1-2 trillion in damages the first year and require four to 10 years for recovery, compared to \$80-125 billion that resulted from Hurricane Katrina.



The panel also predicted that the lowest sunspot number between cycles — or solar minimum — occurred in December 2008, marking the end of Cycle 23 and the start of Cycle 24. If the December prediction holds up, at 12 years and seven months Solar Cycle 23 will be the longest since 1823 and the third longest since 1755. Solar cycles span 11 years on average, from minimum to minimum.



## NOAA: MILD SOLAR STORM (cont.)

An unusually long, deep lull in sunspots led the panel to revise its 2007 prediction that the next cycle of solar storms would start in March 2008 and peak in late 2011 or mid-2012. The persistence of a quiet sun also led the panel to a consensus that the next cycle will be "moderately weak."

NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC) is the nation's first alert of solar activity and its effects on Earth. The Center's space weather experts issue outlooks for the next 11-year solar cycle and warn of storms occurring on the Sun that could impact Earth. SWPC is also the world warning agency for the International Space Environment Service, a consortium of 12 member nations.

As the world economy becomes more reliant on satellite-based communications and inter-linked power grids, interest in solar activity has grown dramatically. In 2008 alone, SWPC acquired 1,700 new subscription customers for warnings, alerts, reports, and other products. Among the new customers are emergency managers, airlines, state transportation departments, oil companies, and nuclear power stations. SWPC's customers reside in 150 countries.

"Our customer growth reflects today's reality that all sectors of society are highly dependent on advanced, space-based technologies," said SWPC director Tom Bogdan. "Today every hiccup from the sun aimed at Earth has potential consequences."

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources.

## SOME INTERSTING PAGES FROM THE INTERNET

From Frank, W3LPL: "Have you ever installed a new antenna on your AB-105 tower at temperatures below zero degrees Fahrenheit (-20 C = -4 F)? I haven't!"

<http://www.g3txf.com/dxtrip/OX5AA/OX5AA.html>

From Dick, WN3R: "This is a convenient guide to sizing a standby generator and tells you what foods you can keep if you lose power. "

<http://www.costco.com/images/content/misc/pdf/115180.pdf>

From Dan, K2YWE: "N7XM sent me this link to the Novice Historical Society. Take a peek." <http://novice.bappy.com/index.html>

## FLOW TO SPOT FAKE ENGINEERS

Engineering is so trendy these days that everybody wants to be one. The word "engineer" is greatly overused. If there's somebody in your life who you think is trying to pass as an engineer, give him this test to discern the truth.

### Engineer Identification Test

You walk into a room and notice that a picture is hanging crooked. You...

- A. Straighten it.
- B. Ignore it.
- C. Buy a CAD system and spend the next six months designing a solar-powered, self-adjusting picture frame while often stating aloud your belief that the inventor of the nail was a total moron.

The correct answer is "C" but partial credit can be given to anybody who writes "It depends" in the margin of the test or simply blames the whole stupid thing on "Marketing."

### Social Skills

Engineers have different objectives when it comes to social interaction.

"Normal" people expect to accomplish several unrealistic things from social interaction:

- \* Stimulating and thought-provoking conversation
- \* Important social contacts
- \* A feeling of connectedness with other humans

In contrast to "normal" people, engineers have rational objectives for social interactions:

- \* Get it over with as soon as possible.
- \* Avoid getting invited to something unpleasant.
- \* Demonstrate mental superiority and mastery of all subjects.

### Fascination With Gadgets

To the engineer, all matter in the universe can be placed into one of two categories:

- (1) things that need to be fixed, and
- (2) things that will need to be fixed after you've had a few minutes to play with them.

Engineers like to solve problems. If there are no problems handily available, they will create their own problems. Normal people don't understand this concept; they believe that if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

## ANOTHER INTERESTING RADIO USE OF GOOGLE MAPS

[www.heywhatsthat.com](http://www.heywhatsthat.com)

"You hike to the top of a mountain or pull off at a scenic overlook. You see mountains in the distance. Which mountains are they?

**HeyWhatsThat** will tell you, providing a 360° panoramic sketch labeled with the names of the peaks you're looking at. From almost anywhere in the world. Via web, email and mobile phone.

"Our Current Offerings:

The main site computes the horizon and mountain names and other related visualizations, including the surface of the Earth visible from where you're standing (the visibility cloak or viewshed) and the line of sight profile between you and the distant peaks. "

## ABANDONED RADIO SITES

*The following items are from the internet—W3DQ*

Manor Hill  
Stenigot, Lincolnshire  
OS Grid Ref: TF257825  
<<http://tinyurl.com/2a7zr>>

RAF Stenigot was opened in 1940 as an east coast Chain Home radar station.

<<http://www.radarpages.co.uk/mob/ch/chainhome.htm>> Stenigot provided long range early warning for raids from Luftflotte V and the northern elements of Luftflotte II along the approaches to Sheffield and Nottingham and the central midlands.

<http://www.subbrit.org.uk/rsg/sites/s/stenigot/index.html>

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"Near Dixon CA are a few abandoned sites with an old VOA HF station, an AT&T HF marine station and Naval comm station.

I've always thought a bunch of hams should get together and buy unused property and develop it as a "ham friendly" residential subdivision, we'd have monster antennas that we could share already in place.

CC&Rs there could be good thing!!!

[http://www.bobgowa.net/Dixon\\_California\\_HF\\_statio.php](http://www.bobgowa.net/Dixon_California_HF_statio.php)

"I like this one best:

[http://community.livejournal.com/ru\\_abandoned/601785.html](http://community.livejournal.com/ru_abandoned/601785.html) (in Russian)

350m high tower. Amazing!

## MY AMATEUR RADIO EXPERIENCE IN THE 1930s

from Jim, W5CPB

I'm now outside the PVRC circle, but I do enjoy the Newsletter.

What inspired me was all the 'when I was a novice' histories on the PVRC repeater that I enjoyed. But all of them had a start after WWII, the 'OT's being in the early '50s. Some aspects of amateur were very different in the old days although things like the fellowship remain the same. And we do not yet have a complete understanding of skywave propagation.

At my home we had an encyclopedia called the "Wonder World" , and it had a section on how to build a wireless station. My best friend, Emmett Simmons, and I thought it would be great to each have a station so we could communicate from his home out in the country to mine in Clarendon TX.

So, around 1930 when I was age 13 we started construction of the wireless stations, with the considerable help of Simmons dad who had a little shop on his farm. The receiver was simple, a coil and capacitor and a galena crystal with cat whisker detector. The transmitter was spark and used an old Model T Ford coil for high voltage. For antennas we had wires as long and high as we could manage.

One station was pretty well finished when we discovered that spark was illegal. On somebody's trip to Amarillo — the big city — they saw a QST (Oct. 1931) and brought it back for us. In it the passing of spark authorization for amateurs was discussed - this terminated the wireless station construction.

This same QST had an article on building a two tube, regenerative detector and audio, receiver which we ordered the parts for and built. We heard what the ham bands sounded like; I think in this first receiver we just wound the 80 m coils; W5PP in Medicine Park OK was one I remember hearing frequently on fone. This look at the HF Band started me on building a series of receivers, going to a TRF stage ahead of the detector, using a metal chassis and panel vice plywood, building a "B eliminator" and getting away from batteries. I did all my soldering in the **MY**

## W5CPB (cont..)

kitchen, heating the iron on a gas stove burner. Hearing hams and Short Wave broadcasts from all over the world really hooked me on skywave radiowave transmission, permanently.

Simmons and I started serious code practice sessions and soon could copy the hams a bit. If you lived in an area remote from any Radio Inspector's visits you could get temporary licenses good for a year by swearing you could copy ten wpm. We asked the Federal Radio Commission (not FCC back then) for these mail order temporary station and operators licenses and got them in 1932, station callsign W5CPB for me and W5CPT for Simmons.

Before a year was up I caught a ride to Dallas, took the exam from a Radio Inspector, and was issued an Amateur First operators license. The Radio Inspector who conducted the exam was a starchy individual who sternly expelled anyone who failed the code and said they could try again in a month. I did get a good looking license just like one for commercial operators. Simmons and I made it this far without any real contact with other hams, so the going was slow and there were lots of mistakes. One I still remember - lost a set of type '30 receiver tubes by getting B voltage on the filaments.

My first transmitter was a '45 tube in a Hartley oscillator circuit, and that was soon followed by a push-pull tuned plate tuned grid oscillator using two '45 tubes. After building a 750 volt power supply the '45s were replaced with 210s. I had only elementary frequency measurement capability so being sure that operation was in the Band was a continuing problem. This was generally solved by listening to the other hams, noting and logging the commercial stations that were near band edges, and always being very conservative. I never got a frequency citation but did get a "pink ticket" from Grand Island for a Rectified AC note. You had to reply explaining the steps taken to correct the problem. I went from a capacitor input power supply filter to a choke input, increased the capacitors, and suffered the resulting lower plate voltage. The availability of cheap quartz crystals that came in the mid 1930s provided a way to know your operating frequency, and crystal control did wonders in cleaning up a rough note. Here are old circuit diagrams of my early transmitter and receiver.

Amateur radio became my major interest outside of school and work. I got into traffic handling and became an ORS, was Local Net Control for an Army Amateur Radio net, and at

age 17 enlisted in the Naval Reserve and was rated a third class Radioman because of my Amateur License.

The Naval Reserve got my attention because my cheap 80 meter crystal happened to be on a Naval Reserve drill frequency. After one of their drills was over I queried one of the stations as to what was going on. The explanation was that a Navy communication drill was going on, and I was invited to come down to Dallas and enlist – which I did.

W5CPB had daily schedules for traffic handling and with the Military messages the BPL was occasionally made. My radio station went through a long series of upgrades winding up with a TX that had an 852 final with 500 watts input.

At that time I was really into high efficiency class C amplifiers: the 852 plate dissipation was rated at 100 Watts. (See picture) Lots of antennas were tried including a V-beam aimed at Europe; the 80 meter halfwave, off center, single wire fed was a favorite for all bands; with this antenna the single wire was clipped on to the amplifier tank coil - no worries about VSWR, just select the turn that gives the right load.

My receivers were all TRFs with regenerative detectors; for band changing plug in coils were used, first made from old tube bases and later nice commercial ones. Regenerative detector receivers were really pretty good as long as the band wasn't crowded; the Navy still used them when we went into WWII..

W5CPB was WAC, A1-Op, and charter member WAS. In addition to weekly on the air drills, Navy training cruises were taken on the USS Leary and the USS Breckenridge, both flush deck four pipe DDs.

Early on contests were an attraction. W5CPB was not able to rank very high in DX



Tests; DX, VK, ZL, and J were easy from Texas with Europe being more of a problem.



## W5CPB (cont.,)

But in the SS I was a more serious competitor, won the North Texas Section (1935) and the South Texas Section (1936 & 1937) being high in the West Gulf Division in 1936. The operation in South Texas was while attending school at Austin. My TX was a Tritet crystal oscillator, followed by a RK20 amp (– see the picture). The SS was quite a bit different from today being more of an endurance test time wise. With most using crystal controlled frequency operation, both running and hunting required extensive tuning up and down the Band.

The SS winner in 1936, W1EZ, did it with 301 QSOs; number 2, W6KFC, had 278!!

In 1938 I shipped over in the USNR as RM1c, no longer slick-armed. After graduation from school in 1939, I went to work for the Petty Geophysical Engineering Company on a seismic reflection prospecting crew, and I could not take my radio along. Then in the summer of 1941 the Navy ordered me to active duty. So there was no W5CPB activity for five years.

## WHEN THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

from Jack, W3TMZ

W6UM had KLM 3 el 40 meter beam that he had taken down some time ago and he gave it to NK6R. Russ came to pick it in his Acura sedan! We both wondered how he was going to manage to transport the antenna. He packaged up the elements in halves, taped them together in a manner such that they would not get damaged.



The boom was 32' long. He went to try to get it apart and the center splice section just broke! Thus now the boom was 16' long. He taped the element bundle to the boom sections. Then added the straps to his car, the front going through the open sunroof and the rear wrapped around his mobile whip mount in the center of the trunk lid.

## WHEN THERE'S A WILL (cont.,)

Behind the bundle he added some foam padding between the car body and the antenna. He then secured the antenna bundle to the jack points under the car so it would ride out away from the car.

He had to travel about 25 miles with this package. He told me that he has moved moderately sized tower sections in a similar manner.

Needless to say, both W6UM and I were impressed. When there is a will there is a way. Amateur radio guys definitely can fit into this group.



*Eric Scace, K3NA, pounding brass (a straight key) at KPH.*

## 1941 Naval Radio School Morse Class

from Frank, W3LPL

Those "good old days" of learning Morse... this video of a Naval Radio School Morse class from 1941 shows how they di-dit back then. (Thanks, Paul VE3HOP):

[http://www.archive.org/details/1941-03-06\\_Big\\_Da-Dit-Da\\_Class\\_Graduated](http://www.archive.org/details/1941-03-06_Big_Da-Dit-Da_Class_Graduated)



## YOU KNOW YOU'RE A HAM...

from Rick, K8VK

The friend who sent this admits to #6. My father and I would have to admit to #25...

1. When you look at a full moon and wonder how much antenna gain you would need.
2. When a friend gets a ride from you and remarks that you have a lot of CBs in your vehicle, it turns in to an hour long rant on how ham radio is not CB radio.
3. When someone asks for directions, you pause, wondering if long or short path would be best.
4. When you can look at a globe and be able to point to your antipode (and you know what an antipode is).
5. Your cell phone ring tone is a Morse code message of some kind.
6. You have accidentally said your Amateur Radio call sign at the end of a telephone conversation.
7. Your favorite vacation spots are always on mountain tops.
8. You notice more antennas than road signs while driving your car.
9. You have driven onto the shoulder of the road while looking at an antenna.
10. Porcupines appear to be fascinated with your car.
11. If you ever tried to figure out the operating frequency of your microwave oven
12. When you look around your bedroom of wall to wall ham gear and ask: Why am I still single?
13. The local city council doesn't like you.
14. You think towers look pretty.
15. Your family doesn't have a clue what to get you for Christmas, even after you tell them.
16. Your HF amplifier puts out more power than the local AM radio station.
17. The wife and kids are away and the first thing that goes through your head is that no one will bother you while you call "CQ Contest" a few hundred times.
18. When you pull into a donut shop and the cops there on their coffee break ask if they can see your radio setup.
19. You refer to your children as your "Harmonics".
20. Your girlfriend or wife asks: "You're going to spend \$XXXX on what???"
21. You actually believe you got a good deal on eBay.
22. When you see a house with a metal roof, and your only thought is what a great ground plane that would be.
23. You have pictures of your radio equipment as wallpaper on your computer's desktop.
24. Every family vacation includes a stop at a Ham radio store.
25. The first question you ask the new car dealer is: "What is the alternator's current output"?
26. You buy a brand new car based on the radio mounting locations and antenna mounting possibilities.
27. You have tapped out Morse code on your car's horn.
28. A lightning storm takes out a new Laptop, Plasma TV, and DVD Recorder, but all you care about is if your radios are okay.
29. Your wife has had to ride in the back seat because you had radio equipment in the front seat.
30. Your wife was excited when you were talking about achieving that critical angle, but very disappointed when you finally did.
31. During a love making session with your wife, you stop to answer a call on the radio.
32. Your wife threatens you with divorce when you tell her that you are going on a "fox" hunt.
33. Talking about male and female connectors makes you feel excited.
34. You dream of big, comfortable, knobs, but not on women.
35. You always park on the top floor of the deck, just in case you might have to wait in the car later.
36. When house hunting, you look for the best room for a radio shack and scan the property for possible tower placement.
37. When house hunting, you give your realtor topographical maps showing local elevations.
38. The real estate agent scratches his head when you ask if the soil conductivity is high, medium, or low.
39. You have Ham radio magazines in the bathroom.
40. When your doorbell rings, you immediately shut down the amplifier.
41. Fermentation never enters your mind when "homebrew" is mentioned.
42. Instead of just saying no, you have said "negative".
43. You have used a person's name to indicate acknowledgement.
44. You become impatient waiting for the latest AES catalog to arrive.

## YOU KNOW YOU'RE A HAM...(con't.)

45. You have found yourself whistling "CQ" using Morse code.
46. You always schedule the third weekend in May for vacation.
47. You walk carefully in your back yard to avoid being close-lined.
48. You have deep anxiety or panic attacks during high winds or heavy ice.
49. You and the FedEx/UPS men are on a first name basis.
50. You really start to miss people that you've never seen.
51. Your exercise machine is a Morse code keyer.
52. You walk through the plumbing section at the hardware store and see antenna parts.
53. Your neighbors thought you were nuts when you ripped up your lawn to bury chicken wire.
54. Your next door neighbor thinks that your wife is a widow.
55. Your wife has delivered meals to your Ham shack.
56. If you sold all your Ham radio equipment, you could pay off your mortgage.



OLD CANS KEEP ME IN STATIC AND WHISPERS,  
ONCE THEIR BAKELITE CAPS BOXED TENDER EARS,  
BUT NOW THEY SMASH UP AGAINST WHITE WHISKERS,  
SAME OLD CANS ON MY MIND FOR YEARS AND YEARS.

AS EVER SO, THIS WORN HARDWARE RESTS LINEASY,  
BUZZING WITH THE NOISE OF NOTHING SPECIAL,  
TILL RATTLED BY HISTORIC SQUAWKS AND SCREAMS.  
WHY WEAR THIS ANTIQUE HEADPRESS, I PUZZLE,  
FROM THE PAST OF PARLORS AND PACHISI,  
WHEN RADIO ROARED THE STUFF OF DREAMS?

## Totally Trivial: Top of the world

by Nick Wood, Total Telecom

### 'Hi, I'm Up A Mountain, Air's A Bit Thin'

Nepal Telecom plans to extend coverage of its mobile network to the summit of Mount Everest, reports *Reuters*.

Until now anyone hoping to make the smug, albeit slightly breathless, phone call to friends and family from the 8,850-metre peak had to use a satellite phone, which is far more expensive.

Now however, Nepal Telecom plans to expand its terrestrial network.

"We are going to set up mobile towers in Thakdin, Manjo, Pheriche, and Gorak Shep, which will bring the summit of Mount Everest within the network coverage," said Anoop Ranjan Bhattarai, director of Nepal Telecom's satellite services wing, in the report.

"A mobile tower at Gorak Shep will provide connectivity to climbers at the top," he commented.

However, thin air at the summit and the need for oxygen masks could make it difficult to hold a decent conversation, and climbers may have to resort to texting instead: "Got 2 top, have frostbite on nose ROFL x"

### Text Record Attempt Ends in \$26K Bill, Sore Thumbs

Two text-happy, and no doubt arthritic, friends were shocked after a text message world record attempt landed one of them with a \$26,000 phone bill.

*AP* reported that Nick Andes, 29, and Doug Klinger, 30, both from Pennsylvania in the U.S., made the most of their unlimited text plans in March by sending a grand total of 217,000 messages between them.

Unfortunately, Andes received an itemised bill for his part of the record attempt.

"It came in a box that cost \$27.55 to send to me," said Andes, in the report. He called T-Mobile, which has since credited his account and is investigating the über bill.

Andes sent more than 140,000 texts, while Klinger sent more than 70,000, giving them a total of 217,000 by the end of the month.

"Most were either short phrases or one word, 'LOL' or 'Hello', things like that," said Andes.

It is not yet known whether or not the text binge will be officially recognised as a Guinness World Record, or if either Andes or Klinger are in regular employment.

# WHERE CAN YOU FIND PVRC MEMBERS?

(as of 5/1/2009)

## **The PVRC NW Region: [Bud W3LL](#)**

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the City Buffet, 1306 W. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD. (301) 360-9666. It's in a small shopping center. Most arrive about 6 PM for dinner and informal discussions. The meeting begins at 7:00 PM.

>From W. Patrick Street, turn up McCain Dr. (the Mountain View Diner is on the corner), then turn right into the shopping center, then turn left and search for a parking place. The City Buffet is tucked back in the left corner of the shopping center behind the Mountain View Diner. You can't see the City Buffet from W. Patrick Street.

## **The Annapolis Crew : [Bob W9GE](#)**

Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at West End Grill in Annapolis. We gather at about 5:30 PM and order dinner about 6. We break up usually before 8 PM. E-Mail [W9GE](#) to be put on the e-mail reminder list.

## **PVRCNC-East : [Will, AA4NC](#).**

Meets on the first Thursday of each month. Details are always available on the web site: <http://www.pvrcnc.org>

## **PVRC-NC/West: [Tom N4IOZ](#)**

"The Winston-Salem Courteous Operators Club" (W4WS) meets on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the "Pure Chrome" establishment, 505 Deacon Blvd. Winston-Salem, NC 27105. It's now a biker bar (we came with the building), so feel free to roar in on your Harley. Info at <http://www.w4ws.org>

## **Gaithersburg Area: [Jeff K3OQ](#)**

Several of us get together, much like the downtown lunch group, about every 4 to 6 weeks and visit various restaurants in the Gaithersburg area.

## **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 [Bill W3AZ](#)**

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 [Bill Leavitt, W3AZ](#) for Maryland meetings.

## **Downtown Lunch Group**

Meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**If you have a group that meets regularly or occasionally, please send details and contact information to [W3DQ](#) for inclusion in the Newsletter!**

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Information regarding the PVRC reflector can be found on the PVRC website: <http://pvrc.org/pvrcfaq.htm>

Note that this is simply the REFLECTOR FAQ pull down under main-page  
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