

# PVRC Newsletter July 2021

**Newsletter Editor:** John K3TN jpescatore@aol.com

Website: http://www.pvrc.org

**Meeting Info:** http://www.pvrc.org/chapters.htm

Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/PotomacValleyRadioClub/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/PotomacValleyRadioClub/</a>

#### President's Letter - Dan K2YWE

#### **Another Contester's Start**

There are several paths a beginning contester may take dictated by inclination, circumstances, and the opportunities presented to them. A common route is to start with a modest home station and build both one's skills and station together over time. The process is accelerated and kept productively on track by having expert advice and guidance along the way. One of the strengths of PVRC is a willingness of the membership to share information and experience to foster such development. We saw the story of Bryan, N3FZ, in last month's Newsletter. Here is another example of how well the process works when it is coupled with a desire for continuous improvement.

Dave W3MAM was licensed in mid-2019 and began his radiosport life with PVRC less than a year later. He started in a severely constrained condo environment with low power and an attic antenna. The antenna was well thought out and installed, but of limited effectiveness due to its location. Dave optimized the antenna and built other options, gaining technical skill and a VNA in the process. His optimized Alpha-Delta was the best he could do.





Still enthusiastic, Dave applied himself with low power SSB, RTTY, and FT8 under the mentorship of K3AJ and steadily contributed scores earned through many BIC hours to PVRC. Dave was hooked on contesting and persevered to contribute over 34K points in various contests over the eight months he operated from his QTH-challenged station. He also participated remotely as part of several K3AJ M/2 and M/S RTTY efforts in the same eight-month period and helped those teams to generate 3.8M points while developing his radiosport skills along the way. Dave understands the value of perseverance as he is also a long-distance cyclist.

W3MAN and his XYL moved to their own property in Queen Anne's County at the end of 2020 and transformed part of an outbuilding to a well thought out radio shack, combining advice from club members on subjects ranging from prime power distribution to operating desk details with his own carpentry and construction expertise.





Following the inside build, Dave and Tom erected an AB-577 topped with a C3SS tribander and VHF J-pole. The new and improved W3MAM was on the air and Dave began to explore and enjoy the potential of his new setup. Dave's abilities and results will grow as he gains experience and continues to benefit from the mentorship of fellow PVRC members. I expect that when the time is right, he will "pass forward" what he has learned in keeping with the same PVRC tradition he benefited from.

W3MAM is traveling the path of building both his skills and station together over time. Another path is the one of guided operation from an established contest station and developing skills before or in the absence of station building. We'll talk about that another time.

#### **PVRC Officers**:

President: K2YWE Dan Zeitlin
Vice President: N4GU Mike Barts
Vice President: AA3S Doug Hart
Secretary: N3QE Tim Shoppa
Treasurer: W3MMM Jay Horman

#### Trustees:

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**PVRC Charter Members (all SK):** 

W3GRF, W4AAV, W4KFC, N0FFZ, W4LUE, W7YS, VP2VI/W0DX, W3IKN, W4KFT

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### PVRC Scholarship Feedback - Dan K2YWE and Frank W3LPL

May 20, 2021 Stephen Chung, KC3ART 7229 Cypress Hill Drive Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Potomac Valley Radio Club c/o Dan Zeitlin, K2YWE, President 1036 Skyview Drive Annapolis, MD 21409

Dear Mr. Zeitlin,

I am honored to be receiving the Potomac Valley Radio Club Scholarship. Thank you for your generous support of my future education.

I first learned about Amateur radio in middle school, where my mentor at an afterschool activity showed me two small radios, and how they worked. I was fascinated by it and ended up earning my Technician License in seventh grade, and my General License the year after that, all before entering high school. Ham radio has opened my eyes to radio science and engineering.

I just finished my junior year at the University of Maryland, College Park majoring in electrical engineering and minoring in computer science. I have interests in microelectronics and signal processing and hope to use my education to design mixed signal electronics for communication applications. This summer, I am also interning at Northrop Grumman.

Thank you again for your generosity and support. With a higher education, I hope that I can teach and inspire others to earn their Amateur radio licenses and further developments in radio and communication technology.

Sincerely,

Stephen Chung, KC3ART

### Frank W3LPL Wins the May 2021 QST Cover Plaque Award

#### From the ARRL:

The winning article for the May 2021 *QST* Cover Plaque award is "What to Expect During the Rising Years of Solar Cycle 25," by Frank Donovan, W3LPL.

The QST Cover Plaque Award — given to the author or authors of the most popular article in each issue — is determined by a vote of ARRL members on the QST Cover Plaque Poll web page.



## PVRC QSL Collection - John N3MN



The latest PVRC Reunion was the reminder to finally put the PVRC cards together and mount them in a frame. Makes a nice addition to the wall.

## **Pipe Antenna Award Submissions**



Here is my homebrew 6m Moxon constructed solely of PVC pipe, wire and hardware. Note the self-supporting tower.  ${\bf Dana~N6DW}$ 

JULY 2021

### **PVRC Wins More Bling – Dan K2YWE**



PVRC won the 2020 PA QSO Party club competition with a total of 520K points! A pat on the back to all members that contributed scores.

The sharp-looking plexiglass club trophy is being awarded to Dave N3XF whose 261K points represented more than half the PVRC total. Well done and congratulations, Dave!

#### WW Digi Added to 5M Program - Dan K2YWE

The <u>WW Digi</u> contest has been added to the PVRC 5M program as of the 2021-2022 season. FTx is growing in popularity and including an FT8/4 contest is in keeping with serving our membership and maintaining PVRC as a leader in the contest community.



WW Digi is a World Wide Radio Operators Foundation (WWROF) and Slovenia Contest Club (SCC) collaboration. The USA Club plaque is sponsored by NCCC. YCCC took first place in 2020. NCCC won in 2019. PVRC finished 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> respectively in those years. WW Digi details may be found here.

### Stripping THHN Insulation - Mike N4CF via PVRC Reflector

This morning I stopped by Main Street Supply in Mineral, VA to buy 25 feet of #12 bare copper wire for my 6M Moxon. But no bare wire -- only THHN-insulated. OK, I said, I'll strip it. Little did I know....

After several attempts that didn't work well, I came up with the jig shown in the photo. It's a scrap piece of 1/2" aluminum (wood would work as well) with a semi-circular notch filed into the corner of a cutout.

I clamped the jig in a vise, laid the wire in the notch, and laid the (new, sharp) blade in a utility knife on the wire, with the back of the blade bucked-up against the jig.

I pulled the wire through the jig, and the insulation peeled right off. Quick and easy, and the blade didn't dig into the wire at all. I stripped 25' of wire in three minutes! You can bet I'll be saving that jig for future projects.



(Editor's note – Steve NR4M suggested an alternative approach: "Tie one end, or both, to something secure, like a small tree, and with the wire taught, you can just walk the length of it, with your box knife, and easily slice the insulation off.")

#### LZ5DB@LZ5R SO2R 2Band Synchronized Interleaved QSOs



LZ5DB makes 100 QSOs in 20 minutes during 2021 CQ WPX CW from LZ5R. Click here or on picture above.

#### Meet the PVRCer - Rick N1RM

Your Call: N1RM

First Year Licensed: 1968

Previous Calls: WN6EJR, WN1KNR, WN9NBW, WD4LBY, KO4F, AI1V, NNN0KVW,

C6ADP

QTH and PVRC Chapter: Reston, VA (shack is in Great Falls, VA)

Purcellville Blue Ridge Chapter







**Favorite Contest and Why:** CW and RTTY Sweepstakes. The smaller playing field is a good match to my still-developing skills. I also do well in Phone, but it makes me tired! As my skills improve, I think the World-Wide contests will be more fun, too. Though it is not really a contest, Field Day holds some great memories for me since it combines station building, getting together with friends and lots of BIC time.

**Least Favorite Contest and Why**: I like them all! I am still working at getting more comfortable in the extremely big ones. I need to build my stamina for any contest that combines a need for headphones and a 48-hour operating period!

**Favorite part of Ham Radio other than contesting**: Working on equipment, working on my station, teaching and making ham radio presentations, experimenting, emergency preparedness drills and public service events.

**Favorite thing to do other than Ham Radio:** I enjoy music: listening to many different genres, singing in a choir, playing piano and guitar. I probably enjoy playing and singing more than anyone that might get stuck hearing me. I also enjoy studying technical subjects on my own and taking on-line courses to try to keep my "academic brain" from fading away. In the summer, my XYL Kris and I can often be found up on Skyline Drive riding our Harleys.

Anything else you'd like to say? I was introduced to contesting (conceptually) at many extremely competitive Field Day efforts with the Loudoun Amateur Radio Group. After that I was really "hooked" by Mike W4RN who was a terrific Elmer and ambassador for PVRC and contesting. I was fortunate enough to be able to operate K4VV before Jack's passing. Another great friend and generous "station host" has been Steve NR4M. Many other PVRC mentors have put up with my continuous stream of questions as I have worked through building and improving my station. I am grateful for their friendship, advice, and generosity.

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#### A 40 Meter Delta Loop Beam – Alan WA3EKL

Shortly after I submitted my article "The Amazing Delta Loop," for publication in the May issue of the <u>newsletter</u> I had another idea. The 40 meter inverted Delta loop or, as I called it, the Point Down triangle produces a 23-degree lobe of vertically polarized radiation. I also pointed out that a dipole or horizontal beam antenna has to be at least 90 feet above ground to produce the same 23-degree lobe of horizontally polarized radiation. This is why my Point Down triangle on 40 meters works as well as my 40 meter beam at 93 feet. It also gives validity to my other statement in the previous article that the ionosphere does not care about what type polarization is hitting it and the polarization of the wave coming back down can be anything and we can effectively copy that polarization.

Thinking about the above, I concluded, why not build 40 meter beams consisting of two or three element Point Down triangles. Where does the "volume" of contacts on 40 meters come from for us here on the east coast during DX contests? Basically, it is from Europe which is east to north east. Where does the "volume" of contacts on 40 meters come from for us on the east coast during domestic contests? Basically, to the west. How could these triangular beams benefit us as contesters?

If you are only interested in 40 meter DX to Europe build a Point Up triangle beam, feed on a corner side bottom, which yields a 20 to 30 degree lobe of vertically polarized radiation. If you build a two-element beam, build a driven element and a director. A director beam gives more gain than a reflector beam and the spacing between the elements is shorter. Hang out in front of the driven element another Point Up triangle and make it a director cut approximately 5% shorter. (Research will help find the ideal length.) If you want more gain, then hang out another Point Up triangle in back of the driven element and cut it to be a reflector spaced .15 wavelengths from the driven element and approximately 5% longer than the driven element. (Research will also help find the ideal length.) Now you have the equivalent of a 3 element horizontal beam at 90 feet. The "hanging points" for your triangles are only at about 50 feet!

**Next configuration:** If you want to only work state side contests then build a Point Down triangle beam. Again, the end support points will only be about 50 high and 50 feet a part. This configuration gives you the broad horizontal lobe for the close in contacts and the lower vertically polarized lobe for the farther out contacts. Again you will have a 2 or 3 element beam equivalent to a horizontal beam at 90 feet but you now have 2 lobes to communicate with not just one lobe if you were using the 90 foot beam.

**Best of all configurations:** Build a three element Point Down triangle beam that is sitting basically east/west. The center element is the driven element. Both outside elements are tuned to be director elements. At the bottom point of the two outer elements hang down a piece of 450 ohm ladder line so that when the bottom of the ladder line is shorted together the director now tunes as a reflector. Connect small 12 volt relays at the top of the ladder line where it is attached to the antenna leads. One relay, with no voltage applied, is normally shorting out the ladder line at the antenna bottom point and that element becomes a director. The other relay, with no power applied, remains open or not shorting out the ladder line and that element remains a reflector. Applying voltage to both relays at once reverses the direction of the beam.

JULY 2021

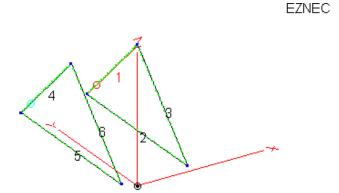
Now you have a two directional beam with a low vertical lobe for DX contests and high and low lobes for domestic contests across the US to the West.

I know someone who built one of these things years ago but is was a five element version. It worked exceptionally well. The exact same concept with relays could be applied to the Point Up triangle beam as well. The outer two elements are tuned as directors. In the center bottom horizontal wire of the two outer triangles, cut them and place an insulator, then hang down the 450 ohm ladder line from the insulators with relays attached to the insulators.

For those who want to build one of these beams here are a few suggestions. A rope between two trees could hold up the two or three Point Up Triangles. Also, a rope between two trees and then another rope, parallel, and between two other trees could hold up the top ends of two or three Point Down triangles.

If you use the insulators that I used in my original article use the formula 1030 / freq in MHz = Length in feet for the driven element triangle. I would use a .12 wavelength spacing between the triangles for a two element director beam. A two element reflector beam normally uses .15 wavelength spacing. The reflector beam gives a better front to back ratio but less forward gain. I fully believe the DX is going to hear "forward gain" not "front to back ratio" that is why I suggest a director beam over a reflector beam. In the case of the bi-directional beam I would still space both elements .12 wavelength away from the driven element or center triangle. You are going to get maximum gain with .12 spacing of the driven element and a director. I realize the reflector spacing is not ideal but just be happy with the extra gain the reflector element gives you. To maintain symmetry if you move the reflector spacing out a little further to get more gain that means you will have to move the director out further which will reduce its gain. Just leave the spacing at .12 and have fun.

The above beams can be scaled back to 2 element beams with less gain. This would give you one driven element and one parasitic element, tuned as a director, with 450 ohm line hanging down, and one relay switching directions. That system would still simulate a 2 element horizontal beam at 90 feet.



## PVRC 6M DXCC Standings – Frank W3LPL

Below are the 6M DXCC totals for PVRC members, transcribed from the ARRL DXCC data as of the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month or so. Thanks to Frank for the data each month to make this a regular feature. Please report any omissions or errors to <u>Frank</u>.

Call	DXCC	Call	DXCC	Call	DXCC
W3BTX	167	K3XA	119	N4PY	102
K1HTV	164	AB3CV	118	W4FQT	102
W4DR	160	K3SX	116	K3WC	101
N4MM	147	K5EK	114	N4JQQ	101
W3LPL	139	N4TL	113	W3KX	101
W3UR	139	W3EKT	111	W3XO	100
K2PLF	133	WX4G	111	W4TJ	100
N2QT	132	N4DB	110		
K4SN	131	W4PK	109		
K4SO	127	N4VA	106		
K4CIA	126	W2YE	106		
KG7H	123	K3ZO	103		
NW5E	123	K5VIP	103		
W3LL	122	W3OR	103		



Gil Gildersleeve W1CJD September 1966

#### **Membership News - Tim N3QE**

PVRC did not add any new members in the latest reporting period.

Chapter leaders please remember to complete the <u>Meeting Attendance Report</u>. Members can check and update their roster details via the <u>Roster Lookup</u>.

### Upcoming Contests – from WA7BNM

July 2021			
	0000Z-2359Z, Jul 1		
	1200Z, Jul 10 to 1200Z, Jul 11		
YOTA Contest	1000Z-2159Z, Jul 17		
CQ Worldwide VHF Contest	1800Z, Jul 17 to 2100Z, Jul 18		
■ North American QSO Party, RTTY	1800Z, Jul 17 to 0559Z, Jul 18		
	1200Z, Jul 24 to 1200Z, Jul 25		

#### Editor's Last Word – John K3TN

Thanks to Dan K2YWE, Rick N1RM, Alan WA3EKL, John N3MN, Dana N6DW, Frank W3LPL and Mike N4CF for contributions to this issue of the PVRC newsletter.

As usual, the Newsletter will be taking August off as I burn some of the Paid Time Off I accumulated during the pandemic travel hiatus. Should be getting some good bicycling in around upstate NY and Vermont.

The quality and usefulness of the PVRC newsletter depends on contributions from members. If you have photos from club meetings, screen shots of new contest software, or brief writeups on station improvements or contest war stories, send them in any format to jpescatore at aol dot com.



#### From the PVRC Treasurer - Jay W3MMM

PVRC has chosen not to implement an annual dues requirement. We depend on the generosity of all 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:



#### Donations to PVRC are not tax deductible

#### **Eyeball QSO Directions**

The latest info on local club meetings and get togethers will always be sent out on the PVRC reflector and posted on the PVRC web site.





### **Now a Word From Our Sponsors**

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ICO-IC-705

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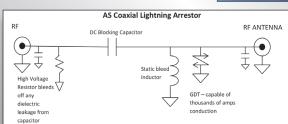
- Available in SO-239, Type-N, and 7/16 DIN
- connectors
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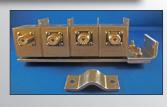
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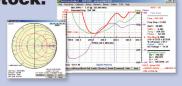
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## Hamation Station Automation

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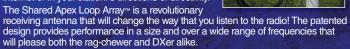


A more complex system could be a SO2R contest station as shone.



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 RF Direct Sampling • Real-Time Spectrum Scope and Waterfall Display • Large Color Touch Screen • Supports QRP/ QRPp • Bluetooth® and Wireless LAN Built-in



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• HF/50/144/430/440 MHz Multi-band, Multi-mode, IF DSP • D-STAR DV Mode (Digital Voice + Data) • Intuitive Touch Screen Interface • Built-in RTTY Functions



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#### VHF/UHF Dual Band Digital Transceiver

 Analog FM/D-Star DV Mode • SD Card Slot for Voice & Data Storage • 50W Output on VHF/UHF Bands • Integrated GPS Receiver • AM Airband Dualwatch



#### ID-4100A | VHF/UHF Dual Band Digital Xcvr

Compact, Detachable Controller for Flexible Installation
 DV/FM Near Repeater Search Function
 Apps for iOS™ and Android™ devices
 Wireless Operation with VS-3 & UT-137 Bluetooth® Headset & Module
 MicroSD Card Slot

#### IC-V86 | VHF 7W HT

7W OutputPower Plus New Antenna Provides 1.5 Times More Coverage • More Audio, 1500 mW Audio Output • IP54 & MIL-STD 810G-Rugged Design Against Dust & Water • 19 Hours of Long Lasting Battery Life • 200 Memory Channels, 1 Call Channel & 6 Scan Edges



#### IC-R30 | Digital/Analog Wideband Xcvr

- $\bullet$  100 kHz to 3.3 GHz Super Wideband Coverage  $\bullet$  P25 (Phase 1), NXDNTM, dPMRTM, D-STAR Mode
- 2.3" Large LCD Display & Intuitive User Interface
- MicroSD Card Slot for Voice & Data Storage USB Charging & PC Connection

#### **ID-52A** | VHF/UHF D-STAR Portable

• Bluetooth® Communication • Simultaneous Reception in V/V, U/U, V/U and DV/DV • Enriched D-STAR® Features Including the Terminal Mode/Access Point Mode • UHF (225~374.995MHz) Air Band Reception







- PHONE Toll-free phone hours 9:30AM 5:30PM
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# HAM RADIO OUTLET

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#### **FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED SINCE 1971**



#### FTDX101MP | 200W HF/50MHz Transceiver

Hybrid SDR Configuration • Unparalleled 70 dB Max. Attenuation VC-Tune • New Generation Scope Display 3DSS • ABI (Active Band Indicator) & MPVD (Multi-Purpose VFO Outer Dial) • PC Remote Control Software to Expand the Operating Range • Includes External Power With Matching Front Speaker



#### FTDX10 | HF/50MHz 100 W SDR Transceiver

 Narrow Band and Direct Sampling SDR • Down Conversion, 9MHz IF Roofing Filters Produce Excellent Shape Factor • 5" Full-Color Touch Panel w/3D Spectrum Stream • High Speed Auto Antenna Tuner • Microphone Amplifier w/3-Stage Parametric Equalizer • Remote Operation w/optional LAN Unit (SCU-LAN10) • This device has not been approved by the FCC.



#### FT-991A | HF/VHF/UHF All ModeTransceiver

Real-time Spectrum Scope with Automatic Scope Control • Multi-color waterfall display • State of the art 32-bit Digital Signal Processing System • 3kHz Roofing Filter for enhanced performance • 3.5 Inch Full Color TFT USB Capable • Internal Automatic Antenna Tuner • High Accuracy TCXO



#### FTDX101D | HF + 6M Transceiver

• Narrow Band SDR & Direct Sampling SDR • Crystal Roofing Filters Phenomenal Multi-Signal Receiving Characteristics • Unparalleled - 70dB Maximum Attenuation VC-Tune • 15 Separate (HAM 10 + GEN 5) Powerful Band Pass Filters • New Generation Scope Displays 3-Dimensional Spectrum Stream



#### FT-891 | HF+50 MHz All Mode Mobile Transceiver

Rugged Construction in an Ultra Compact Body • Stable 100 Watt Output with Efficient Dual Internal Fans • 32-Bit IF DSP Provides Effective and Optimized QRM Rejection • Large Dot Matrix LCD Display with Quick Spectrum Scope • USB Port Allows Connection to a PC with a Single Cable • CAT Control, PTT/RTTY Control



#### FTM-300DR | C4FM/FM 144/430MHz Dual Band

•50W Reliable Output Power • Real Dual Band Operation (V+V, U+U, V+U, U+V) • 2-inch High-Res Full Color TFT Display • Band Scope • Built-in Bluetooth • WiRES-X Portable Digital Node/Fixed Node with HRI-200



#### FT-2980R | Heavy-Duty 80W 2M FM Transceiver

• Massive heatsink guarantees 80 watts of solid RF power • Loud 3 watts of audio output for noisy environments • Large 6 digit backlit LCD display for excellent visibility • 200 memory channels for serious users



#### FTM-7250DR | C4FM/FM 144/430MHz Dual Band

• 50 Watt Mobile • System Fusion-II Compatible • Operates Advanced C4FM Digital & Conventional FM Modes • 3 Watt Powerful & Clear Audio with Front Speaker



#### FTM-400XD | 2M/440 Mobile

- $\bullet$  Color display-green, blue, orange, purple, gray  $\bullet$  GPS/APRS
- Packet 1200/9600 bd ready Spectrum scope Bluetooth MicroSD slot 500 memory per band



#### FT-70DR C4FM/FM 144/430MHz Xcvr

 System Fusion Compatible • Large Front Speaker delivers 700 mW of Loud Audio Output
 Automatic Mode Select detects C4FM or Fm Analog and Switches Accordingly • Huge 1,105 Channel Memory Capacity • External DC Jack for DC Supply and Battery Charging

#### FT-3DR C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz Xcvr

 High Res Full-Color Touch Screen TFT LCD Display • Easy Hands-Free Operation w/Built-In Bluetooth Unit • Built-In High Precision GPS Antenna • 1200/9600bps APRS Data Communications • Simultaneous C4FM/C4FM Standby • Micro SD Card Slot



#### FT-65R | 144/430 MHz Transceiver

Compact Commercial Grade Rugged Design • Large Front Speaker Delivers 1W of Powerful Clear Audio • 5 Watts of Reliable RF Power Within a compact Body • 3.5-Hour Rapid Charger Included • Large White LED Flashlight, Alarm and Quick Home Channel Access

#### **FT-60R** | 2M/440 5W HT

• Wide receiver coverage • AM air band receive • 1000 memory channels w/alpha labels • Huge LCD display • Rugged die-cast, water resistant case • NOAA severe weather alert with alert scan





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