



Potomac Valley Radio Club Newsletter

June 2006

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and www.pvrcnc.org

Celebrating PVRC's 60th anniversary in 2006/7

Details of the 2006 PVRC Reunion and PVRC/60 Award are inside

**PVRC mourns the passing of Boris Platonov, WF3J. We extend
our sympathy to his family and friends**

Editor's Note

By **Pete Smith N4ZR**

This is the last issue of the Newsletter before the summer hiatus, but there is a lot of news this month. Not much comment on Dayton, so I twisted W3DQ's arm for an article on the Visalia DX Convention. K2YWE contributes the simplest SO2R box you've ever seen, and K3ZO is back with another chapter from his fascinating ham career in the Foreign Service. K4VV reports his station-building plans, which have us all envious.

I hope you have an enjoyable and safe summer, full of antenna building and fun with families. The Newsletter will return in September.

From the President

By **Jim Nitzberg, WX3B**

It's the hot, humid, Friday before Memorial Day weekend and we contesters are getting ready for the weekend and the CQ WPX CW contest. The WPX Contest brings out lots of PVRCers, from small single operator to the well-staffed multi-ops. I'm hoping this year will be no different! As I write this, 20 meter propagation is reminiscent of the days of high sunspot activity, with European band openings loud...and long lived.

Thanks to the efforts of Bill, N3RR, the May PVRC Central Region meeting was held at Capitol College in Laurel, MD. Bill has suggested that this excellent facility, with its beautiful, multi-media-capable auditorium, would be available on a regular basis for Central Region meetings and presentations.

Our meeting featured a presentation by John Evans, N3HBX, on the design and construction of his new Poolesville, MD super-station. The station includes 4 200-foot towers with optimized stacked monobanders at carefully chosen heights, and an array of Beverage antennas for low band receiving. Inside are two completely automated SO2R positions, each of which can be assigned just about any resource available. This is quite an accomplishment when you consider the number of antennas the operator can choose from! The station design is such that the it can be reconfigured for Single-op, SO2R, Multi-Single and Multi/Two by merely flipping switches and levers in a very short period of time. N3HBX's station now holds the claimed North American WPX SSB record in the Multi-Two category. Congratulations, John on your fine station building efforts!

If you are interested in touring John's station – you may email him and request a tour. He is very happy to show PVRC members around. Thanks, to Mark, KD4D, for arranging the pre-meeting dinner and John's presentation.

Did you miss the Desecheo presentation given in April by Kam, N3KS, and David, K3LP? You have a second chance to see it... I am happy to announce that Kam, N3KS will be giving the detailed version of the presentation again, at the Carroll County PVRC meeting at 6:00 pm Monday June 19th at Boulevard and Beyond in Westminster, MD. A catered buffet dinner will be served at 6:00 pm at a cost of approximately \$25.00. *Pre-payment is required* -- please watch for the upcoming announcements starting at the beginning of June. We expect a fairly large turnout (between 30 and 40 PVRCers) for this event!

And don't forget the , yearly get-together at the home of Frank Donovan, W3LPL, in Glenwood, MD on Saturday June 17th. This event is always well attended and I hope to see some of you there this summer. It is rumored that the Sweepstakes 2006 plan: **"Return of the Gavel"** may actually be unveiled at Frank's this year.

I was delighted to talk to about 30 PVRC members during my evening visit to the hospitality suite at the just-passed Dayton Hamvention®. PVRC had a very strong presence at the Hamvention® with about 90 members present.

Tim Duffy, K3LR, circulated flyers asking about potential interest in having the PVRC contesting seminar at Dayton. Initial response has been positive and we are moving forward with this evaluation. Discussion to date has been centered around holding a day-long seminar the Thursday before Dayton, possibly at the Crowne Plaza. I will keep everyone posted as more information becomes available on this project.

This newsletter announces the **PVRC On-Air Reunion** and contains helpful information on logging software, check sheets and other information to assist your effort. The PVRC officers, along with help from Howie, N4AF, and Pete, N4ZR, have invested a substantial amount of time soliciting a much larger group of participants to make this a fun event. Please take time to read the reunion section of this newsletter, then get on the air and PARTICIPATE the first weekend in June.

2006 is the PVRC's 60th year as the mid-Atlantic's premier contesting club. To celebrate this anniversary, Howie, N4AF, is administering our **"PVRC/60"** award. Anyone working 60 PVRC members will be eligible for an Award Certificate. The award event begins with our 2006 On-Air Reunion and ends with the 2007 On-Air Reunion. Check out the details in the Reunion Announcement section on the PVRC website.

In the past two months I received some great historic treasures from our club's leaders. Eric, K3NA, sent me Officer's documents from the late 1970's to 1980. While the years have long since passed us by, the topics of debate/conversation remain very similar: What contests do we want to dominate? How should our contest "motivation" program work? Who is going to call who to "bring out the operators" for the {fill in} contest?

From Florida, Jack, W3TMZ, send me a great selection of 35mm slides from the PVRC past. I am hoping to have them digitized and put up on our web site. Many thanks to Eric and Jack for forwarding these historic documents/pictures, and to Pip, WB4FDT, for taking on the role of PVRC historian.

With that, I wish everyone a happy, healthy and relaxing summer season.

73, Jim Nitzberg WX3B

From our Treasurer...

In the past few months PVRC has paid insurance, newsletter mailing costs, donated 2 DVD sets and had some other minor expenses. Our treasury remains solid for this time of the year, but we are anticipating expenses in the fall with our awards programs (including some special 2005 Sweepstakes awards). In addition, a significant expense will probably be incurred in 2007 related to the production of the Dayton contesting seminar, and we would like to have this important event well funded.

We are currently working on an (additional) electronic method to solicit donations and make it easier for our membership to contribute to our club. More details about this program, and general fundraising (donation) opportunities will be published in the fall. Meanwhile, we are always pleased to accept your donations, to my qrz.com address, at the W3LPL Open House, and at Marty, W3YOZ's Fowlfest. Please remember that PVRC does not have mandatory "dues" – and traditionally our donations have kept us alive and well.

I hope to see you this summer.

73,

Dave Baugher, WR3L, Treasurer, Potomac Valley Radio Club

2006 PVRC On the Air Reunion: Celebrating our 60th Year

Dear PVRC Members;

I am pleased to announce that as part of the celebration of our 60th year as a club, we have made some changes in the rules for the PVRC Reunion to try and encourage lots of activity. **Reunion QSOs are now permitted on 10, 15, 20, 40 and 80 meters on SSB, CW and RTTY, and non-PVRC members are invited to work PVRCers for the first time.** The QSO exchange is simple and fun: PVRC member sends the 4-digit year he or she became a PVRC member, name, and U.S. state, the District of Columbia (yes, DC counts as a multiplier), Canadian province or DXCC country. Non-PVRCers skip the year they became a member (you can default it to "1" for logging software). This is the "mandatory" part of the exchange; however rag chewing and giving out additional information are encouraged. Some folks may enjoy exchanging the call sign they had when they first became PVRC members, as we did in previous Reunions, but it is not required this year.

The Reunion time periods are: June 3: 1400Z - 1800Z, June 4: 0000Z - 0500Z and 2200Z - 0300Z (June 5)

Packet spotting of Reunion participants, while not a separate category, is strongly encouraged to promote this event. Since activity will be light on 10 and 15 meters, we suggest searching there at the top of each event hour, or moving stations for contacts to these bands. The main purpose of this event is to get PVRC members chatting with other PVRC members!

This year, we are going to activate W3GRF (our club call) on multiple band/modes, and I understand that charter member Bill, W7YS is expected to be active from Arizona. Ed Bissell's old call, W3AU, will be active, and W4KFC will be on the air with Bill, K3WA as the operator. **Each of these stations will be giving out the special "PVRC" multiplier. Like the regular multipliers, the PVRC multipliers count once per band.** If you would like a chance to operate in the reunion as W3GRF, please email me the requested operation time, band and mode of your choice. I will do my best to create a schedule of "W3GRF" operations and let everyone have a chance.

PVRC Reunion Awards

Howie, N4AF is going to create some nice award and participation certificates for this event, in the following categories:

1. High Score – PVRC to PVRC competition only (by Chapter, High and Low Power)
2. High Score – PVRC to the World competition (By Chapter, High and Low Power)
3. High Score – Non-PVRC to PVRC, High and Low Power
4. Top Ten PVRC Members residing outside the Club circle
5. Top 3 PVRC Members residing inside the Club circle
6. PVRC Reunion Participation Certificate - to anyone that contacts 20 PVRC Members – SASE to WM3T
7. The Worked PVRC (60th year anniversary) Award. Open to all Amateurs – starts June 3, 2006 and ends after completion of our 2007 Reunion. Work 60 PVRC members and submit call signs to Howie, N4AF SASE required for a nice card stock quality certificate, or Howie will e-mail the certificate to you. Details are on our web site at <http://www.pvrc.org/pvrc60.htm>

Hope to hear you in the reunion!
73, Your PVRC Team

Jim Nitzberg, WX3B, Ken Claerbout, K4ZW, Eric Rosenberg, W3DQ, Anthony Brooks, WM3T, Dave Baugher, WR3L, Howie Hoyt, N4AF, Pete Smith, N4ZR

PVRC 60th Anniversary Reunion Rules

1. Eligibility: All members of PVRC worldwide (Once a member, always a member!) for internal PVRC competition; all amateurs for general competition.
 2. Object: To contact as many PVRC members and promote PVRC goodwill by contacting as many other amateurs around the world as possible, using the 5 HF contest bands from 10 – 80 meters.
 3. Date: Always the first weekend in June. The 2006 reunion will be June 3 and 4.
 4. Suggested Frequencies (25 Khz centered on):
CW: 3547, 7047, 14047, 21047, & 28047 kHz.
Phone: 3.847, 7.247, 14.247, 21.247, 28.447.0
RTTY: 3.585, 7.038, 14.085, 21.085 and 28.085.
 5. Three contest periods: June 3: 1400Z - 1800Z, June 4: 0000Z - 0500Z and 2200Z - 0300Z. Check for activity on 10 & 15 meters at the beginning of each hour.
 6. Event exchange: For PVRC members—the year you became a PVRC member, your name, and your QTH. Those outside PVRC send name and QTH. Non-PVRC members work only PVRC members. For purposes of the Reunion, your QTH is your U.S. state, the District of Columbia, Canadian province (using the ARRL's list which separates Newfoundland and Labrador), or DXCC country (HI and AK count as states or countries, but not both).
- Sample Exchange:
- WX3B: CQ PVRC DE WX3B
K4ZW: K4ZW
WX3B: K4ZW 1990 Jim MD
K4ZW: 1990 Ken VA
WX3B: TU WX3B
7. Valid contact: Completed two-way QSOs on any of the bands listed above . No crossband or crossmode QSOs.
 8. Scoring: Two points for each completed QSO with a PVRC member, one point for non-members. Total multiplier is the sum of all states, DC, Canadian provinces, and DXCC countries worked. **As a special bonus in celebration of our 60th year as a club, multipliers will count once for each band, and you are encouraged to work PVRC members on as many band/modes as possible. QSOs with non-PVRC members do NOT count for multiplier credit.** Maritime mobile contacts count only for QSO points.
 9. The club call W3GRF (and other designated calls of historic PVRC significance) will use "PVRC" as their multiplier. The "PVRC" multiplier counts once per band.
 10. Reunion call: CQ PVRC

Send your final score (Call, Q's, Multiplier, and total score) within 30 days to the Secretary, Anthony Brooks WM3T, 212 Ocala Rd, Glade Hill VA 24092 or to wm3t@wm3t.com (e-mail preferred). No log need be submitted. PVRC retains the right to request log details if verification of your claimed score is necessary.

Reunion Operating Aids and Computer Logging Options

The Reunion exchange this year is a good fit for the Sprint module of most contest logging programs. With that in mind, Howie, N4AF has written a program that will score the Reunion from their Sprint Cabrillo file output. It can be obtained through <http://www.pvrc.org/%5Cpvrc60.htm>. For the PVRC-60 Award, you can also download the PVRC Find program to spot PVRC callsigns in any Cabrillo file. Finally, Howie has made up special PVRC .dta and call history files (the former for TR Log and CT, the latter for N1MM Logger) which are available on the Reunion link. Some helpful hints on logging and scoring the Reunion are also there.

For those who want to log on paper, a roster checksheet giving names and calls, plus a checkoff by band and mode, can be downloaded in Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) formats at www.pvrc.org/Reunion_Checksheet.doc or [Reunion_Checksheet.pdf](http://www.pvrc.org/Reunion_Checksheet.pdf). A multiplier checksheet in the same formats is available at www.pvrc.org/PVRC_Reunion_Mults.doc or [PVRC_Reunion_Mults.pdf](http://www.pvrc.org/PVRC_Reunion_Mults.pdf).

PVRC/60 Award

The PVRC/60 Award, a handsome, serial-numbered certificate (a sample is [here](#)), is available to any amateur (PVRC members and non-members alike) who contacts 60 or more PVRC members during the award period, which begins with the start of the 2006 Reunion and concludes with the end of the 2007 Reunion.

Simply keep track, either by computer or hand, and send your list of PVRC members worked to n4af@pvrc.org. No QSLs are required. Your certificate will be sent by e-mail for you to print out. If you desire a hard-copy certificate, send a large SASE (9"x12") to N4AF 549 Bluebird Trail, Blounts Creek, NC 27814

Who will get certificate #1?

PVRC Contest and Event Calendar

PVRC Events in boldface — all dates and times are Zulu except as noted

PVRC Reunion on the Air, June 3-4 (new rules in this issue)

ARRL June VHF QSO Party, 1800Z June 10 to 0300Z June 12

All Asia DX Contest (CW), 0000Z June 17 to 2400Z June 18

West Virginia QSO Party, 1600Z June 17 to 0200Z June 18

W3LPL Open House, Noon local time, June 17

ARRL Field Day, 1800Z June 24 to 2100Z June 25

IARU HF World Championship 1200Z, July 8 to 1200Z, July 9 (includes WRTC)

North American QSO Party, RTTY 1800Z, July 15 to 0600Z, July 16

W3YOZ Fowlfest, August TBD

North American QSO Party, CW 1800Z, August 5 to 0600Z, August 6

WAE DX Contest, CW 0000Z, August 12 to 2359Z, August 13

Maryland-DC QSO Party 1600Z, August 12 to 0400Z, August 13 and 1600Z-2359Z, August 13

North American QSO Party, SSB 1800Z, August 19 to 0600Z, August 20

WAE DX Contest, SSB 0000Z, September 9 to 2359Z, September 10

ARRL September VHF QSO Party 1800Z, September 9 to 0300Z, September 11

North American Sprint, CW 0000Z-0400Z, September 10

Congratulations ...

PVRC won the affiliated club competition in the 2006 ARRL RTTY Roundup. Excellent individual performances by K4GMH -- Roanoke Division HP Winner, W4NF -- Roanoke Division Multiop Winner, W3LL -- Atlantic Division LP Winner, W3BP -- Roanoke Division 2nd Place HP, and K3SV -- Atlantic Division 2nd Place HP.

A Bone Simple SO2R Audio Box

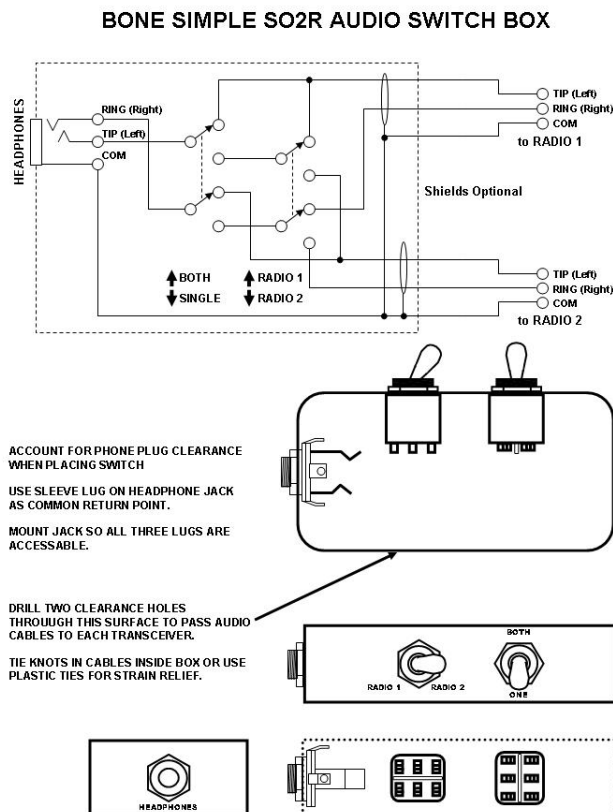
By Dan Zeitlin, K2YWE

My limited experience as an SO2R absolute novice caused me to conclude that the simplest solution is the best one for me. That meant only switching receive audio. I always use headphones, which made the desired functionality even simpler. *My solution* uses two DPDT switches and no power. The choices are Radio 1, Radio 2, or both. The two radios are isolated in different ears in the “Both” position. No mixing is performed. One switch selects Radio 1 or Radio 2. The other switch selects either the Single Radio or Both Radios mode.

I oriented the Radio 1-2 switch bat handle horizontally and the Single-Both switch handle vertically. You may want to change the arrangement to suit your own preferences. In my case, the radios are side by side and the Radio selector handle points to the desired rig. The other switch handle points up for Both.

I suggest you do some pre-wiring if you use a small box where wiring might be tight. First, carefully site the components so as not to interfere with each other. Be sure you allow room for the phone plug tip, as well as for rotating the jack so that all lugs will be accessible for wiring. Then make all the holes in the enclosure and dry fit the components in their correct places. Remove the parts when you are happy with the arrangement. Now mount only the switches in their correct holes, but mount them “inside out” on the outside of the box. This provides a jig for pre-wiring. Keep in mind that the switches will be upside-down when you wire them, and you will have to flip them over for in-box installation. Make all the inter-switch wiring and external cable connections with the switches externally mounted. Put flying leads on the Single/Both switch poles for later connection to the phone jack. Cut the external cables to final or longer length. Do not install the phone plugs yet.

Remove the wired-up switches and reinstall them in their proper places inside the box. Run the loose ends of the cables through their respective holes in whatever order works best for you, last, first, or along with the switch installation. Tie knots in the cables or use some other means of strain relief. Ty-wraps work for that purpose.



Install the phone jack. Cut and strip the flying leads from the switches to length if you have not already done so. Solder the flying leads to the phone jack along with the appropriate wires from the external cables. Use the sleeve lug on the phone jack as a common return (ground) point for the cables. Finally, attach the phone plugs to the ends of the cables. You're done.

Plug your headphones into the box and the cables into the transceiver headphone jacks. You should hear the selected receiver normally in the “Single” position. When “Both” is selected, you should hear a different receiver in each ear. The box is wired to connect the left output from #1 to the left ear of the headphone and the left output from #2 to the right ear in the “Both” position. This assures hearing the main receivers of Yaesu rigs during “Both” operation even when Dual Receive is selected on an individual transceiver. This may also be the case for other brands.

No relays, no active components, no pots. This project is a simple point of departure for your own modifications. You might want to add a third pole to the switches for moving your keyer output to the selected rig (you'll have to decide what “Both” means in that context!). Good luck.

The 2006 Visalia International DX Convention Reported by [Eric Rosenberg, W3DQ](#)

When I found out in mid-March that for the first time a really long time I wouldn't be going to the Dayton Hamvention, I decided to look around for an alternative solution for my spring ham radio fix. In my 35 years as a ham, I've been to most of the big ones: Miami, Boxboro, Friedrichshafen, and Dayton.

Although I'd lived on the west coast for almost six years in the mid 1970's, I'd never attended the Visalia International DX Convention, which has been a west coast tradition since the late 1940's. I'd heard much about it and had friends in California that were regulars. So with the encouragement and endorsement of K3ZO, W4ZW and NN3W (ignore Rich's callsign, he's an unreformed southern Californian!), I scraped together my last remaining frequent flyer miles and cobbled together flights and accommodations.

Where Dayton is three days of flea market and vendors, with forums that cover just about any imaginable aspect of ham radio, Visalia is just the opposite. It's a weekend of forums with a room of vendors, all focused on the DXer, and to a lesser degree, the contester. The attendees seemed less diverse, older, and very focused on (primarily HF) DXing, and contesting. This appeared to me to be very technically savvy crowd. No 'shack-on-the-hip' types here! Vendor support was very obvious, as many of the prizes – first person to register, first time attendee, raffle, banquets, etc., were high-end equipment.

The official opening of the Convention was the getting to know you "Attitude Adjustment Hour". That's where I ran into a large group of PVRicers: W3TEF and W3BTX from Pennsylvania; K2PLF, his wife N6WHB, and K3PU from Maryland; and K8OQL from West Virginia. We made up the largest block of easterners!

From there, the IOTAns, FOCers, and Topbanders went off to their dinners while we contesters went a different way – a gathering of the like-minded, with N6TR as featured speaker and MC - ably assisted by K3LR, N6TJ, and N6AA – of a hilarious trivia game. The prizes? "Lid Alerts". Don't ask!



The Convention officially started on Saturday morning with introductions and welcoming talks by ARRL representatives, quickly followed by the vendor showcase of new products. This was perhaps the most interesting of the forums I attended. For one hour, Elecraft, FlexRadio Systems, AlphaPower and others had the floor to talk about their new products, less sales pitches than discussions of design philosophies and product development. A great example of this were the presentations by Elecraft and AlphaPower, both of whom unveiled their new HF amplifiers. While each aimed for the same performance goals, the two have taken very different paths to get there. The Elecraft KPA-1500 is a solid state, small footprint amplifier with two independent input and output paths (designed for SO2R contest operation) and outboard switching power supply. In contrast, the Alpha 9000 uses tubes, is significantly larger and heavier, has a single signal path and a built-in power supply.

The other vendor that caught my eye was FlexRadio Systems, the maker of the SDR-1000 software designed radio. What was once and still considered to be esoteric technology, the SDR-1000 has evolved into an excellent radio. While this writer is not comfortable with a 'virtual' radio that is operated from a computer screen, the SDR-1000 has a fabulous receiver and excellent performance specs. For those that want or need something to hold onto, an outboard two encoder (knob) pod is available. What is not available – yet – is full break-in capabilities, which may rule out this radio for contesters.

The DX Forum kicked off the day with lots of talk about how DX entities are created along with other esoteric topics near and dear to this, the passionate DXer community. "Not Your Father's Contest Forum", chaired by

Ward Silver, N0AX, followed. The presentations by N0AX, AA7A and N6AA and comments from the floor gave a west coast perspective on what it takes for clubs to sustain interest or grow, additional bands (especially 6 meters) for DX contests, and how one can effectively and easily try out new contest ideas. Your scribe took the floor to describe the PVRC experience, and pushed simple, short-duration contests like the NAQP as both a training ground and means to entice the uninitiated, while taking the opportunity to promote the addition of the District of Columbia as a separate multiplier in that and other state-based contests.

Kicking off the discussion of new contests, N0AX pointed out that in only one weekend in 2006 was contest free. Ward suggest that one weekend a year be set aside for short-duration experimental contests. He suggested that each of these contests would be no more than 4 hours in duration, unique and independent of each other. Each sponsor would be required to coordinate with their respective sponsors and others (e.g., logging authors) as need be. While there seemed to be agreement to Ward's proposal, where it goes from here is anyone's guess.

After lunch and while prize tickets were drawn and QSL card checked, the forums split into two separate tracks, DXpeditions and stations and operating.

Opting for the 'technical' track, I went to Dean Straw N6BV's presentation on antennas and propagation, which he was to repeat at Dayton. The talk gave the contesters perspective of the ARRL Sweepstakes from the west coast, using VOACAP and some interesting add-ons he developed to predict and explain the difficulties faced. N6BV and his NCCC cohorts are **very** serious competitors and have spent a significant amount of time recruiting new members and motivating their membership to participate in the sweepstakes by providing tools and information to develop operating strategies for all levels of operation.

I dropped into two different DXpedition discussions after Dean's talk. One was by AA7A on the Voodoo group's foray into Mali as TZ5A for the 2005 CQWW CW contest, the other by W3WL on the FT5XO Kerguelen trip. I then opted to hear Dennis Motschenbacher, K7BV/1, talk about 6m DXing. As "the magic band" is one I've never tried, this talk had all-new material for me to absorb. Dennis and the vast majority of the attendees are passionate about this band, and the material presented provided a strong argument for trying 6 meters regardless at what level you can operate, high power or low, big antennas or small.

The last session of the day was "Tales from the Antipodes – FT5XO & 3B9C on Top Band", a talk developed by Eric K3NA and presented by Mike N6MZ on 160 meter operation by these two DXpeditions. Using reporting tools developed by Alex, VE3NEA, this presentation compared 160 meter propagation predictions for these two DXpeditions to actual reception reports and QSOs. N6MZ delivered a west-coast perspective of the 3B9C material, which had been presented by Eric at last year's Dayton Hamvention Topband Dinner. The reasons why few west coast stations made 3B9C QSOs was explained with Eric's excellent visualizations of the QSOs and reception reports. On the other hand, the FT5XO DXpedition was far more satisfying to this audience, as the west coast was the prime benefactor of good topband conditions from Kerguelen. Many left the room with smiles on their faces as they joined the "Attitude Adjustment Hour" which segued into the banquet.

Bob McAllphin, KU4EE, co-leader of the 3Y0X DXpedition was the banquet speaker. Bob's multimedia talk covered all the aspects of this multi-week, \$500,000 DXpedition. Suffice it to say, the participants put the collective hearts and souls into this trip, not to mention incredible amounts of time and effort, often under very difficult and trying conditions at almost every step. As the saying goes, this was not your casual DXpedition. The evening ended with the prize drawings, which included an Alpha 4150 Wattmeter, TS-480SAT, IC-756 Pro III and other equally nice items!

The DX Convention ended mid-day on Sunday, but not until the DX Breakfast, with its unique and very funny "DX Fear Factor" show, where the winner walked away with a MFJ 269 antenna analyzer. This was followed by a brief talk on the Northern California DX Foundation by Tim Totten N4GN and Bob Schmieder, KK6EK on the K7C DXpedition to Kure Island, a very different location (hot and humid) and approach (smaller group, shorter duration, less gear) than the 3Y0X group.

With that, the 2006 International DX Convention came to a close. I drove back to Burbank with Pete Hoover,

W6ZH, driving through Tehachapi and the (awesome!) wind farms in the hills just to the south of that city, through Bakersfield and on to the airport.

My impressions the DX Convention? I had a great time, for a variety of reasons. I ran into people I hadn't seen in the 25 years since I left California; I learned a lot about DXing, contesting and contest clubs, the DXer's world, all from the west coast perspective. It was well worth the time and effort taken to get there.

Visalia is a very different experience from Dayton, so it is difficult, if not impossible, to compare them. You can't go wrong at either one.

Station Building **By Jack Hammett, K4VV**

Sharon and I moved to a rural property about 5 miles west of Leesburg, Virginia when we married in May 2002. The land really works for us with privacy, trees and distance screening our activities and towers from the neighbors. The high ground on our land is along the northwest slope of the Catoctin Mountains (ridgeline) at about 600 to 650' elevation. The terrain is downward sloping for miles to the North, Northwest, West, and Southwest. Other directions are favorable, except for South and Southeast. The terrain does not meet the superstation ideal of flat terrain with no trees in the way of antennas, although the land meets our family objectives in every way.

The logical positions for towers are along the East-West (105 degree) line along the South boundary of the property (near the peak of the ridge), with setbacks to meet the county requirements. This line positions the four towers with separations of 180' to 200', along the cleared upper meadow. Sharon was wary of the appearance of guyed, lattice towers in the meadow, and I was concerned about the weekly mowing around the guy cables and supports, so I graciously volunteered to put up three monopoles in the open meadow. Tower heights of 100 to 120 feet were the practical choices for setback and affordability, and adequate for Multi-2. The four towers were installed in November 2005 and approved by the county. (My initial request for permits for four towers had been denied, and a six month campaign was necessary to get the permits.)



My contesting objectives are to achieve a competitive Multi-2 and have the flexibility for fun with multiple antennas, potential for hosting operators from newcomer through top guns, and capabilities for emergency communications. Six HF bands will be covered with 22 antennas as will four VHF and UHF bands through 432.

Two of the towers are original Telrex "Big Bertha" rotating monopoles from the 60's. Tower 1 is a 105' Bertha that was originally owned by Zack Reynolds that has been restored with new sections, welding, new mounting plates at ideal heights, sandblasting, ZRC galvanizing, and base fabrication. The tower weighs about 6,000 pounds and can be turned by hand. Antennas to be installed on Tower 1 are two stacks of Force 12 antennas on 30' booms, 4 el on 20m, 5 el on 25m, and 8 el on 10m. The Force 12 antennas were selected to work within the wind-load capability of the Bertha. These antennas are strengthened with three-way rivets, 3" boom centers, and custom truss support. A C3i 5 el 6m antenna is also assembled for installation. All these antennas are assembled, but require more work to install the mounting plates, truss supports, baluns, and phasing lines before installation.

The "Super-Bertha" installed as Tower 2 is a very heavy duty version that was ordered by Zack Reynolds, but not delivered before his death, and then owned by two others who did not install it. I purchased the new, old, Bertha in 2003. Tower 2 weighs about 16,000 pounds, and has wall thickness of 1.4" in the bottom section, then tapering. The tower is 120', and will host 8 HF and 3 V/UHF antennas. Seven of the HF Yagis are OWA's from the K4JA station, all on 48' booms, with two-stacks on 10m and 20m (7 and 6 el) and a 3-stack on 15m (6 el). A 2 el 40m from Force 12 and 144, 222, and 432 MHz antennas from C3i are included.

Tower 3 is a Union Metal monopole hosting four antennas: single Yagis fixed SW on 10m, 15m, and 20m, and a 2el 40m Optibeam (Moxon) rotating at the top. Antennas are partially assembled.

Tower 4 is a traditional lattice tower, a PiRod/Valmont that is 5.5' wide at the base and 3' wide at the top. The tower is a commercial product with solid legs and cross-members, rated for 49 ft2 of antenna load at 19 feet above the tower top. A 21' x 3" dia chrome-moly mast with 1/4" wall is installed at the tower top, stabilized by two custom Delrin bearings, turned with the large ProSistel. The Force 12 80m dipole (180 Ultra with Aluminum "tower" construction) will be installed at about 132' with some custom strengthening in materials and truss supports. Two of the K3LR/K4JA 4-el 40m beams on 48' booms will be mounted at 70' and 122'. The lower one is to be fixed on Europe (with potential for future rotation using the K0XG system shown at Hamvention 2006).

A Radio Cabin (16 x 24') has been constructed about 60 feet North of tower 2, and trenching to the four towers and to my house completed and multiple runs of 1-5/8" and 7/8" hardline (~12k feet) deployed. The trenches remain open to accommodate control cables.

Various systems remain to be installed. A collection of stack switches has been collected from Top Ten Devices and K4JA to be installed to control the seven stacks. (I am considering leaving some of them "hard-wired" in the 2-stack position for simplicity.) Rotator controls are installed (Prosistel systems) for T3 and T4. An original (analog) rotator is available for T2, and one must be fabricated for T1. (I am exploring the use some new potential solutions demonstrated at Dayton that would permit remote and local contest control of band switching, antenna switching, stack and directional control on the network, so that movement of devices on the desktop would not be needed for band and antenna changes.) I have the K4JA band-witching array that gives three radios access to any band not in use. I have four FT-1000 MP's with roofing filters and mods available. I have two ACOM 2000's and one more on order. I have two sets of quality filters, and one set of stubs available. Basic grounding of the towers is done, but lightning radial systems need to be installed, and a radial system and lightning protection system is needed at the Radio Cabin entrance.

I am grateful for advice and support from many PVRC members, including W3LPL, K4JA, N4ZR, W4MYA, K4ZA, W3OC, W4AU, W0YR, K3WX, K3SKE, W3NRS and the Team from US Tower Service.

My plan is unusual, and tailored to offer the fun that I missed with no tower or Yagi from 1952 to 1995 while moving around in school, the Army, and SAIC, and then having one triband Yagi for 11 years, I am looking forward to access to antennas beaming several directions, and I expect some visiting operators will share in the fun. I would welcome interested PVRC members to help in the building and/or operating aspects.

W3LPL Open House June 17 **By Frank Donovan, W3LPL**

PVRC, NCDXA, CARA, QCWA and many of the W3 QSL bureau "letter" sorters will be attending. DXCC card checking will be available, including 160 meters and older QSLs. CJ, our BBQ caterer, will be here again this year.

What are YOU building this summer? The Newsletter wants to know!

My Ham Radio Life Abroad—Thailand 1968

By **Fred Laun, K3ZO**

The job title of my second Foreign Service assignment was Assistant Branch Public Affairs Officer in Chiang Mai, Thailand. I received the news of that assignment while still working in Santo Domingo in 1967. I had to go into our library at work and look Thailand up on a map. I really had no idea where it was.

I joined the Foreign Service with the idea that I would go wherever they sent me. As I was gradually to come to realize, as time went on, that many -- perhaps most -- of my Foreign Service colleagues worked very hard to get specific assignments in popular places, but in my idealistic younger days I figured that I would do just fine no matter where they sent me, so I just let the personnel people send me where they wanted without any pre-assignment input on my part.

When I joined I had been asked to put down my first and second geographic area preferences for assignment, and I put Latin America first and Africa second. My preference list was honored with my first assignment to Santo Domingo, but Thailand was nowhere near either Latin America or Africa. Still, I was quite satisfied with the assignment and set off to learn as much as I could about the place while still in my Santo Domingo job. At HI8XAL I had a 4-element quad on a 75 foot tower and a Hallicrafters SR-150 driving a National NCL-2000 amplifier, and after querying any number of people around the world I learned that one of the few Thai stations on the air was Arno Kosko, an American working for Philco-Ford in Songkhla in Southern Thailand, who was using the call sign HS4AK.

As it turned out the best path from Santo Domingo to Thailand was over the morning gray line (Santo Domingo time) on 20 meters. My antenna farm was right on the Caribbean coast and on that path my quad looked right out over the ocean, so Arno and I had an excellent QSO and he told me that on arriving in Bangkok I should get in touch with a Thai policeman, Lt. Chankij Boonyaratvej, HS1CB, the President of the Society of Thai Amateur Radio (STAR), who would take care of getting me on the air in Thailand.

Following my tour of duty in Santo Domingo I took home leave at my family's lake cottage in Wisconsin. This turned out to be fortuitous because it was the last opportunity I had to spend time with my mother, who died during my tour of duty in Chiang Mai. My father had passed away during my Santo Domingo tour. While there I received a phone call from a certain Don Riebhoff, K7CBZ, who reported that he was also being assigned to Thailand by "the Army" and that he was leaving almost immediately. He had heard that I knew something about the ham radio situation in Thailand and I gave him all of the info that Arno had given me.

Before being sent to Thailand I was scheduled to receive 10 months of intensive Thai language training in Washington, so I took an apartment in Rosslyn, Virginia overlooking the Potomac, since it was near the State Department's Foreign Service Institute where my Thai language training would take place. I had a Drake-line with me and learned by trial and error that the metal flashing around the big picture window in my ninth-floor apartment loaded up perfectly on 20 meter CW, so I was able to operate as W9SZR/4 with my QSOs almost exclusively in Europe, since my window faced that way and the metal support structure of the building served as an excellent reflector.

That apartment served as my window on some historical events. I was there when Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated and, as my apartment was right above the George Washington Bridge, I was able to observe as people in panicky flight from the Washington riots were caught in a traffic jam which ground to a dead halt. Desperate to escape danger, they abandoned their cars and ran to safety. That night through my window I could see portions of the city burning while listening to police transmissions on a small all-band radio I had at the time. How ironic this all was for me, as I had been present on the Washington mall when Dr. King had made his famous 1964 speech; that was during the time I was in training after having just joined USIA, and our instructors of the time had suggested we witness first-hand the King March on Washington in order to "become a part of history". So I had stood and watched from just beside the Reflecting Pool as Dr. King, standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, held the crowd spellbound with his oratorical gifts. And now it had all come to this!

The next day I had to drive a rental car into that same city because Dick Klein, K9OPF was moving to Washington to go to work for the Government and I had promised to pick him up at Union Station. The rental car agent asked: "You aren't planning to drive the car into DC are you?" and I answered, "Of course not!" Later while watching TV in that same apartment I witnessed the announcement by Lyndon Johnson that he would not run again, and the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy.

On learning that I was to be assigned to Thailand my PVRC colleagues were, as they always have been, ever helpful. Bill Grenfell W4GF who ran ham radio for the FCC at the time suggested I drop in on another FCC official, Merle Glunt W3OKN who had been seconded to the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in order to spend three years advising the Thai Government on telecommunications matters. Merle was a fount of information and gave me names of Thai officials who I might wish to meet while I was in Thailand. Somehow I had learned that Frank Phillips, W5QPH had also operated ham radio while in Thailand and so I engaged in extensive correspondence with Frank and was provided with even more useful information.

I arrived in Thailand in the summer of 1968, having encountered my first-ever experience with jet lag. I was wondering why I was having trouble keeping my eyes open at a welcome cocktail party and especially later that evening when we adjourned to a Thai night spot where we danced away the night with dozens of cute Thai lasses.

The U. S. Information Service (USIS) program in Thailand at that time was very different from that in which I had participated in Santo Domingo. It was a flat-out counter-insurgency program because we were there to prevent Thailand from becoming another "domino" falling into the hands of the worldwide Communist juggernaut. USIS had eleven branch posts all over Thailand and before taking up my duties in Chiang Mai, I was sent to two of our other branches to see how the program was being conducted there.

The first place they sent me was Songkhla, the very same town where HS4AK had been located when I had worked him from HI8XAL. Arno was no longer there but his two German Shepherd guard dogs were well-remembered. Songkhla is practically on the geomagnetic equator, and Arno had been involved in a project to investigate the capabilities of using VHF ionospheric scatter from high-powered transmitters to provide 100-percent reliable full time point-to-point communications for stations located on or near the geomagnetic equator.

The next place they sent me for orientation was Udorn Thani in Northeastern Thailand near the Laotian border, and I was able to tell my office that there was no need to make hotel reservations for me as I had accepted the kind invitation of Don Riebhoff, now HS3DR, to be his house guest during my Udorn Thani TDY. By that time I had received my own Thai callsign from Lt. Chankij, which was HS3AL, and it was a dilemma for me what to do first: try out my brand new HS3AL call sign using the 4-el quad which towered over Don's house, or adjourn to the guest bedroom to enjoy the company of the lovely companion who Don had procured for me and who awaited me there.

Finally I arrived at my own post of Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand. USIS already had a house for me there with a big yard right next to the main railway station. I had shipped a Drake Line, and my NCL-2000 and only a Hy-Gain vertical antenna for 40 through 10 meters. I had been advised that Amateur Radio was not formally legal in Thailand so that it might be a good idea to keep a low profile in the antenna department. The house was equipped with an elevated water tank as were all the fancy houses in the city, because water pressure was frequently low. So the drill was to have an automatic pump to keep the tank full and use water from that stored in the tank rather than to take water directly from the city water line. The tank provided a perfect perch and a nice ground plane for the 14AVQ.

Indeed Lt. Chankij, HS1CB had informed me that Amateur Radio was not legal in Thailand, but that as President of STAR he maintained informal relations with the relevant authorities and issued call signs himself and passed the names and addresses for those call signs on to said authorities. The call he gave me, HS3AL was made up of the HS prefix assigned to Thailand, the third call area which included Chiang Mai, and AL for Alfred Laun, my formal name. The only paper documentation I was issued was a wallet-sized STAR membership card which did have my HS3AL call sign on it. I was advised to use only phone as Chankij was required to monitor the bands so that he could assure the authorities that he had everything under control, and his CW was not up to snuff.

I was quick to learn that Thailand was on something called the "ITU Banned List" and as a result the FCC did not allow U.S. hams to work hams in Thailand. This even extended to U.S. military hams on Okinawa which at the time were using KR6-prefix call signs, and since two or three nights a week KR6's acted as net control stations for the nightly Southeast Asia Net (SEANET), it was downright embarrassing not to be able to check in directly with net control on those occasions.

During my first year in Washington I had become good friends with Jack Colson, W3TMZ and Jack and I had flown up for a visit to ARRL HQ where among the people we met was Dick Baldwin, W1IKE who was then the ARRL's Assistant General Manager. So I wrote to Dick asking all about this banned list and Dick told me what it was. Dick tried very hard to be helpful and eventually told us that the FCC had agreed that, provided that we would use our USA call signs/portable HS the FCC would not object to our communicating with USA stations. But Don and I were in firm agreement not to accept this offer, for two reasons: (1) Lt. Chankij had issued us HS3DR and HS3AL, not K7CBZ/HS and W9SZR/HS, and (2) we didn't wish to leave our Thai colleagues such as Lt. Chankij out in the cold.

An American ham, Col. Donald Kay, operating from a Thai Air Force base in Northeastern Thailand which was being used by the USAF to attack targets in Laos and Viet Nam, had also heard about the FCC's willingness and began working U. S. stations signing WA4PUC/HS. It was with some sadness that I visited the office of the U. S. military attaches in the American Embassy in Bangkok to ask that they get Col. Kay to shut down lest he severely damage relations between Thai and U.S. hams. I took no pleasure in trying to deprive a fellow ham of his fun, but I thought the greater interests of ham radio in general demanded it and I think history has subsequently proven me correct.

Another of our Amateur Radio colleagues in Thailand was Bob Daniel, W6LCB and HS1BD. Bob was an Engineer with the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) which had a USAID contract to advise Thailand's Military Research and Development Council (MRDC) on telecommunications matters. The MRDC essentially was tasked with testing advanced military equipment from around the world and recommending which of it should be purchased for the use of the Thai Armed Forces. Working with Bob in MRDC was Thai Navy Capt. Jamnong So-wanna, HS1JN, one of Thailand's pioneer hams, who had held that call even prior to World War II. Capt. Jamnong still lives as of this writing, though he is not active on the air and his health is precarious.

Bob Daniel was one of those rare individuals who was absolutely sincere and honest in everything he did and could communicate that sincerity and honesty in non-verbal ways. He was modest and self-effacing, and generous to a fault. The Thais loved him and more than once told SRI that they would cancel the contract if Bob were not kept on in Thailand.

Bob Daniel's XYL Alice, a full-blooded native Alaskan who was as comfortable as Bob was with their Thai hosts, became a member of a group of card-playing wives of senior Thai officials. Among those officials was the Deputy Director-General of the Posts and Telegraphs Department (PTD) Sribhumi Sukhanetr, HS1SS. The PTD was the Thai Government entity tasked with issuing radio licenses among other things, and HS1SS had been one of the Thai officials that the FCC's W3OKN had suggested I try to get to know.

When Bob found out about Thailand's presence on the ITU banned list he asked HS1SS about it and Sribhumi was adamant that he could not recall that the Thai Government had ever asked the ITU to place it on any such list. He searched PTD files and came back with an even firmer denial.

While in Santo Domingo I had been nominated to become a member of the British First Class CW Operator's Club (FOC) by my old college chum Dave Morgan, K6DDO and was granted membership. As it turned out a fellow member of FOC was Ted Robinson, F8RU who was also an official of the ITU. So I wrote Ted to ask him how it was that the ITU had Thailand on its banned list when the Thai PTD's Deputy-Director-General was firmly denying that Thailand had ever asked to be placed on such a list. Ted replied with a copy of the document which had caused ITU to place Thailand on its banned list, and a warning not to reveal who had provided it since it was absolutely forbidden for ITU staffers to provide such documents to anyone on an informal basis. Now that Ted has been an SK for a number of years I guess it won't hurt to reveal publicly that he was my ITU eyes and ears at the

time.

So how does a country manage to get on the ITU Banned List without really trying? It turned out that the document Ted sent me was a questionnaire in the French language -- the official language of the ITU -- about fifty questions long. The ITU Secretariat during that era apparently sent this questionnaire out periodically to all of its member countries in order to try to keep its records up to date. There was only one question about the Amateur Radio Service, and that question asked (in French): "Does your administration prohibit Amateur Radio stations in your country from communicating with Amateur Radio stations of other countries?" Note that if the respondent administration answered "oui", ipso facto it had placed its Radio Amateurs on the banned list.

Now I don't know what criteria the Thai Administration used when it decided who should be tasked to answer such questionnaires, but after 25 years in the American Government bureaucracy I can state with some assurance that it is likely that the responsibility for answering such a routine document would be laid on the lowest-ranking flunky in the office, and there would be some question as to whether that individual could handle the French language, but he would be reluctant to ask for assistance for fear that he would anger his superiors by being so cheeky as to interrupt their important routines with such a minor matter. You guessed it, the person who answered the questionnaire on behalf of the Thai administration answered "oui" to every question.

Fortunately Ted also detailed the procedure by which a country could remove itself from the banned list, and HS1SS promptly sent off an official telex to the ITU Secretariat repeating Ted's wording word-for-word. We kept the ARRL's Dick Baldwin abreast of this, and toward the end of 1969 the FCC announced that Thailand had removed itself from the ITU Banned List and that henceforth there was no restriction against U.S. hams working Thailand.

Of course there were many U.S. hams who were delighted to hear the news, but perhaps none so much as the legendary Don Wallace, W6AM. Not long before I received my assignment to Thailand the ARRL had established the 5BDXCC Award. While it was not such a difficult feat to work 100 countries on 80 meters from the East Coast, it turned out to be somewhat of a chore for hams on the West Coast. On my way to my Thailand assignment I had stopped for a few days in the Los Angeles area to spend time with my fellow W9YT alumni Phil Goetz, W6DQX and Dave Morgan, K6DDO. Dave took me to the incomparable W6AM rhombic farm and Don invited us to lunch at Marineland just down at the bottom of the hill from his place. Nobody in California had yet qualified for 5BDXCC and Don was in the thick of those vying to be the first one to do so.

After a substantial repast Don grabbed my check and, looking at me with laser eyes, said: "I'm picking up your tab because I know you will manage to get Thailand on 80 meters, and I want you to promise to get the first W6 you work on 80 meters to call me collect and get me to come up on the air." Frankly I didn't think it was possible to work California on 80 meters from Thailand, but I smiled wanly and accepted his conditions.

So now that U.S. hams could work Thailand it occurred to me that I had better make a good faith effort to fulfill Don's request. My Chiang Mai boss, Jim Carrigan, a wonderful human being and ex-Pan Am pilot, had found a rustic old house right on the river for himself and his lovely XYL, and so he demanded that I move into his former house since the lease on my house ended sooner. I was initially disappointed because the house he wanted me to move into had less room for antennas, but it turned out to be a great location because it was only a half-block from the river so it had great ground conductivity, plus it had a couple of 90-foot palms which were just the right distance apart for a half-wave 80-meter dipole.

But before assembling an 80 meter antenna I decided to listen on the 14AVQ with the feeders shorted and by golly if I didn't hear some W6's on 80 meter CW perfectly well! I had brought extra wire and coax with me. Being a bachelor at the time I had also discovered that there were other things to do of an evening in Thailand besides getting on the air, and one evening not long after the news about the lifting of the banned list I had a lovely house guest who I had picked up at a certain establishment on my way home from the office. Back in Wisconsin it was well-known that antennas always worked better when they were erected during a blinding snowstorm, so I thought I would try out a corollary of this theorem for Thailand, which said something to the effect that if the party who helped you assemble an antenna was a female and if you put it together while you were both ---, well, this is a

family newsletter so I'll leave it at that.

Anyway, the next day I told my gardener, Khun Boonsong, who was adept at shinnying up coconut palms to retrieve the fruit, that I wanted this wire to go at the top of that palm tree and this other wire should go at the top of the other palm tree, and the black wire in the middle should come down through my bedroom window, and I hoped to see it installed by the time I came home for lunch that day.

I arrived home and was initially disappointed because I didn't see the antenna. Then I looked a little higher. By golly when you told Boonsong you wanted the antenna at the top of the tree he took it literally! The antenna turned out to be a winner and that night I worked K6KA who promptly brought W6AM up on the air and I had fulfilled my promise. Then it was off to the races with a big W6 pile-up. That antenna really performed and a few days later, while it was still daylight in Thailand, I heard KS6DH on American Samoa finishing a QSO on 80 CW so I called him. He came right back and when we finished I was astounded to find a pile-up of East Coast stations calling ME. Among them was "Mr. DXCC", Bob White, W1WPO later W1CW. Not only did the 80 meter antenna work on 80, it turned out to be a much better performer on 20 than my 14AVQ.

Meanwhile Don Riebhoff at HS3DR was having a ball with his 4-element quad. One night we were experimenting on 10 meters, me with my 14AVQ mounted on a water tank and Don with the 4-element quad. Don would transmit while rotating the antenna, reading off the bearings as he went around and I would take notes. He was about 450 km. east-southeast of me as the crow flies. When he got to a bearing of about 40 degrees from his QTH I noticed a tremendous echo effect so I asked him to go back to that bearing and for a few minutes we enjoyed talking back and forth through the echo chamber. At one point I counted nine different echoes on his signal. We joked that the Communist Chinese had probably erected a series of barriers to keep RF out and that Don was reflecting off of each of the barriers in turn.

When I arrived in Chiang Mai there was only one other ham in the city and that was Swath Tscheikuna, HS3NT, the Rector of Thailand's Northern Technical College. Swath, who had an MSEE from Ohio State, was gracious and helpful to me in many ways. He loaned me his Heath linear when my NCL-2000 was down for repairs, he let me use his call on CW when HS1CB didn't want me to be on CW -- Swath was not bound by HS1CB's strictures - - and in general, with his fluent English and his cosmopolitan ways, Swath tutored me on elements of Thailand not readily picked up in government area studies courses.

Swath's college had courses for radio announcers which included on-the-air practice from the college's 1 KW broadcast station on 1600 KHz. Once we were off the ITU's Banned List I decided to try to put Thailand on 160 meters for the first time ever during the 1970 CQWW 160 Meter Contest. I asked Swath if I could use the antenna of his broadcast station and he readily agreed. For two days the station was off the air so that HS5ABD could test 160 meter propagation. It was a pretty boring time as I managed to work all of eight stations in all that time, but two of my QSOs were with U.S. stations, W6KWE and W7RM, so I was quite pleased.

HS5ABD, you say? What happened to HS3AL? During my two years in Thailand I tried to arrange my work schedule so that I could attend each monthly meeting of STAR on a Sunday at the riverside restaurant of Bangkok's legendary Oriental Hotel. I was successful most of the time. One of life's great pleasures was to get on the overnight train from Chiang Mai to Bangkok, adjourn to the bar car and sip an ice-cold glass of Thailand's potent Singha Beer as you watched the sun set over the endless green rice paddies.

Don Riebhoff and I had taken leadership positions in STAR and we came to be concerned that the exploding number of U.S. military personnel stationed in Thailand in connection with the war in Viet Nam was having the effect of having a number of HS calls show up on the air which were not registered with HS1CB. Some U.S. military personnel in Viet Nam were even using HS calls to get around Viet Nam's total ban on Amateur Radio operations. This endangered Lt. Chankij's ability to guarantee to Thai government officials that he had the Amateur Radio situation under control. The system used to determine one's call sign in Thailand had been figured out by many of these people and so they would simply come on the air with a call with an HS prefix followed by their call area and two letters indicating their initials.

[Continued in September—ed.]

Briefly Noted

Steve Hanlon, WM3O, has contributed a few Dayton pictures, including the original, unexpurgated scoreboard from the KCDXC Pileup Contest. Todd Ruby, WB2ZAM, sent along a picture of Kam Sirageldin, N3KS, giving his Desecheo presentation at the DX Forum. All this can be seen in the Newsletter Extended Content on the PVRC web page [here](#).

Karl Renz, K4YT, reports that he has “unretired” from the State Department, and will be making monthly trips to exotic locales in connection with the job. He has already completed one temporary duty stint as EY8/K4YT. While there, he reports by e-mail, “...[I] was able to knock about 1000 Qs after work and with a lot of QRN/QSB. I am sked for TZ on July 5th and I believe 9L1 around the 19th. More to come in August, Sept. Thanks to EY8CQ I had a big station to use otherwise with a wire and 100w it would have been depressing out there. It may be different in 9L being on the coast and closer to the US. We are finishing a new embassy located atop a mountain overlooking the city with a clear shot west. I may bring the TS50 with me and try. No answer yet about this licensing. Other than that between trips I am county hunting.”

Rich Boyd, KE3Q, recovering from Dayton, reports, “I want to thank all who supported me for the lifetime achievement award at the Contest Banquet in Dayton, aka "The Mirror Ball Award." Unfortunately, someone walked away with the Mirror Ball. Please send it to my FCC database address, which was recently updated! I need it as part of my Sweepstakes prep regimen.

“Kimiko (Mirror Ball girl) and I flew immediately to Puerto Rico for a beach vacation, since the Icom bikini team was doing their photo shoot and had invited us along to hang out. N6BV is working on VOAAREA to tweak our signal from WP3R. He already has found a flaw in our operation; at times we were only 60 db over S9 on a band or two. He has already found us three db more on 20M. The new 80M fullsize yagi will also be helpful. QRX.... Kimiko, can you bring me another pina colada? Oops, my mask and snorkel are in the way. Anyway, thank you all. You made Dayton 2006 memorable.”

Around The Club Meeting Minutes from the Regions

PVRCNC-East had another strong turnout and an excellent program during our May gathering. The meeting's agenda is outlined below. The 14 in attendance were: W0UCE, Jack; N4CW, Bert; K4CIA, Bill; NX9T, Jeff; N4TL, Tom; W4KAZ, Keith; K4QPL, Jim; K1ZW, Larry; NT4D, Jay; NT4Q, Jerry; K4CZ, Barry; K2AV, Guy; AD4L, Pete; and AE4MN, Paul.

K4QPL welcomed the group and outlined the evening's agenda. NX9T thanked N4CW for stepping in to help out with coordinating our presence at the Raleigh hamfest. A big “thank you” also goes out to all who helped share the cost of the hamfest tables. W0UCE conducted the regular “Paper Contest”. This month was another "Sprint" and W4KAZ snuck in to snatch the victory from many hopefuls! Keith took him a very handy AC circuit tester. Jack, W0UCE, and Guy, K2AV presented a very interesting and informative program entitled, "Working the Weak Ones, Part II." They presented information on the importance of low noise receiving antennas, especially for 80 and 160m. We all left with ideas and even a few plans for action!

The program schedule for June: Show and Tell (Bring some radio item to show...anything goes!) NOTE: Official "programs" will be suspended for July and August. This will allow for more casual social time, rag chews over dinner, and hopefully be more "vacation/summer stuff" friendly. Regular programming will resume in September to kick off the fall contest season!

Member Reports: N4CW: Bert's contesting efforts have been limited lately but he's excited about going to Dayton! He will be on for the WPX in a few weeks as well. K4CZ: Barry, has operated in several smaller QRP contests recently and has been chasing DX. His DXCC count is now up to 169. K4QPL will be showing up at Barry's QTH this weekend to dig holes for the tower with his Kubota. The big news is that at the Raleigh hamfest, Barry

placed 1st in the QBH (send with both hips) CW contest. He really had that hula hoop swingin'! Barry's 11 year old daughter, KI4GUO (Jordan), placed 3rd in that QBH (Great job Jordan!!!) and is planning on working toward her General license this summer.

K1ZW: Larry has been working digital modes lately but had to do a complete computer rebuild to "get 'er done." In the process, he straightened out his USB port issue. Larry told us about how his antenna line launcher is working FB...shoots up to 200' high. Larry also told the group about his tower/antenna hinge that intrigued many of us. He's planning to travel to Dayton with his XYL. K4CIA: Bill gleefully described working the recent VU4 expedition on 30m for a new one. New ones for "Dr. DX" don't come around very often. Bill is heading up to Dayton as well.

NX9T: Jeff has gotten his 160m inverted L up and asked for some modeling assistance concerning adding a 80m wire to the same radials/feed. Jeff also worked the VU4 on both modes, is heading up to Dayton, and plans to make some noise in the WPX. K4QPL: Jim described how at the Raleigh hamfest he placed 2nd in the QBH contest, and 2nd in the QLF contest. PVRC's own N2NFG took 1st! Jim indicated that due to several operators not being able to make it for a larger M2 effort, N4AF will likely be operating single op during WPX. Jim also plans to operate SO2R from his QTH. They are hoping that by taking a "sabbatical" from the M2 category, another PVRC group will be in the position to step in and grab some paper!

N4TL: Tom worked the VU4 on both modes and has been busy chasing band countries. He plans to operate during the WPX. W4KAZ: Keith has not been able to be on the air much lately but has been helping NT4Q with tower preparation. He will be another PVRC warrior charging up to Dayton. W0UCE: Jack reported that he continues to rebuild after multiple lightening strikes. He took another hit on 4/22, but fortunately only lost a keyer. Lucky for Jack, he has a host of CW related accessories! Jack spoke of some incredible conditions the other day on 15 and 20m. He's having a lot of fun with his new TS-480.

NT4D: Jay has been helping Jerry, NT4Q, out with tower preparations. NT4Q: Jerry is looking forward to getting his tower up finished. He currently has approximately 35 feet in the air. He's also been remodeling his shack and is planning to put a TA-36 up on the tower soon. K2AV: Guy has been working on new antenna designs for N4AF. Since last month's meeting on Software Defined Radios, he's been giving this op-

tion some thought.

AD4L: Pete continues to work on his SDR box and has been stymied by a cold solder joint on a board. He is also working on an error detection code project and plans to operate during WPX. AE4MN: Paul described his new high power Ten Tec antenna tuner and how he is quite pleased with it thus far. He told the group an interesting and amusing story about a fellow who claimed to have invented the first wireless telephones. Paul is really enjoying his new PROIII.

Reports via Email: KA1ARB: Rob advised that work commitments are hindering his ability to attend meetings but he looks forward to being with us again Rob sends his greetings and advises that he, and buddy WB1ADR, had a great time operating in the ARRL DX SSB from New Hampshire. Their score is holding up for a top 10 finish in the MS category (right behind our brethren from W4WS). NOTE: Rob is seeking a AB-577 "rocket launcher." If anyone has one for sale, please contact Rob, KA1ARB.

We look forward to another great gathering in June. Don't miss out...mark your calendars now for June 1st. 73,
Jeff NX9T

5M Contest Scores Compiled by Anthony Brooks, WM3T

2006 Russian DX Contest

Call	Class/Status	Bands	QSO's	Mults	Mults	Score
N4AF	SOHP CW		1076	194	75	1,569,077
W3BP	SOHP CW					
OP OF KM4M			561	105	37	422,450
K3DI	M2		445	172		342,452
N8II	SOLP		412	97	27	249,240
N4CW	SOHP CW		274	104	25	183,825
K3KO	SOHP		185	23	88	121,434
N4MM	SOHP	20	228	79		113,128
K1KO	SOLP CW		138	52	18	49,840
N3II	SOHP CW		144	58	5	35,721
K3STX	SOLP CW		85	45	7	23,764
W3LL	SOLP SSB		112	32	11	23,306
K4VV	SOHP		69	13		22,904
W4ZV	SOHP	160	104	32	4	16,310
K4CZ	SOLP		75	33	7	15,000
WF3J	SOHP CW		33			6,732
W6AAN	SOHP		26	8	18	4,810
W4RQ	SOLP		26	17	7	4,200
NS3T	SOLP CW		23	15	1	1,808

Total Logs: 18
 Total Club Score: 3,206,001
 MultiOp Operators— K3DI W3ICM, K3DI

The Reference Page Has Moved

Because it changes so little from month to month, we've decided to move the reference page to www.pvrc.org/refer.htm. That should be more convenient for most readers because there are many links in that page pointing to e-mail addresses, etc. We'll probably publish one here semi-annually, or I'll be glad to send one, on request.

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