

POTOMAC VALLEY RADIO CLUB

est. 1947

JUNE 1992 NEWSLETTER

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - N3RR BILL HIDER (301) 424-2707
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SECRETARY - AA4XU BEN SHAVER (703) 534-4740
TREASURER - K1DQV ROGER MINER (301) 421-9848

The Potomac Valley Radio Club meets the second Monday of each month, from September through May. Regular business meetings alternate between Northern Virginia and Temple Hills, MD. For directions to the next meeting, see below. Or call any club officer.

PVRC CHARTER MEMBERS: W3GRF, W3IKN, W4AAV (SK), W4KFC (SK), W4KFT, N0FFZ, W4LUE, W7YS, VP2VI (W0DX).

Charter Members are not required to pay dues.

VHF Repeater (K3WX): Output 147.00 MHz., Input 146.40 MHz.

UHF Repeater (K3WX): Output 443.15 MHz., Input 448.15 MHz.

Packet Cluster Contest/DX System:

145.51 MHz. Connect to W0YVA
145.57 MHz. Connect to N2FB
145.59 MHz. Connect to W3LPL
145.63 MHz. Connect to K3NA
147.525 MHz. Connect to N4SR

Next Meeting:

Date: 8 June 1992, 1930 EDST
Place: WUSA-TV (Channel 9)
Broadcast House
4100 Wisconsin Ave., NW
Washington, DC
(202) 895-5822 (contact Terry Fox)

Check with the packet cluster or the repeater for last minute changes, if any.

DIRECTIONS TO WUSA-TV:

From the Capital Beltway, take Wisconsin Avenue (Route 355) South to past Tenley Circle. The station is about two blocks past Tenley Circle on the right (on the West side of Wisconsin Ave.) From Virginia: Exit the Beltway at River Road, head to Washington, and turn right on Wisconsin Ave. The station is in a brand new, silver-colored building which says "Broadcast House" on the front. The parking lot is just to the North of the building (which really belongs to Roy Rogers). Arrangements for meeting ahead of time for dinner are pending. Please check the repeater a couple hours before meeting time for details, being arranged by WI2T.

Other Upcoming Events:

June 6 - 8: PVRC On-the-air Reunion; June 27 - 28: PVRC Field Day at W3YOZ/N3HIT
July 18: Joint PVRC/FRC Meeting at NF2L; August 15: Joint NCDXA/PVRC Fowlfest at N3HIT/W3YOZ

Editor: Fred Laun, K3ZO (301) 899-1235

Production and Circulation Manager: Howard Leake, W6AXX (410) 465-7008

Club Historian: Lawrence T. Fadner, W3GN (301) 725-1624

News Deadline: 20th each month.

MUSINGS OF THE EDITOR

Congratulations to my neighbor Don Daso, who changed his call from WA8MAZ to WZ3Q!

Please note that the June meeting will be a tour of WUSA-TV (Channel 9's) new studios. See the title page for more details. Thanks to Bill, N3RR, for setting this up.

And don't forget to get into the ARRL June VHF QSO Party June 13-14. KH2F is planning a big mountain-topping operation for this one.

All of the events in Thailand have been much on my mind, as Somporn is there as I write this and has been all through it. Fortunately, telephone communications have been good and I was able to keep in touch with her all along. By the time you read this, I hope she is safely home. But I was quite concerned on hearing and seeing everything going on there.

Rana, WB4NFO, mentioned getting good information on Radio Australia, and, indeed, their coverage of all the events was excellent. During the past couple weeks I was also able to work HSØAC and HSØZAA, but of course I didn't want to get them in trouble by discussing political events with them.

I am delighted to see that Marty, W3YOZ, and Susan, N3HIT, have agreed to pick up the Fowlfest. Marty has already been in touch with NCDXA President Mike, KO7V, and the Fowlfest continues to be a joint PVRC/NCDXA event. It will be held August 15. Thanks a lot, Marty and Susan!

The sunspot cycle really seems to have dropped off and the flux seems to have to struggle to get to 150 these days. But the Sporadic E season seems to be off to a good start and I have already worked a couple of stations in Minnesota on 2 meters. The CQM was almost destroyed by a tremendous radio storm but 2 meters was fun that day, where I made aurora QSO's in IA, MO, AR, LA, OK and West TN. Even though CQM was pretty much a washout, my 323 QSO's did include a few UA9's and Central Asians over Africa on 40 meters. The signals were tremendous but the multipath echo made some of them very hard to copy. Let's hope the conditions for the WPX CW are better. Apparently there will be lots of activity from around here, with KT3Y back at W3LPL, WR3E at W3GRF and someone else at N2FB. Let's hope that this is the start of greater activity in all the major contests. Our big stations have been going idle too often.

I am acquiring a new antenna. The 8-el. 15-meter Telrex at W4QAW, which Carl, K3RV, has used so effectively, has become available, so I hope it will soon be perched at about the 130-foot level at my place, fixed on Europe, to help give me more options in running Europeans under varying conditions. The 4-el quad performs marvelously in pile-ups but I keep feeling that there are times when the run rate on 15 could be better. We will see.

See you all at Channel 9 on June 8. I am looking forward to meeting Doug Hill and Bill Kamal myself, the only local weather crew who discuss sunspots from time to time.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO OPERATE CQWW FROM CHINA?

by Jerry Fish, K8OQL

In a recent letter from Mr. Wang Tao, BZ8AC, chief operator of station BY8AC, I was invited to come to Chengdu for the 1992 CQWW SSB and CW contests. I am giving this invitation serious thought.

Mr. Wang wanted to know if other contesters might be interested in coming along. He stated that he is trying to form an "international team." Anybody interested, please call me at 1-304-822-3208 after 8 p.m. for more information.

TOWER ORDINANCES IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA COUNTIES

by Lamar Ray, W9LT/4

I am in the process of selling my Leesburg house and am actively looking for a new, modest antenna farm here in Northern Virginia.

I thought PVRC members might be interested in the zoning questions uncovered, so here is a summary of what I found:

CLARK COUNTY

I met with Mr. Gregory Payne, Assistant Zoning Administrator. Following a request for information regarding the installation of two amateur radio towers, one of 100 feet and one of 80 feet, Mr. Payne was very helpful. The answers were:

Towers of 35 feet or less are permitted by right. Normally, 90 feet would be the maximum height considered within the county by the present guidelines.

Both a plat plan and a site plan would have to be submitted with a \$600 fee for review and recommendation.

A Special Use Permit approved successively by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors would be required along with a \$500 fee for each. This would take about six months' time due to advertising and two public hearings.

A \$200 building permit would then be required for each tower.

Mr. Payne strongly recommended a local attorney be used to walk the applications through the committees so that much of the discussion could be done before any formal meetings. Further, he suggested that there was little chance of getting a permit for more than the normal 90 foot maximum height.

Mr. Payne requested information regarding amateur radio zoning including model laws, if I am able to obtain them, since most of the

people involved had little knowledge of the subject.

FREDERICK COUNTY (VA)

I met with Mr. Lanny C. Bise, Planner I for Frederick County, VA. An amateur radio tower of 35 feet or less may be constructed within the county without a permit. Higher structures require a \$45 Variance Permit and either a site or plan view must be supplied. The variance would have to be approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals after a screening by one of the Planners. If approved, a \$25 building permit would then be required.

Further discussion discovered that there are presently one or more lawsuits in progress regarding previously-approved commercial towers in the county. As a result, Mr. Bise stated that none of the planners would be willing to recommend approval of any tower over the 35-foot height. Further, he suggested that there would be little or no chance to get any variance approved by the Board for much over the 35-foot limit unless it were to be in the middle of a 100-acre working farm or such.

Mr. Bise requested further information on amateur radio towers and possible sample laws, if available, since they had little knowledge and, due to their legal problems, could only say no to future applications. The present situation in Frederick County VA is not good.

WARREN COUNTY

I met with Mr. F. Randolph Hodgson, Planning Director of Warren County. A very pleasant discussion of approximately 20 minutes followed.

He found no specific requirements for an antenna system placed on residential property. However, since I had asked about two towers, one of 100 feet and one of 80 feet, he said

others might consider them significant. He preferred to defer his response until he could clarify the situation with the Zoning Board.

Specifically, there is a 40-foot building height restriction, but antennas are exempted. In a worst-case, a Conditional Use Permit might be requested which would take two and one-half months to clear both the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board.

He was very curious about federal preemption, heights needed by amateurs, and possibly sample zoning laws; I referred him to the American Radio Relay League for their information package.

JEFFERSON COUNTY (WV)

I met with Mr. Paul Raco, Director of Planning and Zoning, Jefferson County, WV. I was informed that there are no specific zoning requirements regarding amateur radio towers. However, due to the significance of two towers, one of 100 feet and one of 80 feet, a \$15 Improvement and Location Permit may be requested.

I was requested to direct my question to him in writing within ten days or so. It seems that there are no other persons involved other than him, and his response would be good at any location outside town limits throughout the county.

LOUDOUN COUNTY

I went to the desk for Building and Development for Loudoun County, VA. One of the ladies responsible for information, permits, etc., informed me there were no special problems in the County, except that a tower must be placed such that, if it were to fall, it would fall wholly on your own property.

An antenna would require a Site Plan with a surveyor's seal showing the property boundary, existing buildings, and proposed antenna location. Then a Zoning Permit stating the tower height would be issued for \$20; no hearings, etc., are required. Finally, a building permit must be obtained to insure inspection of the "foundation."

THE N6TR CONTEST PROGRAM

by Fred Laun, K3ZO

While I was on the West Coast for the Visalia DX Convention, I noticed that a number of my friends there use the N6TR Logging Program for their contesting rather than either K1EA's CT or K8CC's NA programs. I wondered why, one thing led to another, and for \$29.50 and a couple of blank diskettes N6TR, Larry "Tree" Tyree, shipped me a copy of the program, which I used in the CQM.

Tree says that the program is largely the result of specific requests for features that his various users have asked him to include. Much of the program has to do with the ability to send various messages during the contest, which don't particularly interest me because I like to send my own CW. However, one feature I will mention in passing is that you can configure the program to start sending the call of the

station you're working the minute you start typing, instead of having to have the whole call typed in and pressing <enter> like the other programs. This gets rid of most of the delay which can be noted in the transmissions of most hams who use their contest programs to do their sending.

I had thought that the program was the first truly generic contest program in that you tell the program how to operate by describing a bunch of parameters in an ASCII file named LOGCFG.DAT. The program looks for this file when it starts up and if it finds it, it will operate according to the commands found therein. However, the second line of LOGCFG.DAT requires you to name the contest you are in, and if you put a name in there of a contest which the program doesn't specifically

support, the program forces you to exit and puts you back at the DOS prompt. It is a shame that Tree hasn't configured the program to allow any name to be placed in the contest name line. If only he had done that, you would have your first truly generic contest program.

Having said that, the program does support almost any contest you have ever heard of, and just by naming the contest, it will set all of the parameters for that particular contest. The CQM is supported so I had no trouble operating that.

As I said, the LOGCFG.DAT file is an ASCII file so I am able to edit it with my DOS 5.0 editor. Even though you have to name one of the contests the program specifically supports, you can then go on to make the program throw switches which will enable the program to log and score correctly the non-supported contest you want to enter. For example, you can get the program to accept any county name in any state QSO Party as a multiplier by typing the following line in LOGCFG.DAT:

DOMESTIC MULTIPLIER = WYSIWYG

WYSIWYG means "what you see is what you get."

Let's say your contest gives two points for phone contacts and three for CW. You just add this line to your LOGCFG.DAT document:

QSO POINT METHOD = TWO PHONE THREE CW

and it will score it accordingly.

You operate the program by simply typing

"LOG" at the prompt. If your LOGCFG.DAT file is already in the directory you are using, the program will take you to the log right away and you can start operating. As you log, the program generates an ASCII file, not a binary file. You can edit the last five QSO's, and you can edit anything on the line. The program prints out the report sent as well as the report received, so if you feel guilty about giving a European a 599 on 160 meters, you can enter 559 and the program will print it that way.

If you want to enter a comment in the log at any point, you just hit <CTRL-N> and the comment will be written at that point in the log. Since you can only edit the last five QSO's, this is the best way to note something you want to mention about an earlier QSO than that.

Those of you who have read earlier comments of mine know that I like a real zero (Ø) to be printed out in the callsign field. Since this program edits in ASCII, I can edit the line with the call containing the Ø by just typing <ALT - 210> (the ASCII value for Ø) in place of the 0 in the call, and I have my real Ø.

As to operating the program, I really like the dupe feature. If you want to find out whether a particular station is a dupe, just type in the station's call and hit the space bar. If it's a dupe, the computer will beep AND the call will be erased. No need for the operator to do the erasing!

There are many other features, of course, too numerous to mention in a brief review like this. N6TR is willing to tailor his program to the desires of his users and can be reached at 15125 SE Bartell Road, Boring, OR 97009, (503) 658-6012.

THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

by Ben Shaver, AA4XU

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING 11 MAY 1992

The meeting of the Potomac Valley Radio Club was called to order by Vice-President ND3A at the Tysons-Pimmit Public Library, Falls Church, VA.

■ Members present: WR3Z WR3E WI2T WD4IEH WA8MAZ W6AXX W3XE W3LPL W3GNQ W3GN W3CPB ND3A N4MO N3JT KE3Q K8OQL K1ZZI AA4XU.

■ Guest: KH2F

There was no regular business conducted.

The Program was presented by Frank Donovan, W3LPL, an illustrated talk entitled Stacked High Frequency Yagi Arrays. Data was derived from easily available, inexpensive software including Ionsound Propagation and Elnec Antenna Analysis programs. The traditional data output from these programs was graphically presented in a new way utilizing Harvard Graphics.

The gain G (dbi) of a directional antenna is found from the following:

$$G = 10 \log [41,000 / (E \times H)] - 1$$

where E and H refer to beamwidth in the E and H planes respectively. Examination of this equation shows the necessity of asking fundamental questions concerning the target area before attempting any array design. For contesting, a beamwidth of 50° is necessary to

cover the entire European continent from which originate most of the contacts for east coast Americans in DX contests. Dxsers may want to optimize a directional antenna with a narrower beamwidth. Frank then demonstrated the effect of tower height, E and H plane beamwidth and other variables on gain and takeoff angle from single and stacked directional antennas.

The next regular Business Meeting of the Potomac Valley Radio Club will be held on September 14, 1992 at 7:30 PM. Summer activities are planned, including a June tour of WUSA-TV/Channel 9's new studio facilities, Field Day, a July joint meeting with the Frankford Radio Club, and the August W3YOZ/N3HIT-hosted joint NCDXA/PVRC Fowlfest.

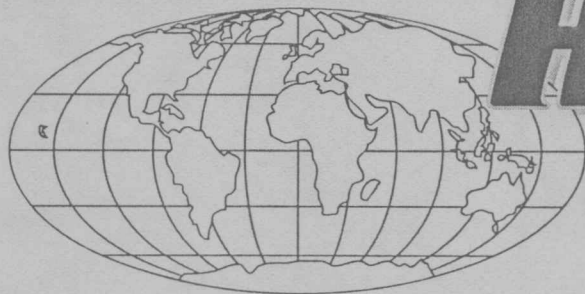
OVER-THE-HILL DIVISION

13 MAY 1992

The OVER-THE-HILL division of the POTOMAC VALLEY RADIO CLUB met for lunch and discussion at the Ramada Inn in Oxon Hill, MD. Len Chertok, W3GRF, was host.

Attending: W6AXX W4GF W4DM W3GRF W3GN W3CPB W3AZ KC3AG K3ZO K3WX AA4XU AA4I

The next Over-the-Hill luncheon meeting will be held in Greenbelt, MD. Andy Anderson, W3XE, will be host.



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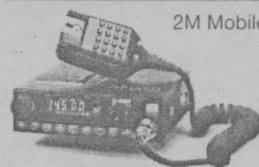
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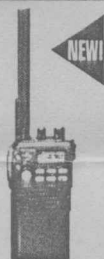
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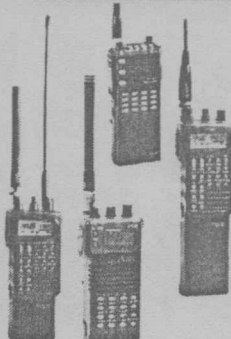
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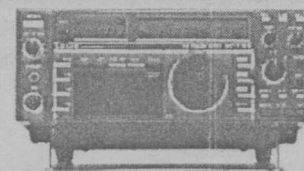
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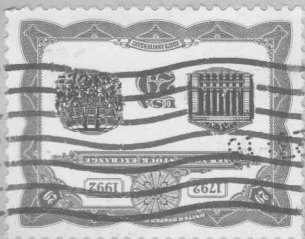
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