PVRC Newsletter June 2013

President's Letter – Rich NN3W

Greetings PVRCers:

Work continues to besiege me. Nonetheless, I did manage a bit of time to play in the CQ WPX CW weekend – I almost wish I didn't, given that the Sun was *not* cooperating with us this past weekend.

Lots of odds and ends to go over – much of which are behind the scenes items:

First, your club officers and trustees are working on finalizing a formal budget for fiscal year 2013-2014. We've initially decided on running with a fiscal year starting on July 1, as the club officers and trustees being their term of office on January 1, and it would seem a bit odd to saddle the new officer/trustee slate with a budget that was created by the previous officer/trustee slate. We plan to unveil the budget once it is approved by the board – likely around the time of the annual W3LPL summer bash.

Second, over a year or so ago, the officers and trustees began discussions regarding if the club should seek exemption status pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We are still exploring that option, and have been in contact with a tax attorney concerning the process that is involved, and whether the option is even available to PVRC. My belief is that there are numerous benefits to seeking this exempt status, however there are some pitfalls that must be considered. This discussion is ongoing.

Third, as you all know, the "fiscal year" for the clubs 5M programs turns over on July 1 of each year. Starting in the 2012-2013 period, we created additional "tiers" for recognition of club members' efforts within the program. We are **almost** done with the first full year, and I see that a lot of you have qualified under the new tier structure. Well done!

Looking to the future, the officers have conferred on two requested amendments to the program and have adopted one request which applies to host operations that host more than one separate operation during a 5M eligible contest. We have declined to

take action regarding the second request as we have not received sufficient information to reach an informed decision on the request.

Fourth, as you all know by now, 2013 is going to be a big year for PVRC – thanks to the IARU HF Championship contest that will run from July 13-14 (1200z to 1200z). PVRC's two headquarter teams W1AW/4 led by Steve Bookout NR4M and NU1AW/3 led by Frank Donovan have finalized their station assignments and things appear to be progressing nicely. A full list of station assignments will be published next month, but the assignments are spread across over a dozen different stations in PVRC land. Many club members will be active from the headquarters stations, while we really, really hope that everyone else will work the HQ stations on as many band modes as possible!

Finally, even though its summer and there is not a major push on contests over the summer (*but see above*), there will be ample opportunity to get on the air, play contest, and engage in eye-ball QSOing. The PVRC Reunion is scheduled for this coming weekend (June 1 – 2); W3LPL's open house is schedule for June 15; the IARU HF Championship is July 13 – 14; the last 5M qualifying event for the 2012-2013 season is the June VHF contest is June 8 – 10; and, finally, the WAE CW contest and the NAQPs take place in August. Summer usually features "Fowlfest" at W3NRJ's QTH, but that has been moved to September. More on that to follow.

73 and Stay cool boys and girls!

Rich NN3W

PVRC Officers:

President:	NN3W Rich Didonna
Vice President:	KE3X Ken Low
Vice President:	K8GU Ethan Miller
Secretary:	W3LL Bud Governale
Treasurer:	WR3L Dave Baugher

Trustees:

K3MM, N3OC, WX3B, W4ZYT, N4NW, K2AV, K4ZA, K3WRY

PVRC Charter Members (all SK):

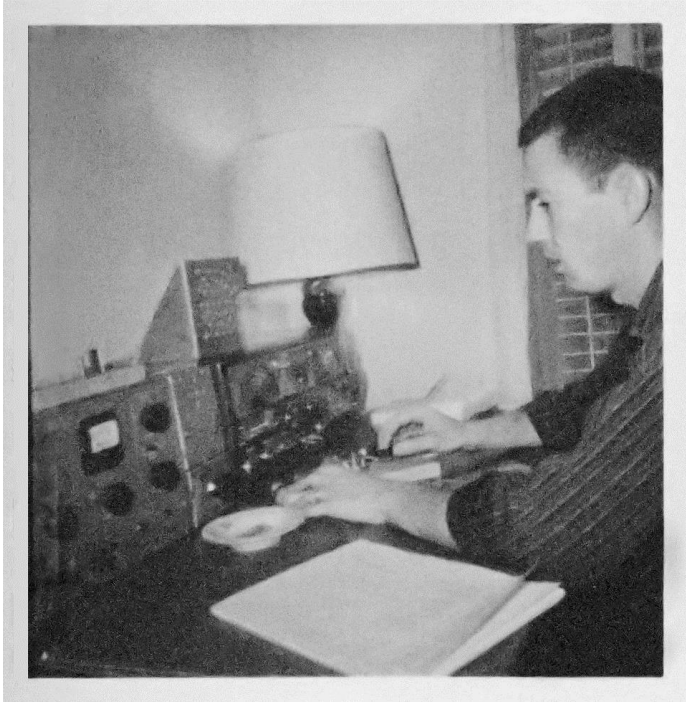
W3GRF, W4AAV, W4KFC, N0FFZ, W4LUE, W7YS, VP2VI/W0DX, W3IKN, W4KFT

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

W3LPL Annual Open House – June 15th

PVRC members, guests and family are welcome to attend the 28th annual W3LPL Open House on Saturday June 15th at noon, rain or shine. BBQ lunch from CJ's will be available from noon to 2 pm. Frank's QRZ.com address is good for mapping to get directions.

The Way We Were continued – Ed W3EKT



Got my Novice ticket in April of 1961,and made my first QSO in early November of that year. Reached General the end of January of 1962. In those 3 months, I made over 800 contacts almost exclusively on 80 meters and confirmed the "lower 48."

Operated "portable," KN8ZSZ/8. QTH was Dayton, OH. The slant bar threw me the most so exchanging names and addresses typically took half an hour. har. Knight Kit T-50, Hallicrafters SX-100, added the Knight VFO when I become K8ZSZ/8.

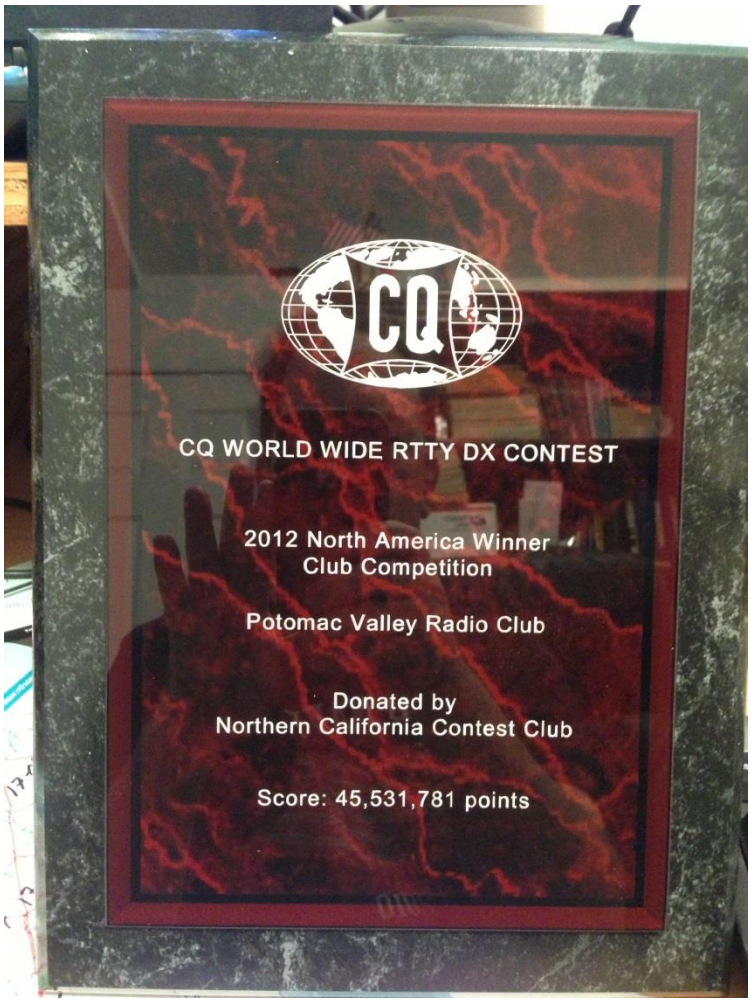
(photo enhancement by N3AM)

Membership News – Bud W3LL

PVRC added two new members since the last newsletter. Please welcome John K4HQK in the Central Chapter and Richard K3UI in the Rappahannock Chapter.

Chapter leaders please remember to complete the Meeting Attendance Report.

PVRC Wins the CQ WW RTTY Club Competition



Accepted in Dayton by Mark N2QT, photo by Bernie W3UR.

New Version of LotW TQSL Software is Out – John K3TN

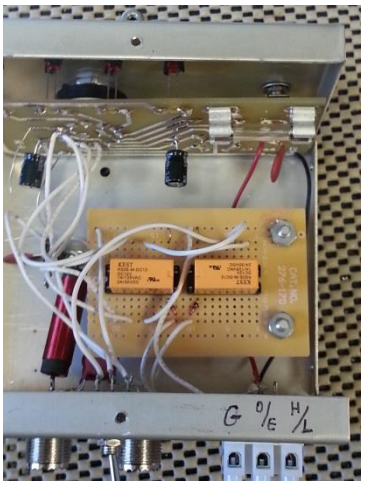
For most contesters, uploading contest logs to LotW has been a great way to get DXCC credits and meet the old “the final courtesy of a QSO is a QSL” tradition in our hobby. That usually meant several steps; dump a Cabrillo or ADIF file from your log, sign it using TQSL, then manually upload a .TQ8 file to LotW.

The ARRL has released an upgraded version of TQSL, v1.14, that streamlines that a bit – it will automatically upload once you sign the file, eliminating that last step. It has also has greatly improved error reporting.

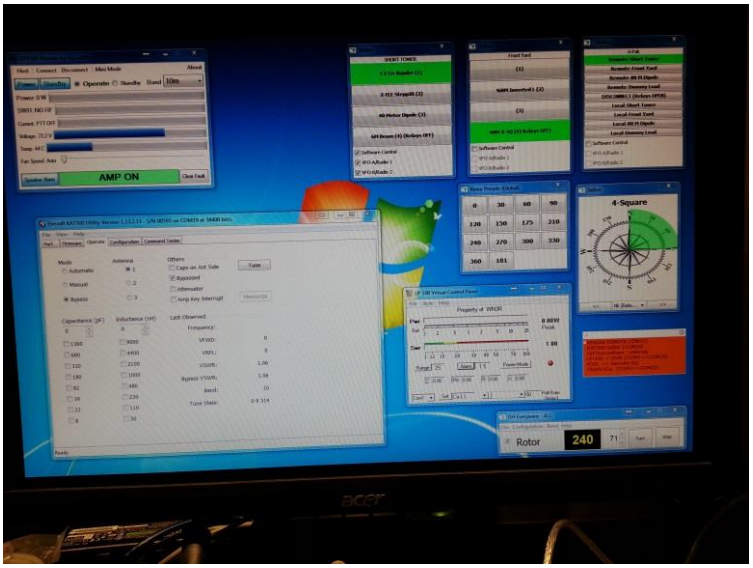
You can download the latest version here. Kudos to K1MU and AA6YQ for the upgrade effort

Moving Forward in Remote Station Operation – Dick WN3R

As I started getting interested in remotely operating my station up on the “Intermod Alley” hill west of Frederick MD, I decided to sell the Alpha 87a (I still have the ACOM 2000) and use that money toward the K3/0, KPA500, and KAT500 since I already had a spare K3 and the Remote Rig. It is so much better than the IC-706. After adding a full complement of GHE Everywhere boxes and Digi Serial-to-ethernet adapters, I can control all the antenna switches and rotors.



The relay board inside the Ameritron RCS-4 allows for the the 4-position rotary switch selections to be controlled by just two relays in the GH Everywhere system. Note the toggle switch. It allows the operator to return the control box back to normal manual operation. Another two relay positions change direction of the 4-square. 8 relays in the GH Everywhere remote module control the Array Solutions Six-Pak. It is impossible to have both K-3's connected to the same antenna at the same time.



A dedicated PC insures reliable operation of the GH Everywhere system. A DIGI Port-Server TS-4 allows serial port control of the amp, wattmeter, and tuner over the internet without a computer in the shack (increased reliability).

The KAT500 connects to a 4:1 balun for matching the 80m dipole fed with ladder line. That antenna is also used on 30m, 5 MHz, and 160m while the 30m loop and 160m inverted-L are being rebuilt.

An APC switched power strip allows each AC power outlet to be controlled over the internet. This is very useful for controlling AC power to every device and for rebooting the computers.

New Horizons for the Old Ham Radio Hobby – Andrey KL1A

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In this article I would like to share my personal experiences on the use of the remotely controlled amateur radio stations. This subject is not new, and was referred to repeatedly in some amateur radio information sources, as well as discussed in many forums on the Internet. So I will not be original here.

Perhaps one of the pioneers in the field of remote control in amateur radio were W4MQ and W7DXX, who began to conduct various experiments many years ago. By the way, W4MQ Internet Remote Base (*HAM Radio Internet Remote Control Pioneer*) received the ARRL Technical Innovation Award.

I observed the construction details and configuration of a remote control radio station for the first time on Nodir's EY8MM WEB site, where he described the setup and configuration of his radio remote control system. Before, that I only saw some short notes in different amateur radio sources.

My own story started at the time when my good HAM friend from Iceland Thor TF4M decided to equip his super station by remotely controlled system and shared the idea with me. We discussed the type of equipment to be used and the principles of construction and project implementation. In order to participate in this project I decided to purchase the RemoteRig «RRC1258mkII" modem for further TF4M's station tests. In spring of 2012, Thor received the necessary equipment. Later, in summer I also received the same equipment from Sweden to start testing remoting.

For a couple of weeks, Thor was "conjuring" his super station setup to get it linked to the Internet and to start project implementation. With the help of the radio amateurs from Sweden he gradually began to install hardware according to the configuration developed earlier. At the beginning the results were not great primarily because of the relatively weak internet channel. From my side, I connected my modem device and fine tuned it. In order to do so, it was necessary to keep in mind many factors including the configuration

of the communication equipment and antenna switching. So it took quite a long time to achieve the desired result. I didn't have any experience before with such a technology so I used common sense while working on this project.

The basic Thor's Setup was as follows:

- Two RemoteRig "RRC1258mkII" Modems.
- The Elecraft "K3/Twin" (later Thor got an Elecraft K3/0 which was designed specifically for radio station remote control).
-Antennas relay switches

My new RRC1258mkII Control Unit from RemoteRig.com (Photo KL1A)

My first Remote Radio QSO was held on July 4, 2012 with callsign TF/KL1A. I will not discuss legal aspects of the remote radio station control in this article. I can only say from the outset that Thor paid attention to strict adherence to the Rules and Radio Regulations. He has investigated very carefully the legal aspects of our operations to make sure we did not violate any law.

When the first part of the project was successfully implemented, even at the lowest Internet speed connection, we started the second part of it. It was about configuration and complete control of the station using the transceiver ELECRAFT "K3/0." The difficulty was to fine tune settings of both transceiver and modem. Weak internet channel added to the difficulty of the task. Second testing of the project was performed on August 12, 2012 with the callsign TF4M/KL1A. As a result, 220 QSO were conducted in a time frame of less than one hour.

New Remote Control Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster Project

At various stages of the project we continued to consult with other hams. We shared ideas and discussed the details. Among those helping us were two wonderful persons from the USA who were obsessed with the same idea, Ray W2RE and Lee WW2DX. The guys were working on same issue but at more serious business level, and they were looking for someone who could have performed beta testing for them. I offered my help and was testing their project during the next 6 months.

Their energy and enthusiasm is amazing, constantly at work implementing new ideas, solutions and pushing forward. This speed has always fascinated me. These guys' energy was amazing.

KL1A/W2 modest Remote Setup (Photo KL1A)

How it looks

Below I would like to focus on the description of the W2RE & WW2DX stations. Here, perhaps, the term Remote Control Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster is used for the first time and I would like to claim Copyright ☺.

The flagship of the Remote Control Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster is W2RE Big Gun Contest station:

W2RE Big Gun Contest Station (Photo by W2RE)

Here are the station descriptions from their website:

QTH: Summit, NY.USA.
Nestled at 2100ASL in the Northern Catskill Mountains, this Contest QTH currently has 24 antennas including the following:

Elecraft K3 with Expert 1KFA 1KW Amplifier and 4 Towers

- 6m – 5 element Yagi
- 10m – 5/5/5 Stacks + 7 Element Mono bander @ 100′
- 15m – 5/5/5 Stacks
- 20m – 4/4 Stacks + 5 Element Mono bander @ 100′
- 40m – 3 ele 40M yagi
- 80m – Full size 4 Square
- 160m – 3 Sloper EU/SA/JA - 4 Square being built
- WARC – Dipole @ 100′

This QTH will provide you with 1KW output on all bands 6-160m. This QTH has drastic drop offs in all directions. One of the biggest advantages of this QTH is the non-existent noise floor! This QTH has already set records and won CQWW and ARRLDX contests.

Other Remote Control Ham Radio Cluster stations:

QTH: Blueberry Hill NY. USA.
Located in the Hudson Valley, this QTH is at 1200ASL with drastic drop offs to JA and SA and beautiful takeoff angles in all other directions. This QTH has won #1 US ARRL and CQWW contests and consists of the following equipment:

Elecraft K3 with Expert 1KFA 1KW Amplifier

- 6-20m – 4 element SteppIR with 6 elements on 6m.
- 40m – 2 element F12 Magnum 240
- 80m – INV V – 4 Square in Spring
- 160m – Inverted L

QTH: Windham Mountain, NY. USA.
Located in the Catskill Mountains, this QTH is at 1800ASL with drastic drop offs to JA and EU. This QTH hits the very LOW angles as the terrain drops off 1500′ in less than a mile.

Elecraft K3 with Expert 1K-FA 1.2KW Amplifier

- 6m – 6 Element HyGain
- 10-20m – Force 12 Yagi + WARC.
- 30m – High Dipole
- 40m – 2 element F12 Magnum 240
- 80m – 1/4 Wave Full Size Vertical
- 160m – Inverted L

QTH: QUAKERHILL, NY. USA.
Located in Southern Dutchess County NY, this QTH has beautiful take off to EU and SA.

Elecraft K3 with Elecraft KPA500 Amplifier

- 6m – M2 6M7 @ 77′
- 10m – 4 Full Size Elements 2X Arrays 2/2/4 WRTC Antenna @ 73′
- 15m – 2 Full Size Elements 2X Arrays 2/2/4 WRTC Antenna @ 73′
- 20m – 2 Full Size Elements 2X Arrays 2/2/4 WRTC Antenna @ 73′
- 40m – Cushcraft 40-2CD 2 Element Yagi @ 85′
- 80m – 4 Square in a swamp
- 160m – INV L also in a swamp

The team is currently working on fifth Remote Control Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster site as well as three other sites along the Eastern seaboard.

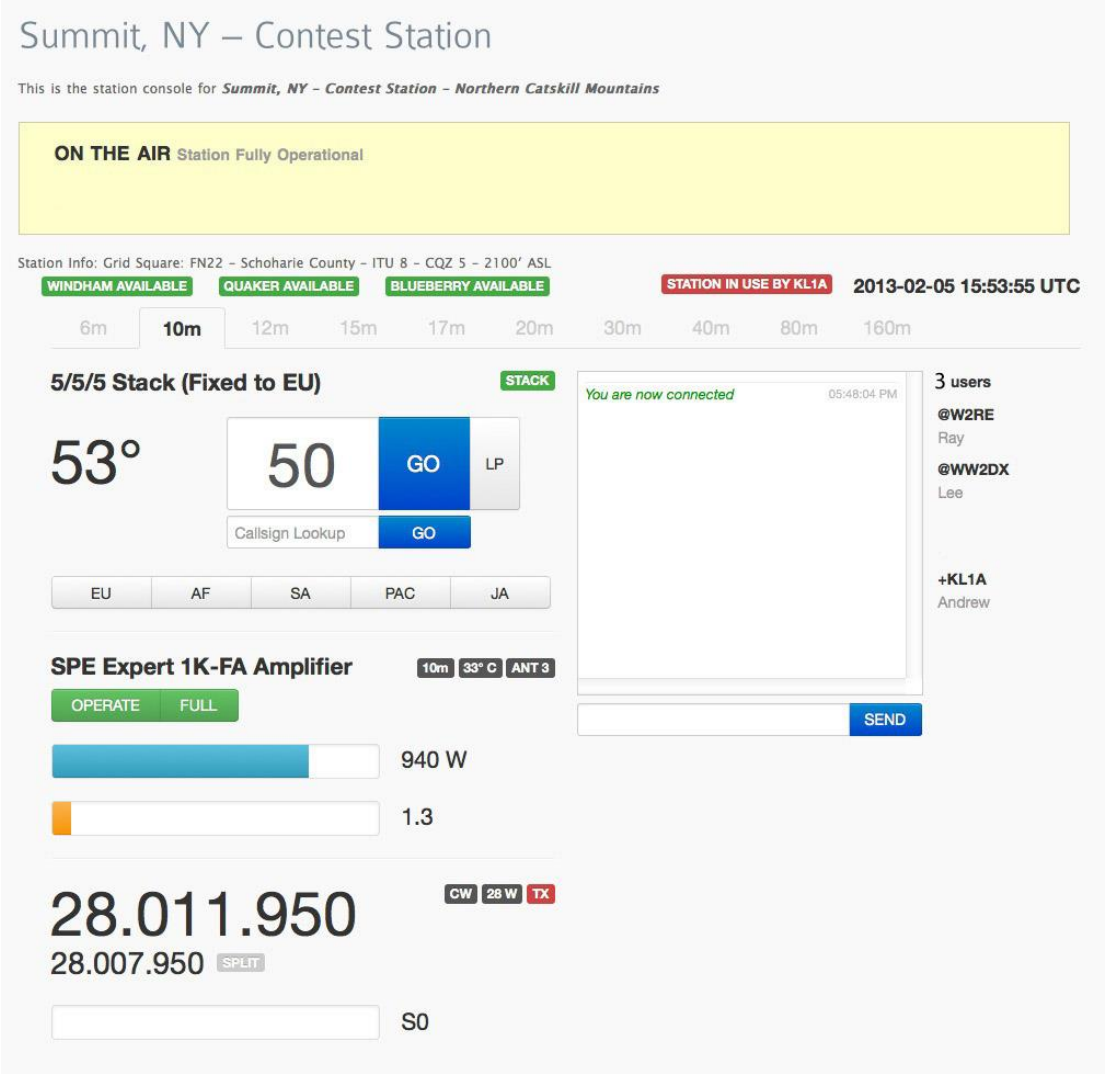
It is impossible for one person to build a network of stations of this level. This type of project would require a team of enthusiasts obsessed and completely dedicated to the idea. There should be a team work of enhtusiasts obsessed with the idea. The expenses were beyond imagination. On top of the expenses, team efforts should be acknowledged. I have worked from various US Contest Stations before (K1LZ and

K1TTT), but the results achieved while working from this Super stations ‘cluster’ were really amazing.

Dream Team

Remote Ham Radio was founded by Ray Higgins (W2RE) and Lee Imber (WW2DX) in 2012. Before RHR Ray and Lee owned and operated Hudson Valley towers, Inc. a tower and antenna installation and service company that built and maintained over 75 tower and antenna installations in the Northeastern United States. In the commercial sector they have done contract work for government agencies NASA and The Department of Homeland Security.

Ray W2RE has years of experience building, maintaining and designing winning contest stations. Lee WW2DX has experience in design, development and engineering new leading edge network and infrastructure technology. Their experienced team has brought Station Remote to the next level.



WEB RHR console was designed and developed by WW1X and WW2DX

The proprietary web console was designed and developed by the RHR team, WW1X and WW2DX to provide the best remote ham experience in the world. There is simply nothing like it. Countless hours of coding, testing, design and experimentation has produced one of the most elegant operating experiences in the world.

Right Choice

Daily discussions of configuration issues over Skype quickly yielded in positive results. After a couple of weeks I was able to work on HF despite the distance between me and Remote site of more than 6000km. The configuration was very similar to that of Thor TF4M. Based on the previous Elecraft K3 settings, it was easy to reconfigure the RRC modem for the new project. Some additional tweaks and basic configuration was also done.

It was especially difficult to achieve stable system operation in CW Mode. Any small failure on the Internet distorted the quality of the transmitted signal. Sometimes, CW was just unrecognizable. It took about two weeks to adjust CW. I have used a slightly different method of manipulation in CW Mode (my 'Know-How'). With the new configurations CW operation is now perfect as you will read below during CQWWCW.

In addition, I have tried different types of CAT Applications. It was not difficult to make basic configuration based on two ELECRAFT K3 transceivers , but it was much more complicated to manage mixed type configuration i.e. Application - Internet - K3, In addition, applications are usually based on the traditional operating system such as «Windows», but very few HAMs use a configuration under Mac OSX, which I was working in.

I would like to stress that during the project for the first time Lee WW2DX and I managed to connect Mac OSX and "RRC1258mkII" Modem without connecting to the Internet through a cable. Connection has been done by Wi-Fi.

CAT and Applications

Perhaps the best solution allowing to participate in such project with the MAC under OSX is the DX logging software «RUMlog». It's freeware Application, powerful and allowing to write scripts to control the transceiver remotely. It is also possible to write CW macros. Not an ideal solution, but it is better then nothing.

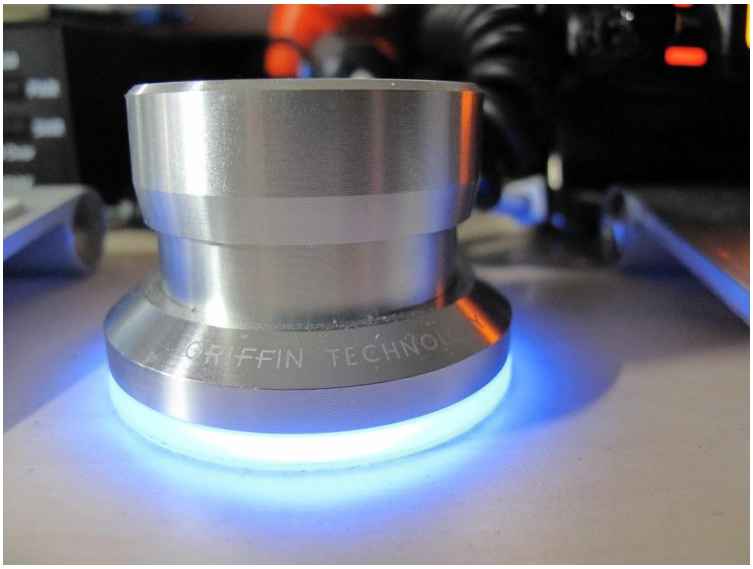
"RUMLog" Application on MAC Book Pro under OSX (Photo KL1A)

Being on a trip to the South of Germany, I have tested my Mac OSX/RUMlog + RRC1258mkII with unstable Internet connection via LAN-Repeater. I made a few hundred QSO's during this test. SSB signal quality was very decent, but CW sometimes had small problems with the quality. But for such a poor internet connection this can be neglected.
The next stage of the project was the testing of the configuration with N1MM Log and CAT Controlling Application - "TRX-manager" under Windows OS (Windows-XP). I didn't have any problems with this configuration.

The best solution for the Remote Control in my case was N4PY CAT Controlling Application. I would like to express my special thanks to Thor TF4M and to Carl N4PY for help in purchasing and using this very nice Application.

For me, N4PY program was optimal in configuration with LogiTech Mouse, SONY VAIO under "Windows-XP", and Log «Win-Test». I was able to make more than 16,000 QSO via remote control using my call sign KL1A/W2. First in Germany then in Austria and again at the end of the project in Egypt.

Daily operation of W2RE / WW2DX "Remote Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster" showed that the system is stable, flexible and robust.



From time to time I used the Griffin PowerMate 3D Mouse. Very useful for CAT Remote Control. (Photo KL1A)

In the Contest

CQWWDX CW Contest 2012 was certainly a particular challenge for the entire system. Perhaps it was the most dramatic moment during the whole project.

The most interesting fact was that during the CQWWDX 2012 in CW there was nobody working from Zone-34. The huge territory was not represented at all. Although I was physically stationed in Zone-34, I used W2RE / WW2DX Stations located in about 8000km away from me. I came to Egypt and installed my small RHR Setup. It included VAIO notebook, RRC Modem, Heil Proset headset, keyer and Power Supply. Internet Connection was provided by “Vodafone” by G3 USB Stick.

Participation in this Contest was unexpected for me. I did not plan on working in the Contest seriously and decided to only test the equipment at the RHR Blueberry Hill station. After about an hour of the Contest I went deep into the process and got carried away. Only after the competition was over did I realize that all the connections were carried out through the equipment located thousands of kilometers away. I did not feel this distance whatsoever, as if all the equipment was here, in my shack.

There were some surprises during the Contest when, for example, I was able to break a Pile-Up calling RI1ANF on the 160m. The Big Guns i.e. K3LR, K1LZ and even the W2RE M/S (SUMMIT) team were behind me. It was really amazing and unexpected.

In the entire time I operated the contest there was only one DX station I could not work - JT5DX on 40m. My remote 2 el. Yagi, apparently, was not enough for such a long path QSO.

Overall, the Contest left me in a very positive mood.

I worked in a new and exotic category in this Contest called the"Extreme category". This category promotes technology in contesting. You can read more about it here: http://bit.ly/UUXjhs

My final claimed score: 1847 QSO (2.542.290 Points). That's not bad for the Remote Control Station in the distance of about 8000km with a poor internet connection with ~400ms latency.

Summary

BAND	QSO	CQ	DXC	DUP	POINTS	AVG
160	57	10	23	0	134	2.35
80	123	18	47	0	319	2.59
40	290	23	69	2	730	2.52
20	603	22	74	1	1723	2.86
15	411	24	77	0	1189	2.89
10	363	25	86	2	1010	2.78
TOTAL	1847	122	376	5	5105	2.76

FINAL SCORE: 2 542 290

DX never sleeps

Part of the project included working with the DX stations. Operating with “TRX-Manager” or N4PY Applications is somewhat different from Elecraft “K3/0”, especially in case of “Split” operation. Sometimes it was difficult to recognize which frequency the DX station was listening. Manipulations with “Split” buttons were not easy and needed time. Nevertheless, after some exercise this problem can be ignored.

Below are examples of my 2012 DX achievements during the 'beta' testing of W2RE/WW2DX Remote Control Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster:

ZL9HR : SSB 10 / 12 / 15 / 17 / 20 / 40
CW 10 / 12 / 15 / 17 / 20 / 30 / 40

VU7M : CW 20

PT0S : SSB 10 / 12 / 15 / 17 / 20 / 40 / 80
CW 10 / 12 / 15 / 17 / 20 / 30 / 40 / 80 / 160

CY9M : SSB 40
CW 20 / 80

NH8S : SSB 10 / 15 / 17 / 20 / 40 / 80
CW 12 / 15 / 17 / 20 / 30 / 40 / 80 / 160

5T0SP : SSB 10 / 12 / 15 / 17 / 40 / 80
CW 15 / 17 / 40 / 80

Some positive aspects of working remotely (From RHR website)

Any General/Advanced/Extra Class licensed U.S. Amateur Radio Operator that may like to do one or more of the following

- Operate from a HOA restricted area.
- Operate from an apartment building.
- Experience “running” DX from the East Coast.
- Extend your DXing/Contesting Toolbox
- Open and close the bands
- Experience operating from one of the largest contest stations in the U.S.
- Operate from 2100′ASL with big stacks.
- Listen and test your station using a remote transceiver.
- Operate stacks, 80m and 160m 4 squares,
- Don’t want the expense of a tower installation.
- Don’t want the expense of a maintaining a station.
- Can take your shack with you (portable)
- You have more than one station to operate from!
- Keep the XYL happy!

Remote Control Ham Radio (RHR) Cluster © has been successfully running since October 2012.

My final results from operating remote for 6 months: 210 DXCC and 16076 QSO with almost completing 5B DXCC (-10 DXCC on 80m Band).

Conclusion

My special thanks to Thor TF4M, Ray W2RE and Lee WW2DX for this unique opportunity to be a member of their ambitious projects. It was really an exciting and unforgettable time in my HAM life.

Thanks to: WW1X, N4PY, N1MM, F5MZN, F6FVY, F6DEX, DL2RUM and to all who have helped throughout the project in its ultimate realization.

Thanks so much also to all radio amateurs who caused and who held all unforgettable QSO’a from all over the world! All these QSO's **(**TF/KL1A**,** TF4M/KL1A**,** KL1A/2 *and* KL1A/W2**)** do not count for DXCC but they do count for the true spirit of Amateur Radio trough state of the art technology and its applications.

References

TF4M : www.TF4M.com
Remote Ham Radio : *www.remotehamradio.com*
Sparky' Blog : www.CQDX.ru
EY8MM : http://www.ey8mm.com/articles/153-remote-control-of-hf-radio?catid=13%3A2010

*If you need to learn more about the legal issues of the Remote Station Control, I suggest to read the article on Thor’s WEB site:

1) Transnational Remote Operation : http://tf4m.com/tfkl1a-remote-operation/

2) TF/KL1A – Remote Operation : http://tf4m.com/transnational-remote-operation/

Read also: The legal aspects of remote radio station control http://www.cqdx.ru/ham/ham_radio/the-legal-aspects-of-remote-radio-station-control/

75 Years of Ham Radio Comms in Blair County - Bob, W3BTX/W3PN

Editor's note: the dispersed regional nature of PVRC means we don't know a lot about other members in other regions of the PVRC – especially what we do outside of contesting. Bob and a number of other PVRCers are in the Altoona, PA area, and Bob sent in this piece about their activities in their local club.

On March 17, 1936, the Horseshoe Amateur Radio Club Operators from Altoona and Blair County were pressed into service to help provide the much needed public service communications at Johnstown, PA. In 1936 the primary source of public service communications was really limited to telephone or telegraph using wire lines and they were out of service for a long time after the flood. Since radio repeaters, cell phones and satellite communications that we all rely on today were not even invented till the late1940's, it was down to just point to point 2-way radio communications. 43 hams from Altoona & Blair County (using their home made equipment) helped provide that needed communications at Johnstown, Pa.

In Feb 1937, the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, D.C. took the time to recognize "Amateur Radio Operators in Altoona" for their work in Johnstown, and the Altoona Mirror reported on the FCC declaration"

> *Washington, D.C. Feb 25, 1937: with national attention focused on the service rendered by radio amateurs in the flood emergency, records of the federal communications commission today showed Altoona has forty-three licensed amateur radio stations.*
>
> *Often called the "last back log of communications," the radio amateurs form an unusual group. Each station costs hundreds of dollars on the average, and long hours of study and practice lie back on each operator's license. Yet any amateur will handle, for nothing, messages which would cost a day's pay on a commercial basis; he is prohibited from making any charge for services rendered.*

Little did we know at the time that another major flood would occur again in the Johnstown area in 1977.

Fast forward to July 20, 1977

Again the local area ham radio operators were pressed into service to help with communications at Johnstown. This time we were better prepared and in addition to point to point communications (as in 1936) we were more technically advanced. We were able to install a (temporary) home-made ham radio repeater on top of Blue Knob at the ski resort.

This repeater allowed any amateur operator using a small hand-held radio or a mobile radio in the flood area to transmit directly from Johnstown to Blue Knob and be repeated

out over several hundred miles. This time we also were able to establish “direct communications link” with Harrisburg through the repeater. In addition, Ham Operators from several states including Washington D.C. volunteered their time and expense to bring their equipment to Blair County (the staging area for Johnstown) to help with the much needed public service communications in all of the affected areas of flood damage.

After this 3nd disaster at Johnstown, the director of the Blair County Civil Defense (yes that’s what the present EMA was called back then) recognized the value of ham radio as a back-up and sometimes primary communications in times of disaster and was able to get an early form of “grant money” for two new repeaters at both Blue Knob and Wopsononock Mountain. Both locations are still in use today with state of the art communications.

Present Day Ham Radio in Blair County

Until recently, the local Ham Radio Club would meet at the Red Cross building in Altoona, but unfortunately the building was sold and we lost our home. The international Red Cross had been founded as primarily a battlefield relief organization, and Clara Barton, the founder of the American Red Cross, had led some battlefield relief efforts during the Civil War. However, Barton felt the Red Cross could also provide relief for peacetime disasters, and the Johnstown flood of 1889 provided an ideal opportunity. Barton, 67, and five Red Cross workers arrived from Washington, D.C., on June 5, 1889, just five days after the flood occurred. Thus, the “Johnstown flood” was the first major peacetime relief effort for the American Red Cross.

But every time a door closes another one opens and we are now located at the local EMA / 911 operations center in Altoona. A special thanks goes to the EMA / 911 for recognizing and allowing this communications opportunity for the county. As you have read, the local “Hams” have always been there to offer support, and in my mind the EMA / 911 is a perfect fit because all types of emergency communications (public & ham radio) can be integrated at one location.

The Goal Starting in 2013

Our first goal is to install ham radio equipment and antennas at the local EMA that will allow us to have direct “over the air communications” with PEMA HQ in Harrisburg. There is now an active network of over 30 Central PA counties checking into a state-wide net on a regular weekly basis, and I would like to see the Blair EMA as a regular participant. These stations consist of both mobile and fixed base stations. In addition, since all emergencies are not always local (think about Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy) we want to make this location into a 1st class world-wide operation for Blair County.

We would also like to expand the ham radio licensing courses to all of the public service type people who may be interested in this amazing hobby. The local ham radio club is also certified by the FCC to offer license training locally. We offer these courses quarterly and they are open to all who are interested in becoming a ham radio operator.

By: Bob Gutshall, W3BTX/ P49T (LEPC Member) Licensed Ham since 1955, Roy Goshorn, W3TEF (LEPC Member) Licensed Ham since 1953

Upcoming Contests and Log Due Dates

Contests This Month

- June 1 – PVRC Reunion
- June 1 – SEANET
- June 8 – GACW WWSA CW
- June 15 – All Asian CW
- June 22 – Field Day

Logs Due This Month

- June 10 – EA CW
- June 12 - CQ M
- June 30 – VOLTA RTTY

See WA7BNM's Contest Calendar for more detail and the latest information.

The Editor's Last Word – John K3TN

I remember thirty years ago working a ZS station who said "Hold on, I'm going to switch to a remote connection to by brother's rhombic 100km away – tell me which is louder." As someone who never actually seems to get a tower in the air, I'm fascinated by the possibilities of remote operation, so it was good to see what Dick WN3R and Andrey KL1A and others have done. Maybe someday guest opping will not require leaving your own house. There is some controversy over the connection between the remote op and the station – if non-amateur communications (like the Internet or wireless commercial data services) are used, does that violate contesting rules?

Normally, I would take July off and not publish a newsletter until August. However, since PVRC is making a major push around the IARU HF contest, there will be a July issue – I'll take a break in August instead. Please send any photos or contest write-ups or Dayton trip reports my way for the July issue.

73 John K3TN

Eyeball QSO Directions

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

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

From W. Patrick Street, turn up McCain Dr. (the Mountain View Diner is on the corner), then turn right into the shopping center, then turn left and search for a parking place. The City Buffet is tucked back in the left corner of the shopping center behind the Mountain View Diner. You can't see the City Buffet from W. Patrick Street. Contact: Jim WX3B

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

VA LOCATION: Anita's, 521 E. Maple Ave, Vienna, VA. Tel: 703-255-1001. Meets at this location during the months of February, April and October.
Contact: Rich NN3W

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SOMD Region Meeting: The Southern Maryland Chapter meets at 6:30PM on the first Tuesday of even numbered months. We meet in the vicinity of Charlotte Hall, MD, with the specific location (usually a local restaurant) to be announced several weeks prior to the meeting (keep an eye on the reflector). These meetings are open to all PVRCers, guests, and those interested in joining PVRC. Contact Tom AB3IC for information: e-mail: GL1800Winger@verizon.net - cell: 240-434-3811

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

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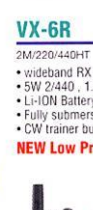

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