



# PVRC Newsletter

## March

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Website: <http://www.pvrc.org>

Meeting Info: <http://www.pvrc.org/chapters.htm>

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### President's Letter – Doug AA3S

Very much hope that all of you had fun with the extraordinarily good propagation (some said the best since 1957) during the ARRL DX CW contest a few weeks ago.

Our club focuses on having fun in radio contests as well as offering opportunities to learn communication and technical skills in a friendly environment, such as our Chapter meetings and special events like the Galactic Lunch. We also encourage giving to charitable organizations that advance the purposes of the Amateur Radio Service; the ARRL is one of those organizations with specific programs to advance our shared purposes. If you attended the recent on-line Galactic Lunch then you heard details about one of those programs from the ARRL manager in charge of making that program work well.

The specific program is the ARRL *Teachers Institute (TI) on Wireless Technology* program managed by Steve Goodgame K5ATA who was hired about 2 or 3 years ago specifically to run this effort ([here](#) and [here](#)). The essence of this program is that it teaches aspects of RF communications to practicing teachers in an engaging manner so the teachers can influence many students in their day job of teaching STEM topics. One teacher can influence a couple dozen students each year for the teacher's entire career of teaching. It costs \$3500 to fund one teacher, so that teacher could end up influencing 500 students to explore STEM topics and Amateur Radio specifically. The ARRL TI program now has about 80 teachers per year (7 sessions of about 12 teachers each session). One year's teacher cadre may influence 40,000 classroom students over the teachers' careers!

Steve Goodgame is well aware that follow-up with the teachers is crucial to keeping the positive momentum of their experience in the ARRL course and he provides needed follow-up and resources. The resources provided can be equipment from the existing manufacturer sponsors or from ARRL itself. ARRL's commitment to this program is shown by Steve's authorization to hire a much-needed assistant.

I expect that you will hear more about this promising ARRL program as your PVRC Officers digest this information and construct some recommendations as to how PVRC might help (follow-on help to teachers, equipment, donations...).

**Club Competition: Beyond 5M (Earn Another Plaque or Two) - Doug AA3S**

Be sure to monitor the PVRC Reflector for news about the two contests in March that are PVRC 5M contests! Another ARRL DX (SSB) and then there is the [CQ WPX SSB](#) . As always, the 5M calendar is found at [PVRC 5M Contest Calendar](#) or by easy click-navigating from the “PVRC 5M” tab on the main webpage.

**Now for something different...**

There are several State QSO Parties that publish score results of out-of-state radio clubs and award a plaque or certificate to the high scoring club. PVRC has recently won several. Rather than have that plaque reside at some random officer’s house, it will be the intent of PVRC to send that plaque to the highest scoring PVRC member or multi-op station owner who contributed to that win for PVRC.

The following State QSO Parties have had club competitions (i.e. the contest sponsor calculates and publishes club scores) and I’m assuming for now that they will again in 2024 (it may depend on whether a sponsor steps up to provide the specific out-of-state club award):

QSO Party	Club Competition	Date	Web Link
Virginia QSO Party	<b>Yes &amp; we won in 2023 upsetting the long-time incumbent! **</b>	<b>3/16/2024</b>	<a href="https://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/QSOParty.htm">https://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/QSOParty.htm</a>
Georgia QSO Party	Yes	4/13/2024	<a href="http://gaqsoparty.com">Georgia QSO Party (gaqsoparty.com)</a>
Michigan QSO Party	YES	4/20/2024	<a href="http://michiganqso.org">Michigan QSO Party – Sponsored by MRRC (migp.org)</a>
New England QSO Party	Yes	5/4/2024	<a href="http://neqp.org">New England QSO Party – 20 hours, 67 counties, the chase is on! (neqp.org)</a>
Ohio QSO Party	Yes	8/24/2024	<a href="http://ohqp.org">Ohio QSO Party – Sponsored by MRRC (ohqp.org)</a>
Tennessee QSO Party	Yes	9/1 or 9/8/2024	<a href="#">Tennessee QSO Party   cq cq cq TNQP de K4TCG</a>
Iowa QSO Party	Yes	9/21/2024	<a href="http://w0yl.com">Iowa QSO Party 2022   Story County Amateur Radio Club (w0yl.com)</a>
Maine	YES	9/28/2024	<a href="#">Maine QSO Party, Maine's Premier International HF Contest, which takes place annually in September. Maine Radiosport, Maine ham radio, amateur radio HF contesting (ws1sm.com)</a>
California QSO Party	Yes	10/5/2024	<a href="#">CQP Home Page</a>
Arizona QSO Party	Yes	10/12/2024	<a href="#">AZQP - Arizona QSO Party</a>
Pennsylvania QSO Party	Yes	10/12/2024	<a href="#">PA QSO Party - PA QSO PA</a>
New York QSO Party	Yes	10/19/2024	<a href="#">New York State QSO Party – Official website of the NYQP</a>

It is time consuming and easy to make errors when sifting through all the state QSOp websites to determine details of club competitions; it may contain errors so let me know what you find.

**\*\* The Virginia QSOp next month** is particularly complicated for club competition, there are two awards (see slide 5 of the presentation [here](#). updated February 15, 2024:

- 1) "Combined Club Score" which seems to mean the scores of all Virginia members of a club are summed and compared to all other Virginia-member clubs. So only PVRC members with their contest QTH in Virginia would be counted toward this award. This is the award that PVRC-VA won in 2023! See slide 99.
- 2) "Virginia Club Merged Score - VA QSOs" which adds the scores of club members by counting only the QSOs that both originate and terminate in Virginia. For this award in 2023, PVRC almost closed the gap with the winning point total of the Fauquier ARA. See slide 102. This award is now within reach of PVRC! There are specific operating tips provided by the Fauquier ARA to score better in the Virginia QSOp *because they want the competition!* See <http://www.vagsoparty.com/>

**Any volunteers to lead a PVRC effort to win these Virginia QSOp awards?**

73 Doug AA3S

<b>PVRC Officers:</b>		<b>Trustees:</b>
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**PVRCers at Orlando HamCation 2023 – Jerome K8LF**



Fred AI3Z, Bruce W3YVV, Ted WA3AER, Mike N3VOP



W3YVV, Scott KE4WMF (Colonial Capitol Member in front of his contest rover VW GTI), WA3AER, Jerome K8LF

**Confessions of an S&P Rate Junkie – Rick N1RM**

Someone said that confession is good for the soul. Here goes...

A combination of life events conspired to limit my time in what has been reported as the best conditions this millennium for the ARRL DX CW contest. I managed to operate a little over nine and a half hours and it sure was fun. Dozens of mults spotted on multiple bands kept me “in the red” for most of the contest. There was no reason to run since my rate was 100-120 much of the time with S&P, and it was almost all mults. The W9PA cluster node with the “NOT SKIMBUSTED” filter turned on seemed to work much better than usual in preventing busted spots.

I spent almost the entire time using N1MM’s “Available Mults and Qs” window. I displayed only mults, sorted the list by beam heading, and ALT-A’d my way through the list of red entries. Occasionally I would hit ALT-J to gradually nudge the beam around the compass. It was a well-oiled QSO machine!

Then I started running into folks going several QSO’s without identifying. How dare they impede my rate! I started violating my “hear his call before calling” rule, settling for the tail end of a spotted call as sufficient evidence when I jumped to a new frequency. Doing

so improved my rate, and glances at the bandmap kept me from jumping on obviously busted calls.

Sometime Sunday afternoon I was “in the zone” managing about 140/hr (all mults!) and my attention strayed. Here’s what happened:

- ALT-A: I catch the tail end of the CQ “LPL”.
- I look at the auto filled entry and see EW3LPL.
- I hit F4 – perfect timing with the end of the CQ.
- As I do that I say to myself “man, I bet he gets confused with Frank a lot – CRAP!!”...
- I pray that he comes back to someone else.
- “N1RM 5NN MD” – double crap!
- I send him 5NN VA and look for an RF rock to crawl under, imagining the chortling and head shaking in the LPL shack.
- I wonder how quickly I can get a new callsign so I can blame it on someone else.

I will allow Frank to assign my penance. I just hope it doesn’t involve becoming overly familiar with the Wouff-Hong.

**Comparing Contest Claimed Scores on 3830Scores.com – John K3TN**

Pretty much every contester is familiar with the excellent [3830Scores](https://3830Scores.com) site Bruce WA7BNM created and maintains. However, not everyone has noticed the Compare Scores function that allows any reported score to be compared against any other score over many years, showing mults and Qs per band.

You can access Compare Scores from any contest summary (look at the end of the **Summaries:** line above the contest title) or from the view of any individual score report (look to the right of **Summary** above the Band/Mult/Qs box score)

Here’s an example from the recent ARRL DX: three part time high power/wire antenna efforts:

Call	Edition	Class	Power	Score	Totals		160		80		40		20		15		10	
					QSOs	Mults	Q	Mlt										
W3IP	2024-Feb 17	SOUAB	HP	2,063,205	1305	527	95	48	100	69	175	78	250	106	325	110	360	116
K3TN	2024-Feb 17	SOUAB	HP	1,885,464	1624	387	73	31	74	34	307	61	372	81	282	87	516	93
KM3T	2024-Feb 17	SOUAB	HP	1,882,842	1313	478	16	15	103	61	189	81	324	103	313	107	368	111

Mike W3IP and Dave KM3T both put in about 24 hours, focused on S&P to get mults and ended up with almost identical QSO totals. But Mike’s multiplier strategy and his time on 160M gave him a big winning edge.

John K3TN was on for 18 hours but focused almost exclusively on running and had a 300 QSO advantage over W3IP and KM3T. But since a mult was worth about 4 Qs in this one, not spending enough time chasing mults meant I barely edged out Dave and lost to Mike. Of course, accuracy counts, too – the cleaner log will probably decide the battle between KM3T and K3TN.

You can also compare scores year to year. Conditions were awesome for the 2024 ARRL DX CW but turns out my results were nearly identical to 2023, another 18 hour BIC year for me:

Call	Edition	Class	Power	Score	Totals		160		80		40		20		15		10	
					QSOs	Mults	Q	Mlt										
K3TN	2024-Feb 17	SOUAB	HP	1,885,464	1624	387	73	31	74	34	307	61	372	81	282	87	516	93
K3TN	2023-Feb 18	SOUAB	HP	1,859,283	1577	393	16	15	117	53	366	71	308	83	292	85	478	86

The major difference was I spent more time on 160/less on 80 in 2024 and also didn't do as well on 40M.

We should have another good year for the 2025 run of the ARRL CW, I hope to remember this then and adjust my strategies!

### Jim and Nina Do Patagonia – Jim N3JT

Nina and I normally take our overseas trips these days in the form of organized tours to countries with large cities that feature great museums, have fascinating history – and where I know ham radio operators and can meet them astride the tour schedule. But Patagonia, which is essentially the southern part of South America consisting mostly of Argentina but also some of Chile, has little of any of those. It is a relatively desolate kind of place at first glance, with few cities, hardly any notable museums, and few hams. Sure, I have worked stations in Ushuaia (Argentina), El Calafate (Argentina) and Punta Arenas (Chile) over the years, but not in recent months.

So why Patagonia? Because it is reportedly filled with great natural beauty and the sorts of sights I could never experience elsewhere. Convincing Nina to go was a minor challenge because the tour description included Zodiac rides, hikes to glaciers and long mountain passes, and 4 days of possibly rough sailing through the fjords and waterways near Cape Horn. I could not understand why this did not attract her. What did convince her were the cool temperatures and her interest in seeing penguins, beautiful mountains, and glaciers. So off we went on January 7, 2024, flying nonstop from Miami to Buenos Aires, where our tour group of 21 would assemble and begin its adventure. I should mention here that a principal reason for preparing this article, apart from sharing our travel experience with others, is to record what we experienced for ourselves.

This trip, organized by Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT) for January 7-21, provided only two evenings free of organized activities, one in Ushuaia and the other in Calafate, both within Argentina. All other evenings involved scheduled dinners with our 21-person tour group, one dinner with a local family in Ushuaia and the rest aboard our 200-passenger boat that would later take us to Cape Hope, into the Magellan Strait and through part of the Darwin Passage. In the weeks prior to departure, I tried to get in touch with several hams I had worked in these towns but schedules conflicted so we could not arrange any eyeball QSOs, though along the way I did spot two tribanders.

Neighbors delivered us midday to a Tri-Rail train station near our home in Boynton Beach. The last stop is Miami International Airport, which apart from some walking at the airport turned out to be an efficient and cost-effective option over a taxi or Uber. Our 9-hour non-stop flight from Miami to Buenos Aires left at about 8:30 pm. Sleeping on the flight proved elusive. The plane was a Boeing 787 and I think they reduced the seat

spacing so that only a small child can find a comfortable position for so long. I guess I must have dozed off because I only got through the first third of Barbi when I awoke with a leg cramp a few hours later.

We arrived at our Marriott hotel in the early morning, too early to access a room and nap so we took a walk along the awakening avenues of downtown Buenos Aires. Adrenalin always fuels energy for the first day of such trips. By 5 pm the other members of our tour group had arrived so there was the usual introductory meeting where each person notes how many trips they have made with OAT, their own backgrounds, and what they looked forward to seeing in Patagonia. There were 4 physicians in our group, which was unusual, and I was the only attorney (or engineer) among us. We began our acculturation with a tango lesson taught by a professional dancer and bandoneon player. I am not inclined to enjoy dancing, but this was actually rather fun. But soon it was time for us to separate ourselves and meet with Claudia, a museum tourguide we met in Buenos Aires 6 years earlier with whom I remained in contact.

A featured cuisine in Buenos Aires is of course their beef, which is very tasty and half or less the cost we would normally pay. To illustrate, we chose a top restaurant in the city and ordered sizeable ribeye steaks, wine, sauteed vegetables, huge salads and dessert, all for about \$90 including tip. Claudia could never afford such a meal so we were pleased to live her culinary experience. I tend to be a mafist (a person who does not eat mammal meat) so this was quite excursion in cuisine for me.

The next day our group toured Buenos Aires, where I had been twice before, culminating in a dinner at a local family's home where we discussed Argentine economic and political issues. OAT makes its trips adventures in a variety of ways, including meals with locals. There would be another such meal in Ushuaia. The dinner in Buenos Aires was at a neighborhood apartment and consisted largely of salad, meatballs, and mashed potatoes, with alfajores (a sweet cookie) for dessert, and of course Malbec wine. One cannot help but feel sorry for the people in a country that experienced 200% inflation in 2023 and has a history of horrid dictatorships marked by some 30,000 missing political activists (Desaparecidos), most of whose bodies have not been found. Because of the economy and corruption, massive demonstrations, and the leading generals' incompetence in the Malvinas (Falklands) war, democracy was restored in 1985. But since then, there has been a succession of ineffectual leaders and a seemingly intractable economy. The recently elected president, Javier Milei, seems to produce a highly polarizing reaction among Argentines. From those we spoke with, mostly better educated people, Milei is a disaster. But the Peronistas did not have answers, either.

The next morning, we headed to Patagonia on a flight to Ushuaia, Argentina, the southern-most city in the world located 3-1/2 hours by plane south of Buenos Aires. The city is the largest in Patagonia and sits along the Beagle Channel on the Isla de Tierra del Fuego. See Foto 1.



Foto 1. Ushuaia, the southern-most city on the planet with a population of some 87,000.

This was the beginning of our Patagonian adventure. We posed for photos in the dock area before a huge “Ushuaia” block structure, and later walked along the Beagle Channel shore consisting solely of rounded, glacially-worn stones. A local guide provided us with more details about the Malvinas war, how ill-prepared the Argentine navy was, and the underlying reasons for starting the war (yes, for the generals in power to distract public attention from the desaparecidos and the economy!). Some 600 Argentine soldiers died (255 British), and Argentina remains less than pleased that Chile sided with Britain over this one, partly because Chile feared a possible Argentine attack for other reasons. Both sides have arguments for sovereignty, but Brits have been on the islands for the last 200 years. During this presentation we got our first taste of the strong winds that would characterize most of our Patagonia visit. Interestingly, the temperatures in summer do not go much below the mid 40’s (5C), and in winter rarely below 25 degrees (-3C), but the wind is worst during summer. We were then on our own until dinner, so we visited the Maritime Museum, Prison Museum, Museum of Art, and 2 preserved early homes. The Maritime Museum had excellent displays of Patagonian birds and animals, dioramas of native cultures and history of the region, including stories about sea adventures like those of Shackleton. The Prison Museum was partially converted art sales booths with detailed description of colorful prisoners who had been inmates. That evening we had our second local-family dinner, this one offered by a couple long resident in Ushuaia. Their home was quite lovely, with multiple rooms and great views. But this was just the warmup because Ushuaia is the embarkation point of our Ventus Australis boat trip of four days, taking us to glaciers and waterways most of us had only read about in featured adventure stories and in our tour catalog.

We were delayed in departing the port at Ushuaia by several hours due to high winds that made docking the incoming Ventus Australis vessel risky. We all walked together to a restaurant about a mile away and had a nice dinner. It is interesting that I cannot

remember hardly any of the meals of our trip with greater specificity than that they were good. I always chose fish or chicken, sometimes pasta, but regret admitting I always ate the desserts, which were invariably very tasty. Later I will note the one dessert I clearly remember, and why. By the time our dinner was finished the Venus Australis had docked and we boarded.

During the evening, we sailed eastward in the Beagle Canal and then south through Murray Channel, and Nassau Bay toward Cape Horn, the southernmost point of South America, where so many ships were lost over the centuries. See Foto 2. It is very rough water because of the convergence of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the winds that are funneled by the Andes. We were fortunate that the weather was not bad, but it was bad enough to prevent us in the morning from taking Zodiacs (rigid inflatable boat used to transport people from cruise ships to land). I remember trying to walk down the hallway of the ship and essentially bouncing from wall to wall with the waves. Fortunately, Nina and I had Scopolamine patches and so were never seasick, which we most assuredly would have been. See Foto 4 (lighthouse at Cape Horn).



Foto 2. Display in the ship's quarterdeck showing our path aboard ship from Ushuaia (Argentina) to Punta Arenas (Chile).

Heading north again, we stopped at Wulaia Bay, where Charles Darwin stopped during his voyage with the Beagle. It is a stunningly beautiful area, lush with great views.

The next day we took Zodiacs to two glaciers, Pia and Porter. There were 10 or 14 people aboard each Zodiac, and we approached quite close to the glaciers, different in their positioning in the mountains and the way they calved. Some glaciers are solely on dry land and so ice falls off them into the water; others are longer and extend into the sea, calving both from underneath and above. See Fotos 5, 6 and 7. We also visited the Condor Glacier, where we saw many condors. See Foto 8.



Foto 3. View of Wulaia Bay, and the Ventus Australis.



Foto 4. Cape Horn lighthouse from our ship.

Foto 5. Walking towards Pia Glacier.

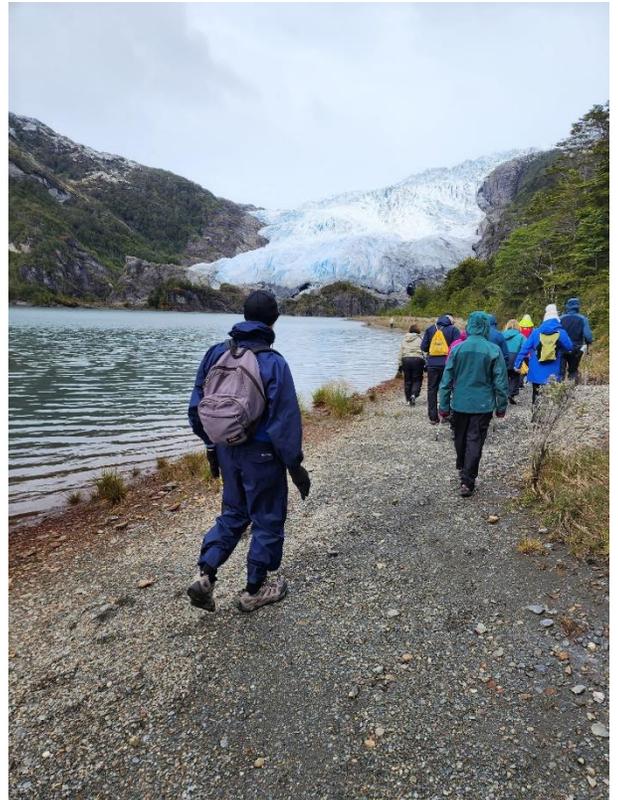




Foto 6. A typical view of the majestic Atlas Mountains (not the Andes).



Foto 7. Nina and Jim in front of a glacier. Either Pia or Porter, can't remember!!



Foto 8. Andean condors.

We made several additional stops at glaciers and overlooks, but of great interest was the stop on Magdalena Island and our visit with the Magellanic penguins. They are clearly not afraid of people and in fact will walk up and presumably challenge you as you get too close to their nests, though the path we are limited to is many feet away. See Fotos 9 and 10. Note that the penguins taste like chicken. (Just kidding; making sure you're reading everything!)



Foto 9. Magellanic penguin on Magdalena Island, in the Magellan Strait.



Foto 10 A penguin pileup

Our next stop was Punta Arenas, a city of about 125,000 people, in Chile along the Magellan Strait. It was the demarcation point of our sea voyage and the beginning of the final land portion of our tour, which would include visits to Torres del Paine National Park, Porto Natales, and Calafate. Punta Arenas has a lovely, multiple-vessel outdoor museum (Museo Nao Victoria) featuring recreations of the Beagle (Darwin's ship), the Chilean Schooner Ancud, which claimed the tortuous Strait of Magellan for Chile, and a replica of the lifeboat that saved Ernest Shackleton's team. See Foto 11.



Foto 11. Replica of Ferdinand Magellan's Nao Victoria.

We left Punta Arenas and by bus headed north to Porto Natales, which borders Torres del Paine National Park, at its center the Cordillera del Paine, the series of tall mountains that give such majesty to the rivers, lakes, and overall landscape of this area. The park is a transition area between the Magellanic subpolar forests and the Patagonia Steppes. Our hotel was essentially a spa with a lovely indoor pool and fantastic views of the mountains. We hiked for about 90 minutes and saw a variety of wildlife, including condors, guanacos (cousins to llamas), rheas, crested cara cara, and gray fox. See Foto 12. The Paine Massif consists of granite mountains that emerge suddenly from the Patagonia steppes and are capped by crumbling sedimentary rock. They are only some 12 million years old. The sedimentary rock and magma collided violently through tectonic motion and were thrust upwards, later worn to the current striking pattern by Ice Age melting. One thing we missed here (and elsewhere on the trip, actually) was a view of the southern sky at night. Most of the Milky Way is visible only from the Southern Hemisphere and I had looked forward to seeing that sky, but we were either too tired to stay up so late (remember, the days are very long that far south in summer) or there was cloud cover. We also visited a sheep farm, ate lamb chops and watched shearing. Warming temperatures have led to reduced grass for sheep so that the future of sheep farming is at great risk in Patagonia.

We stopped at Lago Pehoé, a beautiful place adjacent to a mountain river cascade. It is notoriously windy in that area and our visit was no exception. In fact, they closed the path to the overlook as we exited because winds were more than 60 mph. Several people had to crawl to safety, and one of our group (notably the tallest among us) fell, cutting his face in several places.

Our final stop was El Calafate on the northern edge of Patagonia. The area is named for the indigenous Calafate bush, which is a small, tart berry that produces the best dessert I think I've ever had. It was so good I dedicated a photo to it! See Foto 13. It is much like tartufo, the Italian dessert that consists of a round scoop of vanilla ice-cream with a maraschino cherry in the middle, all covered with dark chocolate. This Patagonian killer-dessert was a step up from tartufo. It is calafate ice cream (with the berries in it) covered by dark chocolate. It is not available in Buenos Aires or anywhere else outside Patagonia. The route to Calafate required us to change buses at the Chilean-Argentine border. We were now in Argentina again.



Foto 12. Torres del Paine Massif. A massif is a compact group of mountains.



Foto 13. Calafate ice cream made from calafate berries (Magellan barberry, or *berberis microphylla*). I have a photo of the dessert untouched, but this gives you a better view!

We went by bus a few miles west of El Calafate in the Los Glaciares National Park to see the Perito Moreno Glacier, a pristine site some 200 feet above Lake Argentino. It was named after Francisco Moreno, a 19<sup>th</sup>-c Argentine explorer who played a role in resolving a border dispute between Argentina and Chile in this area. We watched calves fall into the sea and were able to walk along catwalks to see the glacier from different heights and angles. It was quite impressive. See Foto 14. We also took a horseback ride in the scenic area of our hotel. I even succeeded in picking a few calafate berries along the way from atop the horse. The woman riding the horse behind mine kept yelling at her horse to stop putting its nose up my horse's butt, but her horse apparently was not fluent in English.



Foto 14. Perito Moreno Glacier.

The next day we headed to the airport and flew back to Buenos Aires. Many of us had luggage that weighed more than the 22-lb. limit in Argentina, but our tour company paid the overage (which turned out to be about \$7 per person). The limit internationally is higher so that was no problem, of course. Include a few rocks from Patagonia and you can increase the weight of your suitcase easily! I am told they frown on smuggling Magellanic penguins into the luggage.

We had one final day in Buenos Aires. Our tour included an excursion by boat in Tigre, part of the Paraná Delta adjacent to Buenos Aires. There are dozens of interconnected waterways featuring vacation homes and secluded residences accessible only by boat. We had no notion of this aspect of life in Argentina so close to Buenos Aires. We enjoyed a final steak dinner and headed to the airport for our overnight flight home.

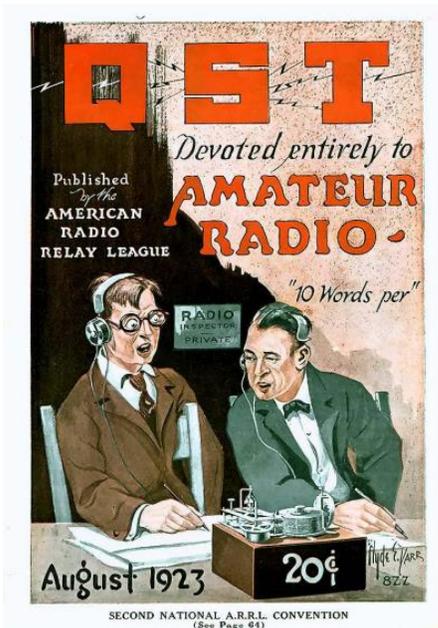
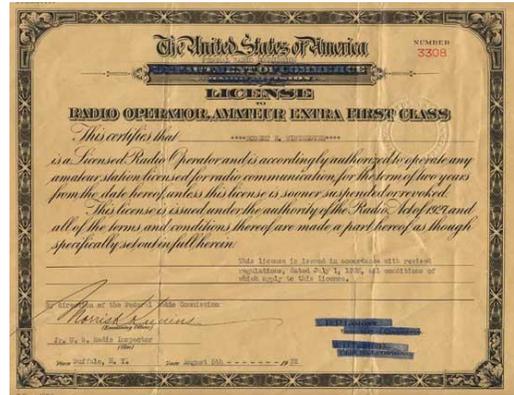
I saw two tri-band antennas on the trip, one in El Calafate and the other in Ushuaia, but no meetings ensued. I walked from our hotel to the house in Ushuaia but nobody was home. His neighbor greeted us and told us he was out, which I could tell because his car was gone. I left my card on his door but did not hear from him. The neighbor I chatted with reported that his wife just passed away and he was visiting his family a lot. Between Google Maps and my walk, I think I found his call sign. The other, in El Calafate, is on a street I noted but nobody on QRZ.COM in El Calafate appears listed with that street name. So it goes.

Unfortunately, one of our group tested positive for Covid at the beginning of the trip. He wore an N-95 mask and ate at a separate table. We still were in close quarters in the bus and when walking, however. By the end of the first week there were 4 members similarly situated, some with no symptoms but testing positive, others coughing. By the end of the trip at least half were coughing, though Nina and I seemed to have it the worst (despite having all the inoculations plus RSV and flu shots). We wore our N-95 masks but at the Buenos Aires airport several people moved away from us in reaction to our prolonged coughing outbursts. We took what medications we could and survived the flight to Miami, where we walked to the Tri-Rail train, rode to our local station and took an Uber home.

This trip was excellent, far more fascinating and fulfilling than we had anticipated. Part of that is due to the excellent program and tour-guides of the company we chose, but underlying it all is the land itself, filled with wildlife, desolation, beauty, glaciers, wind and history. It's the "other part of the world" most people might never see but should. Even if ham radio is not part of it!

**Why It Is Called an "Extra Class" License – Frank W3LPL via PVRC email**

The "Amateur Extra First Class" radio operator license was first issued in July 1923, deriving its name from the "Commercial Extra First Class" radio operator license. The Department of Commerce first issued the "Commercial Extra First Class" radio operator license in August 1914. It required passing a 30-wpm transmitting and receiving code test in addition to holding a Commercial First Class radio operator license.



From [QST: August 2023](#): Amateur Extra First Class operator licenses will be issued to persons passing the required special examination with a percentage of at least seventy-five percent and a code speed in sending and receiving of at least twenty words per minute, five characters to the word, who have had at least two year's experience as a licensed radio operator and who have not been penalized for violation of the radio laws subsequent to the date of these regulations.

**PVRC DXCC Challenge Standings – Frank W3LPL**

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

CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC
W4DR	3204	K5VIP	2571	N3KN	2066	NA1DX	1579
W3UR	3181	N4QQ	2565	AA4NC	2061	N3AO	1527
W3LPL	3172	K3JT	2560	W3XY	2016	WB2ZAB	1522
K4CIA	3137	W3BW	2554	W3FOX	2002	AA4FU	1519
N2QT	3106	W4VIC	2509	W0YVA	2001	K4HQB	1518
W4PK	3038	W3OA	2503	K5RJ	1961	KU1T	1501
N4BAA	3032	WS6X	2493	N3KS	1906	N3AIU	1487
W3DF	2995	W2GG	2471	K4EU	1871	W8AKS	1487
N4MM	2987	N4GG	2426	N3ND	1867	N3HBX	1428
WX4G	2973	WA2BCK	2411	KM3V	1849	WA3EKL	1420
K4SO	2972	N3RC	2393	W2CDO	1820	N8II	1390
K1HTV	2969	W2YE	2334	K3AJ	1818	N1EK	1388
N3NT	2966	K0GD	2314	W3KB	1815	W4PRO	1377
K5EK	2949	K1ZZI	2314	W3DM	1791	NR4M	1367
W3LL	2946	W3YY	2297	KE4S	1758	W9GE	1364
W0VTT	2928	K3TN	2278	N3OC	1749	AK3E	1348
W3KX	2924	K4WNW	2278	N4GU	1738	KG4USN	1337
K1AR	2919	KA4RRU	2256	K4QE	1726	W3NRJ	1325
K2PLF	2903	NW4V	2219	N4XYZ	1720	N1SZ	1317
KG7H	2896	W3MR	2217	ND3F	1718	K4ZA	1313
K3WC	2889	K4FJ	2214	W4GP	1710	K4NTO	1222
AB3CV	2882	N4JQQ	2201	W3US	1705	N3RR	1199
N4DB	2857	K1EFI	2190	KF7NN	1698	W4NF	1181
KG4W	2853	N4ZH	2188	K3STX	1696	K5VG	1170
K3WA	2832	W3IP	2179	W3UL	1679	K3IXD	1090
K3RA	2708	K2BA	2153	N3MK	1674	NE3K	1073
WB3AVN	2669	N3QE	2147	NE3H	1668	N3COB	1049
N3MN	2657	W3TN	2132	K1RH	1666	W4ZV	1048
K5RT	2689	K3PU	2107	K3WI	1652	W3OU	1046
K1GG	2668	K3SX	2083	N4ZR	1651	K4ZW	1044
W4FQT	2622	KN4KL	2079	WB4DNL	1620	K4VX	1021
N4TL	2605	W3GG	2071	K3KY	1606		
N3KK	2575	N4NW	2068	KE3X	1588		

**Membership News – Tim N3QE**

Chapter leaders please remember to complete the [Meeting Attendance Report](#). Members can check and update their roster details via the [Roster Lookup](#).

**Upcoming Contests – from [WA7BNM](#)**

**March 2024**

+ ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Mar 2 to 2400Z, Mar 3
+ Stew Perry Topband Challenge	1500Z, Mar 9 to 1500Z, Mar 10
+ North American Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0359Z, Mar 10
+ YOTA Contest	1000Z-2159Z, Mar 10
+ BARTG HF RTTY Contest	0200Z, Mar 16 to 0159Z, Mar 18
+ Russian DX Contest	1200Z, Mar 16 to 1200Z, Mar 17
+ Virginia QSO Party	1400Z, Mar 16 to 0400Z, Mar 17 and 1200Z-2400Z, Mar 17
+ North American SSB Sprint Contest	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 24
+ CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Mar 30 to 2359Z, Mar 31

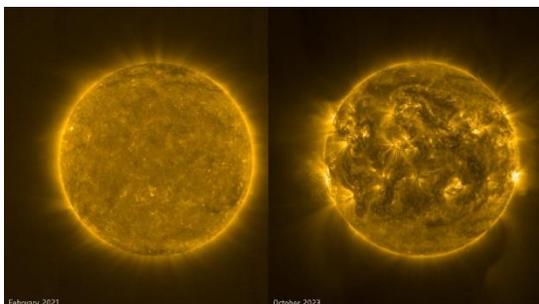
**RED – scores count towards PVRC 5M Awards or Challenge Program**

**Editor’s Last Word – John K3TN**

Thanks to Jerome K8LF, Rick N1RM, Jim N3JT, and Frank W3LPL for contributions to this issue of the PVRC newsletter.

Contesting life is good at the top of the solar cycle – the ARRL 10M DX contest was awesome. Funny how easy it is to work those DXpeditions during the contest compared to working them in those big split pileups before and after the contest.

The quality and usefulness of the PVRC newsletter depends on contributions from members. If you have photos from club meetings, screenshots of new contest software, or writeups on station improvements or contest war stories, send them in any format to [jpscator@aol.com](mailto:jpscator@aol.com).



**Via N1RM:** great visualization of a sunspot maximum. February 2021 on the left, October 2023 on the right. From [Spaceweather.com](https://www.spaceweather.com)

**From the PVRC Treasurer – Ted WA3AER**

PVRC has chosen not to implement an annual dues requirement. We depend on the generosity of all our club members to finance our annual budget. In addition, active PVRC members are expected to participate and submit logs for at least two PVRC Club Competition contests per year.

When contemplating your donation to PVRC, each member should consider the benefit you are receiving from PVRC and its many opportunities for your personal growth in our wonderful hobby, then donate accordingly.

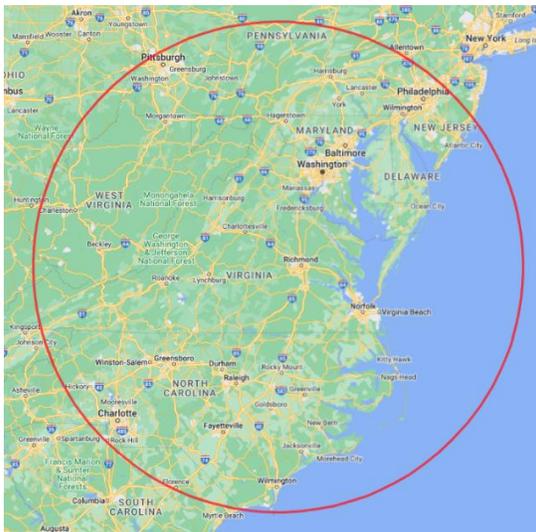
Direct donations to PVRC via Credit Card or PayPal may be made by clicking this "Donate" button and clicking the next Donate button that appears on your screen:



**Donations to PVRC are not tax deductible**

**Eyeball QSO Directions**

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



**Now a Word From Our Sponsors**

*PVRC doesn't ask for dues, but the Club does have expenses. You can also support the Club by buying from the firms listed who advertise in the newsletter!*



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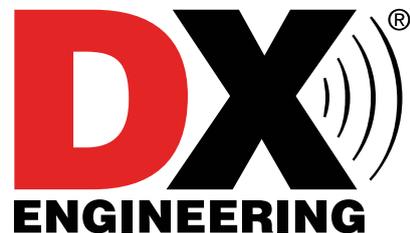
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### Modular, hybrid architecture adapts to your needs

The basic K4 covers 160-6 m, with dual receive on the same or different bands. The K4D adds diversity receive, with a full set of band-pass filters for the second receiver. (Thanks to direct RF sampling, there's no need for crystal filters in either the K4 or K4D.) The K4HD adds a dual superhet module for extreme-signal environments. Any K4 model can be upgraded to the next level, and future enhancements—such as a planned internal VHF/UHF module—can be added as needed.

### Single or dual panadapter, plus a high-resolution tuning aid

The main panadapter can be set up as single or dual. Separate from the main panadapter is our per-receiver *mini-pan* tuning aid, with a resampled bandwidth as narrow as +/- 1 kHz. You can turn it on by tapping either receiver's S-meter or by tapping on a signal of interest, then easily auto-spot or fine tune to the signal.

### Comprehensive I/O, plus full remote control

The K4's rear panel includes all the analog and digital I/O you'll ever need. All K-line accessories are supported, including amps, ATUs, and our K-Pod controller. The USB display output supports its own user-specified format. Via Ethernet, the K4 can be 100% remote controlled from a PC, notebook, tablet, or even another K4, with panadapter data included in all remote displays. Work the world from anywhere—in style!

### K4 KEY FEATURES

Optimized for ease of use

Modular, upgradeable design

7" color screen with touch and mouse control

ATU with 10:1+ range, 3 antenna jacks

Up to 5 receive antenna sources

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## ID-50A | VHF/UHF D-STAR Portable

- High Visible LCD with Backlight Function • Find Nearby Repeaters with the Built-In GPS • Easy D-STAR Settings for Beginners • Voice Recorder Function • Share Pictures in DV Mode



## IC-7300 | HF/50MHz Transceiver

- RF Direct Sampling System • New "IP+" Function • Class Leading RMDR and Phase Noise Characteristics • 15 Discrete Band-Pass Filters • Built-In Automatic Antenna Tuner



## IC-7100 | All Mode Transceiver

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

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



## IC-7610 | HF/50 MHz All Mode Transceiver

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## IC-2730A | VHF/UHF Dual Band Transceiver

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## ID-5100 AD

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

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