



PVRC Newsletter

January 2014

President's Letter – Ken KE3X

On behalf of the Officers and Trustees of Potomac Valley Radio Club, I extend a warm welcome and Happy New Year 2014 to all! With this column I begin my tenure as your new President, following in the mammoth footsteps of K4ZW, KD4D and most recently, Rich DiDonna NN3W. I would like to thank Rich in particular for his careful stewardship of PVRC over the 2011-2013 term, as well as the wealth of advice he has shared since I joined PVRC in 2010 after a 17-year absence from radio.

Although I have met many PVRC'ers in person, I'm sure some are asking: "Who is this KE3X dude anyway"? To answer this, I quickly glanced around the shack: FT-1000MP's from N4CW and K3ZZ... Alpha's from WN3R and N4RV... DVK's recommended by WX3B ... Bird wattmeter slugs from K4EU, headsets recommended by W3DQ and W3LPL. Hmm, do I see a pattern here? Then I walked outside: Tribander built by N3AM, tower help from K2PS ... 160 antennas by K3STX and K3ZM. OK - this is starting to make sense.

'Certificate wall' shows Sweepstakes strategy from NN3W... All Asian DX band plan from K3ZO... WRTC invitation from guest-ops at NR4M, N3HBX and N4RV ... PVRC email history reveals contesting advice from an additional 47 PVRC colleagues before I stopped counting.

So who is KE3X? I guess... I am 100% PVRC! Virtually my entire enjoyment and adventures in radio contesting over the last 3 years can be attributed to our wonderful club. I am honored to be your new President and excited to lead our Board over the next 12 months to build on our storied history since 1947.

New Year - New Challenges

So what's on tap for 2014? For starters, the New Year brings two exciting new events: the ARRL Centennial QSO Party and the Second Annual NAQP Challenge. As a long time 'little gun station' myself, I am particularly excited about these two events in which PVRC will play major roles, and where the 'little gun' will have an opportunity

for BIG FUN and to make a major impact on club scoring.

2014 ARRL Centennial QSO Party

Quick Quiz: "What is the single most recognized callsign in the world?" It's W1AW, of course! Have you ever wondered what it would be like to run pileups from the most famous callsign in the world? Well, in 2014 you won't have to drive to ARRL Headquarters to find out ... you can 'be W1AW' from the comfort of your own shack! In 2014, the W1AW callsign will be goin' mobile across all the US states and territories. Complete details are located [here](#). Here are some summary comments to introduce the event:

"The Centennial QSO Party is made-up of two main activities: (1) W1AW operating portable in each state and most territories; and (2) The Centennial Points Challenge which is the accumulation of points from qualifying contacts made throughout 2014. To have a score listed online in the Points Challenge competition, logs must be submitted through the Logbook of the World (LoTW) system. Station hosts must be ARRL members."

The complete schedule of operations is located [here](#):

As you would expect, we have several PVRC stations coordinating the Mid-Atlantic states. Each weekly W1AW 'Host Leader' will be organizing a schedule of volunteer stations to activate the W1AW callsign during that week. As the W1AW call can be activated on multiple bands and modes simultaneously, you can imagine we will need LOTS of volunteers! If you would like to participate in this historic event, please reach out directly to one of the Host Leaders listed below:

State	Week of ...	Host Leader
NC	Jan 1-8	N4AF
VA	Apr 9-16	K4EU
MD	Jun 25 - Jul 2	W3LPL
DC	Jul 2-9	KE3X
MD	Aug 13-20	W3LPL
NC	Sep 17-24	N4YDU
VA	Oct 8-15	K4ZW
DC	December?	KE3X

(may activate DC again if needed)

For each of these weeks, there will be multiple opportunities to participate - contact the Host of your state to get on the operating roster if interested. Note: this is a distributed operation, where each station operates W1AW from their home QTH. After your operation is completed, you will forward your log to the Host Leader, who will consolidate all logs and upload to LOTW.

To give you a flavor of the level of activity expected, KL7RA's team plans to have 15 stations active starting the first hour of their assigned week in Alaska... so sign up early and often!

2014 NAQP Challenge

Last year our NCCC rivals threw down the gauntlet and dared SMC and PVRC to enter the First Annual NAQP Challenge. This three-way club competition was created to add a 'new dimension of fun' to the North American QSO Party (NAQP) events and complement the existing 5-operator team competition. NCCC won the inaugural Cup, assigning NAQP as a 'focus contest' and taking advantage of good high-band propagation.

Well, this year the NAQP Challenge is back ... and with it comes a serious piece of 'Stanley Cup' quality hardware to the winning club – see photos in the article following this piece.

Here's how the NAQP Challenge works:

1. Six NAQPs total: CW, SSB, and RTTY, for winter and summer.
2. Club score per each contest is simply: points * multipliers (Total points of all logs) * (multiplier = number of club participants in that contest) Participant = someone who made at least 1 QSO, either as a S/O or as part of a M/2. M/2 score is calculated like CQ Multi-op scores: percentage of club members participating in the M/2 is the percentage that gets added to the club total.
3. A club member can participate anywhere in the world. No 175-mile circle rule. As long as the ham is a member of the club at the time of the contest, that person's contribution counts.
4. The S/O and M/2 stations must submit a log to NAQP in order for it to count for the club total.
5. Score is based off of 'Preliminary' scores as reported on the NCJ website.
6. Anyone who runs high power in NAQP and submits a HP checklog is counted as a participant, but their score is 0.
7. All this is totally separate from the normal 5-person NAQP teams.

The dates for January 2014 NAQP's are all Saturdays: Jan 11th (CW) and Jan 18th (Phone). The RTTY leg follows shortly afterwards, on February 22 (more to follow in next month's column). Each contest starts at 1800 UTC (1PM Eastern).

As usual, your official 'NAQP Floggers' this year will be organizing 5-person PVRC teams for each mode, and whipping interest into a frenzy: KE3X (CW), WX3B (Phone) and N3QE (RTTY). When they come calling, be sure to sign up quick and ... Let's win the Cup this year! See the next issue of National contest Journal for a complete write-up of the 2013 NAQP Challenge.

NAQP's Added to 5-Meg Program

With the NAQP Challenge as background, the NAQP events have also been added to the PVRC 5-Meg program on a two-year trial basis. The Reference Score will be set at 250,000 for each mode, reflecting the shorter 12-hour NAQP contest period compared to most other contests with a 48-hour time limit and 1,000,000 maximum point value. We'll evaluate participation trends after 2015 and decide whether to make NAQP's a permanent 5-Meg fixture.

Personally, I like the addition of these shorter events into 5-Meg... it gives me more flexibility around my weekend family schedule, yet I can still operate 'full bore' for the entire contest period and get a full night's sleep afterwards.

And Don't Forget - There's a 160-Meter Contest in January, Too!

Finally, in addition to the NAQP's and ARRL Centennial event in NC, January will also see the return of the CQ 160-Meter CW Contest on January 24-26. Our own Peter Briggs, K3ZM will be out in force, defending his USA Single Operator Combined title from 2013. I will be handing out the 'coveted DC multiplier', and look forward to getting many PVRC'ers into the log as always.

One final thought: PVRC is **your** club. What 'new twists' would you like to see in 2014? One example: there has been some interesting chatter on the CQ-Contest reflector about creating a new hybrid Internet/radio contest that would appeal to online gamers. Any ideas? How about inventing a new experimental contest 'from scratch'? What would be the parameters and how should we market it? PVRC has been making history for 67 years... let's not stop now. Email your thoughts to anyone on the Board and keep the comments coming.

See you in the pileups!

Ken KE3X

Another Way to Beat NCCC – The NAQP Club Challenge Cup



They can't beat us in Sweepstakes, so the NCCC has latched onto the NAQP Club Challenge. They won the inaugural round in 2013, but January 11 (CW) and January 18 (SSB) will give us a chance to start the process to snatch the cup from their grasp in 2014...

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VP2VI/W0DX, W3IKN, W4KFT

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

Using the New 3830scores.com to Compare Contest Efforts – John K3TN

When I got back to contesting in 2009 after a decade long Rip Van Winkle-like QRX, one of the amazing advances was how quickly I could see contest scores by using the 3830 reflector. Doing the PVRC newsletter back in the late 1980s/early 1990s, I used to listen to the actual 3.830 Mhz frequency and hand write scores down to report in the newsletter.

One odd thing: since CQ has joined QST in **not** providing full line contest line scores in their magazines, the 3830 results are really the **only** place I actually see my score - I seem to rarely fight my way through all the various web sites required to do so.

Recently, Bruce WA7BNM has improved things even further by putting up the [3830scores](http://3830scores.com) site. It makes it easier to both report your score and see summaries of all scores, and also added a very neat function: an easy way to compare multiple scores.

Here's an example of my score in the 2013 CQ WW CW against those in PVRC close to my score in the SOAB HP Assisted category:

Call	Edition	Class	Power	Score	Totals			160			80			40			20			15			10		
					QSOs	Zones	Countries	Q	Z	Cnt															
W2NO	2013-Nov 23	SOAB(A)	HP	1,747,395	1051	125	460	3	3	3	36	12	35	224	24	88	222	26	99	328	31	123	238	29	112
K3TN	2013-Nov 23	SOAB(A)	HP	1,746,714	1160	114	420	17	6	12	69	14	17	206	21	80	327	22	91	303	26	99	238	25	91
W4RM	2013-Nov 23	SOAB(A)	HP	1,725,750	1031	27	450	17	11	16	53	14	48	150	25	74	275	29	101	214	29	107	322	27	104
W2CDO	2013-Nov 23	SOAB(A)	HP	1,666,224	1142	120	393	0	0	0	106	14	53	304	26	83	242	29	87	312	27	90	178	24	80

You can see I didn't do a great job on multipliers, probably reflecting two things: (1) I wasn't on during the prime Sunday am run times at all; and (2) I tried to run much more than I usually do. That resulted in W2NO creaming me on countries even though I had a slight edge on Qs.

You can also compare your own score against previous years:

Call	Edition	Class	Power	Score	Totals			160			80			40			20			15			10		
					QSOs	Zones	Countries	Q	Z	Cnt															
K3TN	2012-Nov 24	SOAB(A)	HP	1,890,207	1218	127	422	31	10	21	109	17	56	233	23	78	323	26	93	331	31	102	191	20	72
K3TN	2013-Nov 23	SOAB(A)	HP	1,746,714	1160	114	420	17	6	12	69	14	17	206	21	80	327	22	91	303	26	99	238	25	91

Here you can see that my 2012 effort beat out my 2013 effort – mostly with much better results on 160 and 80, which far outweighed gains I made on 10m. While I spent about the same number of hours on the air each year, in 2013 I didn't wake up in the wee hours on the second night and missed out on the prime low band hours around EU sunrise.

Membership News – Bud W3LL

Everyone must have been busy contesting in December - PVRC added no new members since the last newsletter.

Chapter leaders please remember to complete the [Meeting Attendance Report](#).

Laurel Chapter Shack Upgrades - Bill N3XL

The Laurel Chapter, W3LRC, has upgraded our shack located in the Laurel Municipal Center. We are now equipped to operate two radios on 10 -80 meters, all modes. Additional upgrades are underway for VHF bands.

The architect of our HF upgrades was Jim Nitzberg, WX3B, who made an outstanding presentation on multi-operator contesting and presented some options for the upgrade of our station, last October. We followed through with his recommendations and, largely due to the hands-on efforts of Johan Stewart, NI3C, putting things together, we were up and running for the MDC QSO Party in August. We captured second place in that event.

The shack upgrades have invigorated interest in contest operations in the club and we have a very ambitious contest schedule laid out for this season. Hope to see you on the bands.

Upcoming Contests and Log Due Dates

Contests This Month

- Jan 1 - SARTG RTTY
- Jan 4 - ARRL RTTY Roundup
- Jan 11 – NAQP CW
- Jan 18 – NAQP SSB
- Jan 24 – CQ WW 160 CW
- Jan 24 – REF CW

Logs Due This Month

- Jan 7 – ARRL 160M
- Jan 14 – ARRL 10M
- Jan 15 – OK DX

See WA7BNM's [Contest Calendar](#) for more detail and the latest information.

Editor's Last Word – John K3TN

I tried my first remote operation in a contest – putting in a shift at K4VV during the 10M contest. Skype was not kind to us that weekend, but Mike W0YR has already begun a series of upgrades to move in new remote connection/audio technology. I was impressed at how well it worked and how much fun I had.

Remote operating seemed to be a major trend this past year, and it makes a lot of sense. The aging of the ham and contesting population means some really good stations not getting used that much, and more operators living where they can't put up a station. Could you increase the points your station generates if you could support remote operation?

We welcome a new advertiser in the Newsletter this month – K3LR and DX Engineering. Give them your support in return – a lot of great stuff for improving your signal.

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 Golden Corral Frederick, MD
5621 Spectrum Dr.
Frederick, MD 21703
PVRC Meets in the BANQUET ROOM
(301) 662-5922

From Interstate 270 south of Frederick, MD
take MD Route 85, "Buckeystown Road" NORTH.
First right on Spectrum Drive.
Restaurant is in a couple of blocks. Most arrive about 6 PM for dinner and informal discussions. The meeting begins at 7:00 PM.

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!

Now a Word From Our Sponsors

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AMP-172102	Type N Male	RG-8/RG-213/RG-393	\$4.35
AMP-172102H243	Type N Male	DXE-8U/DXE-400MAX/LMR-400	\$3.91
AMP-172135	Type N Male	RG-8X/LMR-240	\$4.38
AMP-182100	PL-259	RG-58/LMR-240	\$4.14
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AMP-182115-10	PL-259	RG-8X/LMR-240	\$4.50
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