

POTOMAC VALLEY RADIO CLUB

President - Fred Laun K3ZO

Vice President - John Pescatore WB2EKK
Secretary - Roger Kaul K3TM

Vice President - Don Daso WA8MAZ
Treasurer - Carl Andersen W3XE

The Potomac Valley Radio Club meets the second Monday of each month, from September through May. All radio amateurs interested in contesting and HF operating are invited to attend and apply for membership. Meetings alternate between Colesville MD and Temple Hills MD. Anyone on the 147.00 repeater can provide directions.

PVRC members have established a packet radio based DX spotting system on 145.59. Try the system out and contact N2FB to support the system

BULLETIN EDITOR

John Pescatore WB2EKK
(W) 301-294-8486
(H) 301-622-0219
Packet - @N4QQ

Send me your comments,
articles, opinions, etc.
Deadline: 20th each month.

JUNE BULLETIN

DIRECTIONS TO THE JUNE JOINT PVRC/FRC MEETING Saturday 17 June 1989, 1-5pm QTH of W3LPL

Bring lawn chairs!!

FROM THE EAST:

I-95 or Rt 29 North to Rt 32 West
Turn right at stop sign in Clarksville
Turn left at second stop light (Rt 32)
Turn left onto Burnt woods (5 mi)
Turn right onto Hobbs (1.7 mi), try to find house

FROM THE NORTH:

I-70 West from Baltimore to Rt 97 South
Turn left onto McKendree (2 mi)
Turn right onto Hobbs, go till you see a few towers

FROM THE SOUTH:

495 to Georgia Ave. Rt 97 north
Go many miles, cross Paxtuxent River
Enter Howard Co, turn right onto Burntwoods
Turn left onto Hobbs, find Ham Heaven

POINT/COUNTERPOINT

Remember the days when contesting controversies would swirl up, and exchanges of letters in NCJ and other magazines would go on about subjects such as guest ops, multi-multis, multipliers per band in Sweepstakes, etc? Even the most controversial topic we have today, no-code licensing, hasn't really stirred up all that much debate. The PVRC bulletin is the club's forum for presenting personal opinions, and Fred's editorials have presented some strong opinions. Bud W9OCL sent in a packet message agreeing whole-heartedly with Fred's opinion of list operations, and the decline of DX operating skill in general. Bud, as W4ASU, had a lot of experience from the other end of the pileups as well.

One of our more frequently published members, Jim N3JT, sent in some alternate views on some of the recently discussed subjects. I hope more people will do so, or come to the meetings and voice their opinions. Maybe we can recreate the old Saturday Night Live routines. Who remembers when Dan Akroyd came back to Jane Curtin with "Jane, you ignorant slut. You hop from bed to bed with the frequency of a cheap ham radio"?

The following represents the opinion of Jim Talens N3JT, and do not reflect those of the FCC, PVRC, ARRL, FOC, or any other organization

having or not having an acronym name. We recognize our responsibility to print opposing viewpoints, if we feel like it. Your mileage may vary.

FROM A MEMBER'S SHACK JIM TALENS N3JT

Our President has offered a series of editorials in this bulletin on matters of topical concern. His views are well stated and reflect sentiments many of us feel from time to time about DXing and contest operating. But there are counterpoints and alternative views. Let me offer mine on three of Fred's recent expressions. The first is on his opinion that competition justifies setting yourself on essentially any frequency you like, within 200 Hz of another station. The second involves the use of "QRL?" to determine if a frequency is clear. The third concerns the recent 4W0PA operation.

200 Hz High quality operating to me means optimizing courtesy and information exchange efficiency. Using minimum power and leaving the station on an adjacent channel plenty of elbow room is the objective. Unfortunately, we do not always have conditions that allow us to achieve this objective. In the extreme is the environment that most strongly challenges us to exercise our operating skill: the DX contest during peak sunspot cycle years on an open HF band. Fred has flatly stated that even in this environment if you plop down on a frequency 200 Hz away from another station you are exercising quality operating skill. I think more is required!

Picking a channel 200 Hz from a nearby strong signal does not, by my operating standard, constitute adequate exercise of courtesy. The burden on one using an 80 meter beam and 1.5 KW output to avoid unnecessary interference to adjacent stations is higher than on one running 100 W and a dipole. The difference stems from the simple physics involved: the bigger signal is more likely to bother one or more nearby stations. In days of yore when the AR-88 with a 1 kHz bandpass filter was considered good ham receiving equipment, you would not expect to hear signals 60 dB over

S9 from 80 meter beams hundreds of miles away. This permitted the development of hearing skills that people like Fred now display.

With increased crowding borne of the greater number of active hams, the potential for interference had increased and we must be more careful in unnecessarily crowding or interfering with other stations. The law required no less. Fred, for his part, has not said "200 Hz, provided nobody complains." He has said simply, "200 Hz because that's what a true competitor should expect." I don't believe such a simplistic practice is good enough under today's operating conditions. If you drop into an apparently clear channel 200 Hz from the nearest station and that

station complains because you are blocking his state of the art receiver, you are probably too close for those band conditions and your station capability. You should move elsewhere. On 28 Mhz, where you can often hear no other station within hundreds of miles or much over S9 in strength, 180 Hz might be adequate! The survival of the fittest syndrome in a contest no longer has a place in quality operating. Reflect on courtesy and you'll do the right thing, even in a contest! In short, 200 Hz is not necessarily enough of a guardband under all conditions.

QRL? Factors such as skip, average QSO exchange duration, station capability, band choice, antenna direction, and legal requirements are all involved in our decision to select a frequency, particularly during a contest. Sending "QRL?" on CW as part of a longer transmission that includes your callsign is perfectly proper to assess a tentative channel. But the length of time required to send that message in its entirety can cause unnecessary interference to someone already there or nearby. I would suggest that, as a general policy, where there is a question between sending only "QRL?", thus minimizing interference, and sending "QRL de [callsign]", the most courteous and efficient choice is the former. Some, like Fred, argue that sending "QRL?" is illegal because it is a transmission without identification. But I think there is an inter-

CONTEST CALENDAR

June 3-4	PVRC Reunion
June 10-12	ARRL VHF
June 24-25	Field Day
July 8-9	IARU HF

pretation that permits this more courteous and efficient practice.

At the outset we must assume that the calling station's intent is to send a full message that includes his callsign. If dispatch of the transmission is interrupted by the protestation of a station already on or near the subject frequency, it would constitute a direct rule violation to continue transmitting. Thus, sending "QRL?" and then pausing momentarily for a response, to avoid violating a prohibited act, and continuing the transmission with callsign identification if there is no interruption, does not in my view constitute a violation. The caller's "QRL? de [callsign]" message would be truncated only on the preemptive intervention of station protesting interference. This interpretation avoids Fred's concerns about violating a rule through the exercise of the courteous and efficient practice of asking if the frequency is clear before transmitting.

4W0PA The recent 4W0PA operation typifies the worst of today's list operations. I agree with Fred that it is by far better for most of us if the DX station develops a pileup, works all the stations he can and then moves to another frequency when he can no longer cope. But the operator of 4W0PA was a neophyte who was dispatched with instructions to operate in a list mode. Is it his right to choose? What can we do to stop it? Just complaining about it does nothing. Should the ARRL disallow DX country credit where the contact had been made by list operation? Should DX columnists raise the issue, urging those planning DXpeditions to avoid lists, and include myriad reasons why that style leads to fewer stations worked and overall unhappiness? Should we as a club consider writing to the various DX journals advocating the anti-list view?

Any comments? Jim N3JT

MAY MEETING

The May meeting was hosted by Bill Hider N3RR at the Gannett USA Today facilities in Rosslyn, VA. Both the USA Today newspaper and television show are produced from there. Bill is the VP for Telecommunications.

The first part of the tour involved the electronics and studio for the TV show. They pro-

duce the show (1/2 hour each weekday and 1 hour on Saturday) here in the afternoon and then distribute it via satellite to local stations. This requires even more equipment than the W3LPL multi-multi. Susan Freidlander gave this part of the tour.

The second part of the tour emphasized the steps in preparing the color USA Today newspaper. Originating from the 1100 Wilson Blvd. offices, the material is transmitted via satellite at 150 KBps to 33 receive sites in the US and three sites overseas (VS6, 9V, and HB9). Using data compression the entire paper is sent out in several hours, from 6pm - 2am Sunday through Thursday, and 8am - 5pm Monday through Friday for the international edition. Bill is involved in system design and keeping this network operational. Many thanks to Bill for the tour. Anyone else have tours of the work QTH which could be arranged? The meeting was attended by W3LPL, K3TM, N3RR, W3EMH, K3ZO, WA8MAZ, K6IR, KM4E, WB4J, KA3UBJ, W3IDT, WB4HRE, W4EZ, AA4XU, WB3FSB, AA4U, K0OO, KX3Q, and W6AXX.

DAYTON 1989

There sure were a lot of PVRers at Dayton: K3ZO, WA8MAZ, WB2EKK, WB3JRU, KC8C, K1ZZI, W3GG, W3LPL, N2FB, WB3AVN, W3EKT, N3GB, KB3HH, K8SYH, W3XE, K3WX, K3LYW, N3AM, K3SA, KZ3H, KA1GD, K3RT, K6IR, W0YVA, K3NA, KN3T among the locals and K4VX, K2PLF, W7RM, K5KT, among the out-of-towners. The Saturday evening "East Coast Contest Club" dinner had over 85 attendees and had to spill out of the banquet room usually used. The contest/DX hospitality suites were even hotter and sweeter than usual, especially since there was one fewer suite this year. Frank W3LPL was the only PVRer to win a prize in the CW pileup contest.

The antenna forum had a few interesting presentations. W3LPL presented his analysis of stacking antennas for the best contesting results, mainly achieving optimum coverage of Europe at the required takeoff angles. K1EA showed his elevated 80 meter vertical array. NP4A showed how his 3 element 80 meter beam was designed and constructed. The boom is 85 feet of Rohn 45, each element is 147 feet long. The entire antenna weighs 4000 pounds and is at about 185 feet. The elements actually fold down (through a system of pulleys and winches) against the tower to survive the

hurricane season.

N3JT lead off the contest forum, going over his VP2E and HK0 contest efforts. After everyone in the audience donned protective clothing, WA8MAZ gave a good presentation on aids for SSB operators, highlighting posture and breathing as keys to minimizing vocal fatigue. The N4RJ, K1EA, and K3TUP stations were detailed and a CQ WW 160 contest log analysis presented. N6AA updated last year's presentation on logging errors, blasting the PJ1B effort for not wanting to send him their logs. W2GD then showed the results of a random poll of 174 NCJ subscribers (the only PVRer that I know of who was picked is WA8MAZ), which showed a high average age and income of testers, as well as a marked preference for CW and the CQ WW contests.

John's presentation ended with some suggestions for ways to increase the ranks of testers. More QST pages devoted to contesting, more categories, experience multipliers, and more "contest Elmering" were suggested. A contest advisory committee survey was handed out; a copy is included. Send these to K2ZJ. The aging of testers probably mirrors that of the general amateur population, or may be worse. John brought up the point that general purpose ham clubs tend to have more of the younger or less experienced amateurs as members, and it is those clubs which can feed the ranks of testers and contest clubs. If you are active in another club or on a two meter repeater, publicize contesting. Invite new hams to operate your station, the 10 meter contest would be a great introduction to contesting for novices.

Randy Thompson K5ZD will be stepping down as editor of the National Contest Journal. K5RC will take over the position. Randy said NCJ's circulation is up to about 2000, with a lot of the growth coming after the ARRL started advertising NCJ in QST. If you read Randy's article about CW SS in last year's NCJ, he came a lot closer to K3LR in 1988. He attributes this almost completely to using a second radio. He may do a follow-up article this year.

There weren't many new products announced. The KENWOOD guy said no TS 950 was in the works but YAESU is coming out with a new top of the line HF rig. A lot of commercial WARC beams showed up and K3LR's company LTA had a line of 10 meter beams. The weather sort

of cooperated, although rain on Saturday did force thousands of damp, sweaty, smelly people into the inside areas. It also seemed like almost as many people were taking about EGA, CGA, and VGA as were talking about USB, LSB or CW.

JOB FOR HAMS

I received a letter from the ROU Training Plan, Maritime Electronics Training School advertising an opening for an apprentice radio-electronics officer in the U.S. Merchant Marines. You must be a US citizen, have a valid 1st or 2nd class radiotelegraph license, be in good health, not have been convicted of a felony, and have a sound background in electronics. If you are interested send a resume and copies of licenses to William Eney, ROU-METS, 1415 Moylan Road, Panama City Beach, FL 32407. Phone number 904-233-6100. I know nothing about this company, and PVRC in no way endorses or validates this job announcement.

MISCELLANEOUS

It will be a lot easier to win 15M single band in the coming contest season. Carl Kratzer K3RV will be stationed in Monrovia, Liberia starting in June. Look for EL3RV, I guess.

W6HJK is supposed to have put together a list of useful Russian phrases for amateur radio operations, including a pronunciation guide. Might be nice to know something beyond DSW.

On May 11 Congress reviewed the FCC's actions in taking the 220 - 222 Mhz segment away from hams. The hearing was lead by Bob Wise D-WVA.

The 1987 5R8VT operation has been accredited by the DXCC desk. Anyone (like me) who had that card rejected can send it back in for DXCC credit.

PA0GIN has been mentioned as a QSL route for PA0GAM/ST2 operations after January 1 1989.

In the 1988 CQ-M contest, K3ZO finished first in North America, Category B, CW only (8th worldwide, highest non-Russian score) and K3EST finished first NA for Category B, mixed mode (9th worldwide, from W3LPL). K4PQL finished 2nd behind Fred.

ARRL CONTEST ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire, designed by K1CC, is being distributed by representatives of the CAC to get your opinions on various contest-related issues. This information will be used the CAC in formulating recommendations to the ARRL Board of Directors and the Headquarters Awards Committee to assist them in keeping the ARRL contest program responsive to the needs of contest participants. Even if you don't consider yourself a contester, your input will be of value. Any additional comments are welcomed, and can be included on this questionnaire or sent directly to your division's CAC representative.

CAC REPRESENTATIVE, GREAT LAKES DIVISION: Mr. Randy Farmer W8FN
8115 South Palmer Road
New Carlisle, OH 45344

Which of the following ARRL-sponsored contests do you operate?

SUBJECT	REGULARLY *	OCCASIONALLY	NEVER
1. ARRL DX Phone			
2. ARRL DX CW			
3. November Sweepstakes Phone			
4. November Sweepstakes CW			
5. Field Day			
6. IARU HF World Championship			
7. ARRL 160-meter Contest			
8. ARRL 10-meter Contest			
9. Novice Roundup			
10. January VHF Sweepstakes			
11. June VHF QSO Party			
12. September VHF QSO Party			
13. August UHF Contest			
14. 10 GHz Cumulative Contest			
15. International EME Competition			

* Regularly means at least 3 hours during the contest,
at least 2 out of the 3 contests.

Should contest be allowed on the WARC bands? ☐ ALL CONTESTS
(Check any that apply) ☐ ONLY THE FOLLOWING CONTESTS: (Use the numbers above) _____
☐ CW ONLY ☐ LOW-POWER ONLY ☐ NO CONTESTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED

ARRL DX CONTEST

Have you ever used packet radio for spotting during any DX contest? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you ever used other means of spotting during any DX contest?
(Repeaters, etc) ☐ YES ☐ NO

Would you operate with packet or another type of spotting if there was a separate category for single operators (single-op assisted) in the ARRL DX contest?
☐ USUALLY ☐ OFTEN ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ RARELY ☐ NEVER ☐ NO OPINION

Should there be a new "single-op assisted" category in the ARRL CX contest? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NO OPINION

Should the current 10-minute rule in the multi-single category continue? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NO OPINION

Should the 2-transmitter class (the "mini-multi") continue? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NO OPINION

Which of the following time periods for the contest would you most prefer?
☐ NO CHANGE (48 HRS) ☐ MAXIMUM 42 OUT OF 48 HRS ☐ MAXIMUM 36 OUT OF 48 HRS ☐ 36 HRS ☐ 24 HRS
☐ OTHER _____ ☐ NO OPINION

NOVEMBER SWEEPSTAKES

Which of the following formats for the contest would you most prefer?

- ☐ NO CHANGE (One multiplier on all bands, one QSO per contest)
☐ ALLOW QSO's AND MULTIPLIERS ON EACH BAND (Like DX contests)
☐ ALLOW QSO's ON EACH BAND INSTEAD OF ONLY ONCE PER CONTEST (Same station could be worked on 6 bands)
☐ NO OPINION

CONTEST PUBLICATIONS

How would you rate the contest write-ups in "QST"?

- ☐ TOO SHORT AND NOT ENOUGH DETAIL
☐ ABOUT RIGHT LENGTH
☐ TOO LONG AND DETAILED ☐ NO OPINION
☐ OTHER _____

Do you subscribe to the "National Contest Journal"?

- ☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, what types of articles and what else would you like to see? _____

CONTEST RESULTS AND REPORTING

How would you rate the contest log checking and accuracy of reported results by the ARRL?

- ☐ ACCEPTABLE
☐ NOT ACCEPTABLE

If not acceptable, then why? _____

Which of the following functions do you perform with a computer? What do you use and how do you like it?

	NO	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	COMPUTER	SOFTWARE	LIKE IT?
Post-contest dupe checking						
Post-contest multiplier counting and log scoring						
Post-contest statistical analysis						
Real-time logging and duping						

Would you be willing to submit your log data (Date, Time, Call, Report) on a floppy disk in a standard text-file (ASCII) format?

- ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NO OPINION

If so, which of the following disk formats could you provide?

- ☐ IBM PC ☐ COMMODORE 64 ☐ APPLE
☐ OTHER _____

INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF

Check any of the following which describes your station or the station you usually operate from:

- ☐ AMPLIFIER - Max output used in contest: _____ ☐ TRIBANDER FOR 10/15/20 METERS
☐ WIRE ANTENNAS FOR 80 AND 160 METERS ☐ 40 METER QUAD OR YAGI
☐ MONOBANDERS ON 10/15/20 METERS ON ONE TOWER ☐ MORE THAN ONE TOWER AND MULTIPLE ANTENNAS

What would encourage you to operate more in contests? (Check any number that apply)

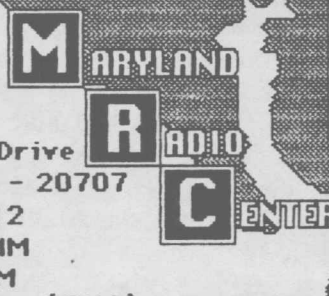
- ☐ SHORTER CONTESTS ☐ MORE PUBLICITY ABOUT CONTESTS ☐ MORE AVAILABILITY OF RULES AND LOGSHEETS
☐ MORE CONTESTS ☐ FEWER CONTESTS ☐ MORE CATEGORIES ☐ MORE AWARDS
☐ HIGHER QUALITY AWARDS ☐ OTHER _____

How would you categorize yourself as a contester? (Check only one)

- ☐ CONTESTING IS MY MAIN AMATEUR RADIO ACTIVITY AND I USUALLY PUT IN FULL EFFORTS IN CONTESTS
☐ I PUT IN FULL EFFORT ONCE IN A WHILE BUT STILL FIND TIME FOR OTHER AMATEUR RADIO ACTIVITIES
☐ I PARTICIPATE IN CONTESTS AND SUBMIT LOGS BUT USUALLY DO NOT PUT IN FULL EFFORTS
☐ I DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN CONTESTS

YOUR ARRL DIVISION: _____

YOUR CALL (Optional): _____



8576 Laureldale Drive
Laurel, Maryland - 20707
Laurel - 725-1212
Wash. - 470-HAMM
Balt. - 880-HAMM
Modem - 725-8307 (8N1)
FAX - 725-1198

Newsletter - June, 1989

MRC ADDS INSTALLATION BAY

We have just added an installation bay to our store. The bay will allow us to install mobile radio equipment and antennas for you. We will do installations by appointment only. See one of the folks at the counter for more details.

CELLULAR PHONES AT MRC ?

In response to the many requests that you have made for us to sell and install cellular telephone equipment, we have just signed an agreement with GTE to represent their entire cellular telephone line. We can now address all of your cellular needs, from purchase and connection through installation and support.

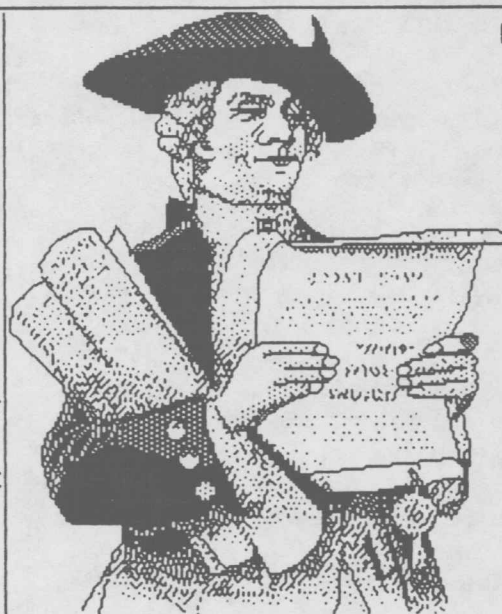
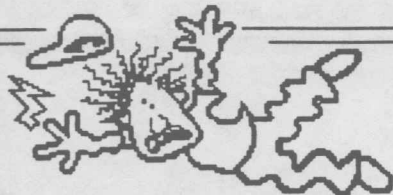
We elected to sign with GTE due to their excellent customer support history and because they offer the lowest rates of any cellular carrier in the DC Metro area.

Check with one of the folks in the store for more information and a rate card.

FREE MAP AVAILABLE AT MRC !

We have just received the first run of polar projection (centered on Washington) maps and they are FREE for the asking at the front counter ! Stop by and get yours while supplies last !

It's lightning season.. Be sure to unhook your antennas !



Latest Callsigns
Assigned as of
1 May, 1989

Extra
NU3S
AB40B

Advanced
KD3MP
KM4RL

Tech/General
N3HAL
N4YPB

Novice
KA3UOE
KC4KJB

I found this in an advertisement in The Sporting News, thought it would lighten up things a bit....
GFX-100 INDOOR TY "DISH" ANTENNAS for only \$10!

Throw away your old TY rod antenna! The GFX-100 looks like an outdoor satellite dish, but works indoors like ordinary rabbit ears. No wiring or installation! Legal in all 50 states. You pay NO cable fees because you're NOT getting cable!!! You pay NO satellite fees because you're NOT using satellite technology or service!!! Works entirely via proven "RF" technology-actually pulls signals right out of the air. Instantly locks into every local VHF and UHF channel from 2 to 83 to bring you their movies, sports and special events just like an ordinary pair of rabbit ears. No cable box or special attachments needed! Enhances color and clarity, helps pull in weak signals. Compatible with all TYs from 3-inch portables to giant 7-footers. Sits on any TY top in less than 4 linear inches of space! Guaranteed not to utilize, replicate, transmit or interfere with any satellite signal. Complies with all applicable federal regulations. Not technical razzle-dazzle [like the ad] but the sheer aesthetic superiority of its elegant parabolic design make the GFX-100 a marketing breakthrough! At this price, put one on every TY in your home! One-year money-back guarantee, (Sorry, limit 3 per address. No dealers or wholesalers, please!)

N8GSK

TROUBLES

So you think you've got troubles. You think the bands are crowded and people are impolite and don't respect "your" frequency. Perhaps a look into the past will cool your fevered brow.

Way back when CW was the only mode (as God intended) radio transmitters consisted of a single tube oscillator and the feedline and antenna were a part of the resonant circuit that determined the oscillator frequency. Any change in the inductance and/or capacitance of the antenna, such as would be caused by the antenna swaying in the breeze, would change the transmitted frequency. An old shipboard radio operator told me that you could tell how much the transmitting ship was rolling by how much you had to ride the receiver tuning knob to keep him tuned in. And you worry about a little chirp.

As time went on transmitters licked this habit but there was still trouble in paradise.

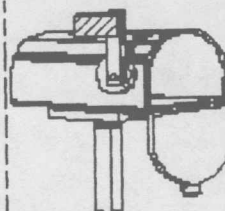
I have a friend who, in the early days, had a National SW-3 receiver which would gray the hair of the most saintly. It had plug-in coils and the whole of the forty meter band appeared in five small divisions of the dial. Once he had the station

tuned in, receiver stability was such that the frequency would change every time the refrigerator kicked on. That's rough copying CW under those conditions. He remarked that California was the big DX on this receiver.

I had another friend who had an old Hallicrafters boat anchor that he claimed was so unstable that he couldn't copy CW at the same table. The jiggling of his pencil caused the receiver to change it's tuning.

So take the chirp in stride and roll with the drift. Things are better than they were and they are getting better every day. Just stay off of "my" frequency.

KD3S



Sure.. Put a copy of this sucker in my mailbox each month. Here's five bucks for a years' subscription.

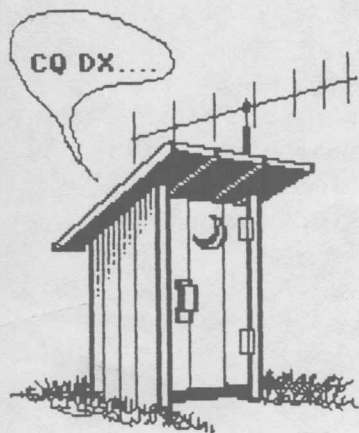
I'm _____

And my address is _____

Potomac Valley Radio Club
John Pescatore
1135 Hornell Drive
Silver Spring, Md. 20904



FIRST CLASS



K3ZO

1989

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P O Box 31097
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20748

FIRST CLASS