

PVRC Newsletter

February

Newsletter Editor: John K3TN jpescatore@aol.com

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

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

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PotomacValleyRadioClub/>

President's Letter – Bill K3WA

Well, 2026 is off to a great start! You started the year off fresh after some major 2025 contest wins. And you didn't stop there. You hit your radios right from the start with an awesome turnout in the ARRL RTTY RU followed by a great turnout in the first two NAQPs (CW and SSB). The results of both are very close – too close to call so far. But what is unbeatable is your demonstrated enthusiasm for radio sport. That is formidable.

What I find particularly pleasing is seeing the progress of many of our newest members and how their contest performance improves year after year. That's the true PVRC spirit.

February will be a busy contesting month with four 5M contests and four state QSO parties. And we're in the midst of winter DX propagation - let's not forget forget the DX Marathon. In the following months, we will encounter some of the major contests of the PVRC 2025-2026 contest season. From our big guns to multi-ops, to the littlest little PVRC pistols, your score counts. Let's all get on the air and make some noise!

Lastly, a quick reminder: **The 2026 Galactic Event is on February 7, 2026 at 12:00 PM via Zoom. Thanks to Jerome K8LF for arranging for some interesting presentations and the social round table.**

Go PVRC! Have Fun!
Bill K3WA



2025 Donors: Thank you – Ted WA3AER

To those PVRC members who made contributions to support the club and the activities we sponsored, including the PVRC Scholarship Fund, ARRL Teachers Institute, and WRTC 2026 Tents, Thank You all. Note that I do not request a list of donors from the ARRL, so if you contributed to the PVRC Scholarship Fund or the Teachers Institute and are not listed below, please know that this Thank You extends to you also. Were it not for your generosity, PVRC would be unable to provide 2 \$3000 scholarships annually; we would not be at the top of the WRTC Tent sponsors list; and we would not be able to fund plaques or our 5M and Olympics Awards programs.

AA3S	K4XL	N3MK	W3RMO
AC5XK	K8LF	N3OC	W3TAS
AE3T	KB3VQC	N3RR	W3UL
AG3I	KB3Z	N4CF	W3XG
K1BZ	KD4D	N4CW	W3XOX
K1EFI	KD4IZ	N4GU	W3XY
K1ZZ	KG3V	N4IW	W3YVV
K2WK	KG4USN	N8AAY	W4KAZ
K2YWE	KK4R	NC3Y	W4VIC
K3AJ	KU4V	NC4S	W4XP
K3RV	N0YY	NC4SW	WA3AER
K3SX	N1EK	NW3L	WB2ZAB
K3WA	N1RM	W1TRT	WB4FDT
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			WR3R

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Buddy W4YE Is On the Air Again – Al N3AC

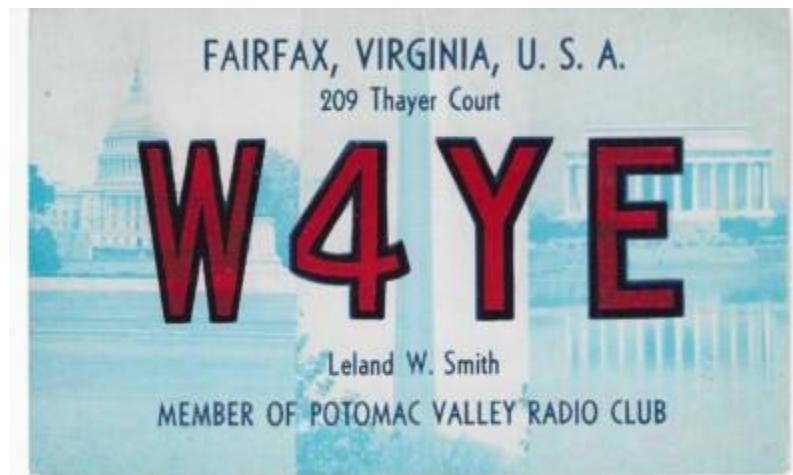
I've recently become friends with a PVRC Past President - Buddy, W4YE, down in Burnt Chimney, Virginia. You've probably worked him in many of the CW contests, as he continues to stay very active.

After Buddy had his quad destroyed in a storm, N3MN and I had the opportunity to help him assemble a TA-33 and stuff it up on his tower.

After the weather worsened, the driven element rotated about 90 degrees - despite careful assembly per the manual. N3MN recently got a quick look at the beam and saw that the spacer between the boom and the rectangular aluminum for the driven element was missing. And that the feed wires had torn loose.

The next day, I re-secured the driven element, replaced the feed wires from the back of an SO-239, reattached the feedpoint, and replaced the adjacent old coax jumper. Buddy confirmed that the SWR was acceptable. While he was testing it out, I saw first-hand that he switched adroitly between the keyer and his bug while chatting with DF7CW!

In hindsight, I think Mosley should have mounted the driven element under the boom and used real lock washers and Nyloc nuts.



Connecting an External SDR to the FTDX10 to Drive the N1MM+ Spectrum Window – Tom K3AJ

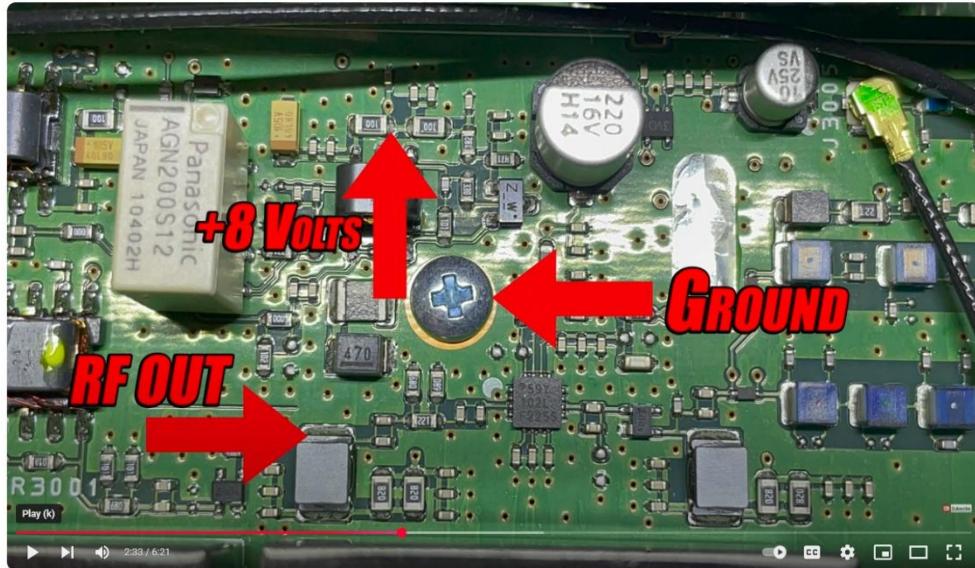
My main station radio is an FTDX101D which has a dedicated RX Out jack to connect an external SDR. The SDR (I use SDR Play RSP1A/B SDR's in my station) is set up to provide input to the N1MM+ Spectrum Window. This is important to me, since my station is frequently used by remote operators for multi op contesting. The Spectrum window is a great tool for the remote op for things like unassisted S&P, finding a run frequency, getting a quick overview of band activity and instantly seeing if a spotted station is really there. Not to mention that the N1MM+ spectrum Window is a lot bigger and easier to use than the radio's front panel band scope. Last year, I acquired an FTDX10 to use as a second radio, mainly for times when we want to do a LP M/2 operation (BTW, did you know that the Yaesu FTDX101D and FTDX10 both have built in bandpass filters that allow for two radio operation at 100W with no external filters?). But the FTDX10 lacks the RF Out jack.

I was sitting in the grandstand at the Dayton Hamvention fairgrounds last spring bemoaning this fact to someone I was talking to. It was my good fortune to be overheard by Eric, NR4O who was sitting behind me. He said that he had successfully connected an SDR to another Yaesu radio, and that there was a vendor who supplied the interface board to make that happen. He was pretty sure that it would work on the FTDX10.

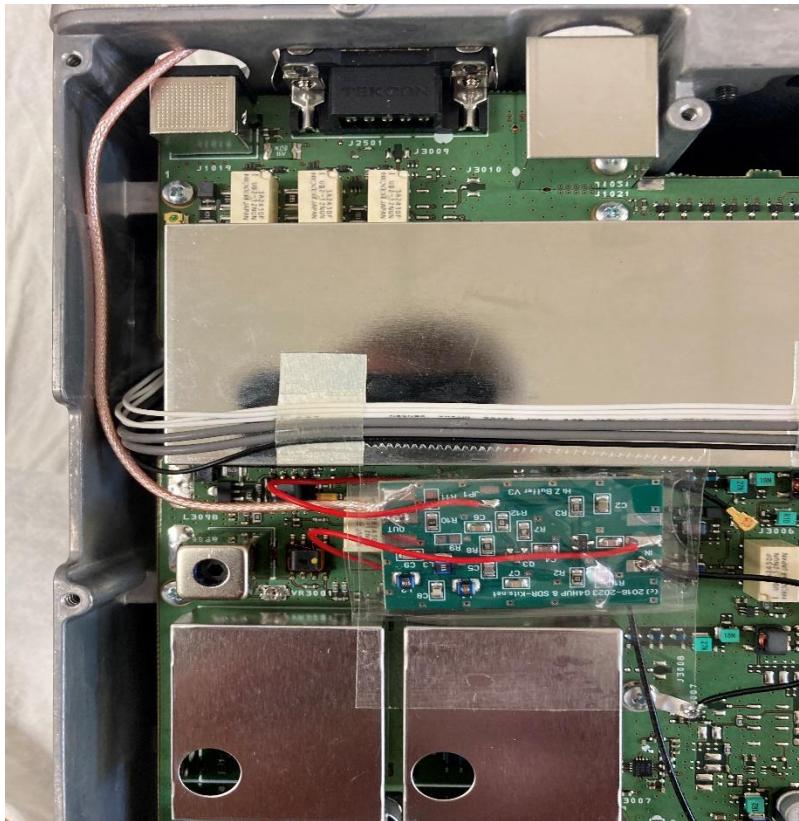
A quick Google search proved Eric was right. Tech Minds has a very nice YouTube video explaining exactly how to implement an RX Out jack on the FTDX10, based on an implementation by IZ2ZQG using an interface board supplied by SDR Kits in the UK. The video is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlr3ILvLfdM>. The information about the interface board can be found here on the SDR Kits web site: <https://www.sdr-kits.net/Panoramic-Adaptor-Tap-Boards>. For the FDX10 you need the PAT70M board. Click on Web Shop on the SDR Kits page and it will take you to the ordering page and then to the PAT70M: <https://www.sdr-kits.net/PAT-Board-70MHz>. The current cost of the board is just under \$16. Be sure to also order the Generic Plug and Hardware kit for another \$8.

There are only three connections to the FTDX10 needed, and both the board and RF Out cable to the SDR can be installed without drilling holes so this installation can be reversed. One connection is via a lug placed under a screw (not surprisingly, the ground connection). The other two require soldering to the pads of two SM devices. The pad that receives the RF Out connection is of a decent size, but the pad on a very tiny SM resistor that the +8V connection is made to is very small and very close to other pads. Tin the ends of the wires with a little blob of solder, hold them against the pads, and just touch your soldering iron to solder it.

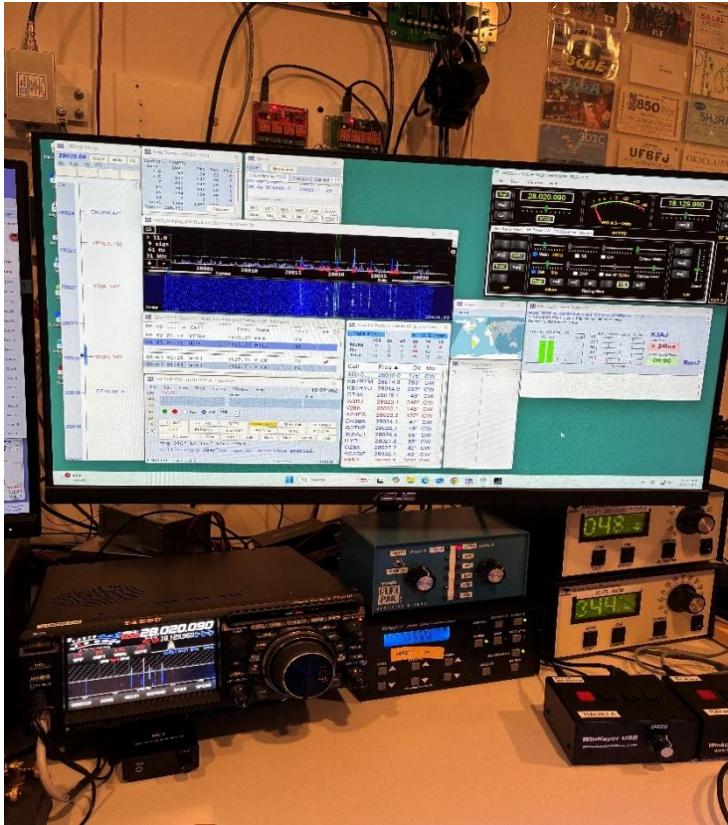
Here is a screenshot from the video that shows the connection points:



The RF Out cable from the PAT70M board is routed through the hole for the Tuner jack on the rear panel of the FTDX10 (be sure to fish the cable through before you solder it to the board). The board doesn't need to be fastened down. Wrap it in clear packing tape a couple times to insulate it, then use more tape to suspend it between two metal shields in the area. See a photo of my installation below:



It's plug and play – no set up required. And it works:



Kaboom Outside K2KW – Kenny K2KW

We had just finished an early Christmas dinner (Linner), and then we heard a loud bang and the power went out. There are overhead lines up to the house across the street, which then traverse the street to a pole on my property, and then goes underground for a large portion of the neighborhood. The top of the pole came off and I assume the transformer blew too.

Dominion Power was out in short order. We are lucky we had a whole house generator installed this spring! It could be a long period before it's fixed. While I have a relatively quiet QTH, it seems like one of the "ticks" is now gone.



Over a Decade in Remote Operation Innovation by Mike W4RN



For over a decade Mike W4RN has been a pioneer in remote contesting, starting with Jack K4VV's (SK) station, then moving things to his own W4AAW/W4RN QTH, enabling PVRCers (and others) around the world to participate in top ten multi-op efforts.

Further Comments on WSJT-X/FT8 Operation – Mike W3IP

(Here's a follow-on the January article by Alan WA3EKL)

WSJT-X is fully set up to encode and decode signals up to "about 5 KHz" (<https://wsjt.sourceforge.io/wsjtx-doc/wsjtx-main-3.0.0-rc1.html> section 8, fourth bullet).

Since many transceivers use crystal SSB filters around 2.7 KHz bandwidth, K1JT implemented the "fake it" and "split" modes (File > settings > radio > split operation) to expand the ability of these radios to transmit beyond the constraints of the 2.7 KHz filter. WSJT-X does the math to move either the main VFO frequency (fake it mode) or the sub VFO frequency (split mode) to transmit at full power at whatever offset (0 to 5 KHz) that you choose AND to force all audio harmonics out of the transmit passband. Using the "fake it" or "split" modes, every transceiver can transmit an audio harmonic-free WSJT-X signal at every offset up to 5 KHz.

Receiving is another matter. While Alan's receiver may have a 2.7 KHz filter as his widest choice, many of the modern SDR radios now have wider passbands available. My receiver has up to a 4 KHz passband. I usually set my passband when using FT8 to pass between 200 Hz and 3.2 KHz. There can be a lot of activity on a crowded band up to about 3 KHz. Additionally, for those radios with a 2nd receiver available, a 2nd copy of WSJT-X can be used to split the FT8 band into 2 segments. By setting the two VFOs appropriately, you can decode signals over a 5 KHz contiguous range.

Strategies to ensure that your decoded response to a CQ will be at the top of the CQer's queue and it will be automatically picked first in my opinion may not be successful. Operator psychology comes into play here. If I have multiple responses to a CQ, I will quickly scan all the responses and then click on the most "interesting" call to respond to. That could mean a new DXCC, a new grid, a callsign with the same suffix as my novice call, an old friend, or maybe the guy or gal who has called for the longest time (or not). There is no way to know the selection criteria of another operator - or how it may change with time.

PVRC Digital DXCC Standings – Frank W3LPL

Below are the Digital (which includes RTTY) DXCC totals for PVRC members, transcribed from the ARRL [DXCC data](#) as of the 20th 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
K3WC	353	N4DB	322	W2YE	277	W3DM	197
K4FJ	349	K5VIP	319	W8AKS	277	N4GU	192
W4PK	348	KM3V	318	K3TN	275	K3WI	188
N2QT	345	K3SX	317	WS6X	274	NR4M	186
K3SWZ	344	K1GG	313	W3DF	270	KE4S	186
W3UR	342	W4VIC	312	N4XYZ	267	K3KY	172
W4DR	341	W2GG	309	K3JT	265	K3PU	171
W3OA	338	N4MM	308	W3MR	265	KG7H	168
W3LL	332	N4TL	308	N1EK	263	N4IW	166
N3NT	332	KG4W	308	WB3AVN	263	NA1DX	162
N4BAA	332	N3MN	305	W3LPL	263	KF7NN	161
K1HTV	331	W3IP	298	K1AR	258	N3AIU	155
K3WA	328	KA4RRU	295	N3KN	254	K4HQK	142
K4CIA	328	K4WNW	295	K5RT	254	NE3K	120
K5EK	328	W3GG	293	N3QE	252	K4FTO	119
K3RA	325	W3FOX	292	W4JVN	249	K3IXD	114
W0YVA	324	W3BW	289	N3ND	221	N3COB	112
N3KK	323	N4JQQ	285	N4NW	221	W3MAM	107
WX4G	323	W3US	282	AA4NC	219	N3RTW	100
K4SO	323	N3RC	280	N6DW	212	N4ZH	100
K6ND	323	K0GD	278	KU1T	210		



Membership News – Steve NC4SW

Please welcome new member Robert Schroder NT1S from Upper Falls, MD. He is in the Laurel Chapter.

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](#)

February 2026

+ North American SSB Sprint Contest	<u>0000Z-0400Z, Feb 1</u>
+ Real Time Contest	<u>1600Z-1900Z, Feb 1</u>
+ North American Sprint, CW	<u>0000Z-0359Z, Feb 8</u>
+ ARRL School Club Roundup	<u>1300Z, Feb 9 to 2359Z, Feb 13</u>
+ CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest	<u>0000Z, Feb 14 to 2359Z, Feb 15</u>
+ Dutch PACC Contest	<u>1200Z, Feb 14 to 1200Z, Feb 15</u>
+ ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW	<u>0000Z, Feb 21 to 2400Z, Feb 22</u>
+ REF Contest, SSB	<u>0600Z, Feb 21 to 1800Z, Feb 22</u>
+ CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB	<u>2200Z, Feb 27 to 2200Z, Mar 1</u>
+ UBA DX Contest, CW	<u>1300Z, Feb 28 to 1300Z, Mar 1</u>
+ North American QSO Party, RTTY	<u>1800Z, Feb 28 to 0559Z, Mar 1</u>

[RED – scores count towards PVRC 5M Awards or Challenge Program](#)

Editor's Last Word – John K3TN

Thanks to WA3AER, N3AC, K3AJ, K2KW, W3IP and W3LPL for contributions to this issue of the PVRC newsletter.

One of my favorite contests is in February – the CW Sprint, a unique 4 hour Saturday night contest. If you haven't tried a Sprint, or it has been a while, George N3BB wrote a great tutorial [here](#).

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 jpescatore at aol dot 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.

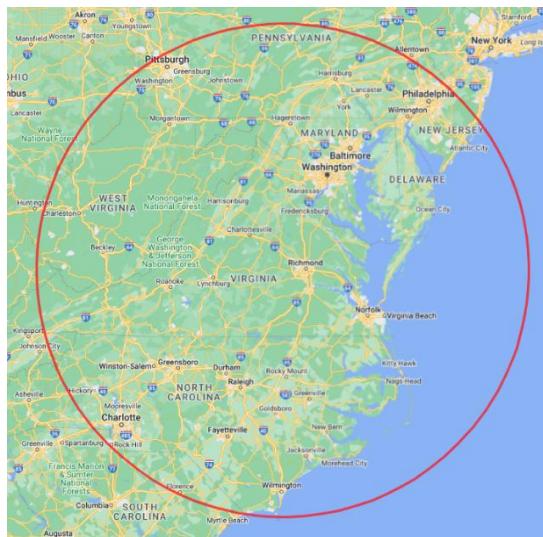
When contemplating your donation to PVRC, each member should consider the benefit you are receiving from PVRC and its many opportunities for your personal growth in our wonderful hobby, then donate accordingly.

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:



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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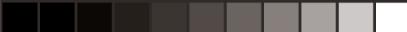
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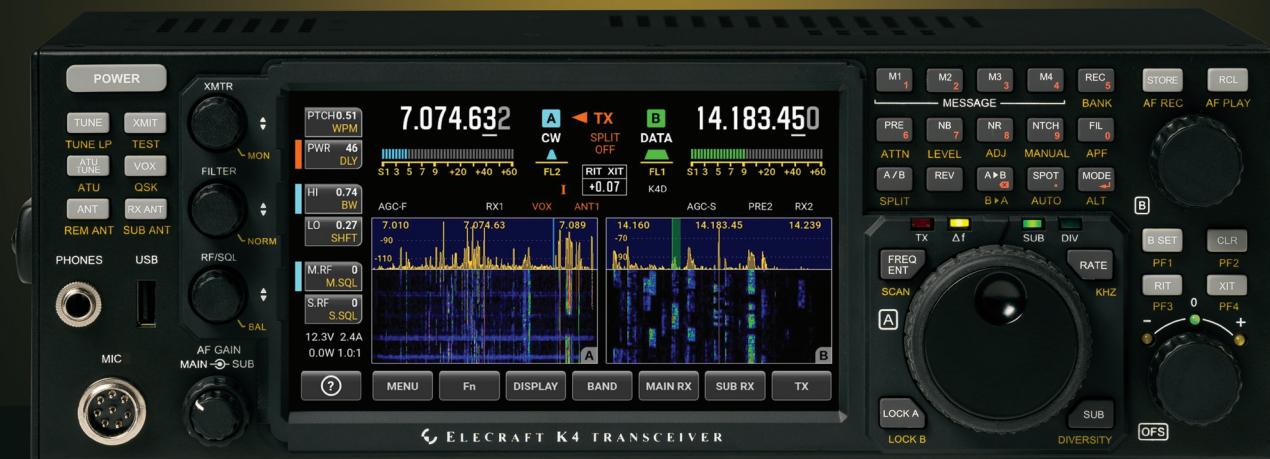


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Modular, hybrid architecture adapts to your needs

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

Full remote control via Ethernet



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FTDX10 | HF/50MHz 100 W SDR Transceiver

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FTDX101D | HF + 6M Transceiver

- Narrow Band SDR & Direct Sampling SDR • Crystal Roofing Filters Phenomenal Multi-Signal Receiving Characteristics • Unparalleled -70dB Maximum Attenuation VC-Tune • 15 Separate (HAM 10 + GEN 5) Powerful Band Pass Filters • New Generation Scope Displays 3-Dimensional Spectrum Stream

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version also
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FT-710 Aess | HF/50MHz 100W SDR Transceiver

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FT-891 | HF+50 MHz All Mode Mobile Transceiver

- Stable 100 Watt Output • 32-Bit IF DSP • Large Dot Matrix LCD Display with Quick Spectrum Scope • USB Port Allows Connection to a PC with a Single Cable • CAT Control, PTT/RTTY Control

Two
versions
available!



FT-3185RASP | Heavy-Duty 85W 2M FM Transceiver

- Massive Heatsink Ensures Reliable 85W RF Power • Super-DX Function Increases Receiver Sensitivity & Weak Signal Reception • 221 Memory Channels • Large 6-Character Alpha-Numeric Display



Two
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FTM-150RASP | 2M/430MHz FM True Dual Band Xcvr

- Dual Receivers Allowing (V+V, U+U, V+U, U+V) Operation • 55W VHF & 50W UHF • Heavy Duty Heat Sink w/Funnel Air Convection Conductor • Front & Main Body Speaker for 6W High Quality Audio



Two
versions
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FTM-510DRASP | C4FM/FM 144/430MHz Dual Band Xcvr

- New Super-DX & ASP (Audio Digital Signal Processor Unit) • True Dual Bank Receive (V+V/U+U/V+U/U+V) • C4FM/C4FM Digital D-D Dual Receive • 2.4" High-Res Full-Color Touch-Panel Display • Wireless Operation Capability with Optional Bluetooth® Headset



FTX-1 Optima | HF/50/144/430MHz All Mode SDR Xcvr

- Detachable Field head For QRP SOTA/POTA Adventures • Attach Field Head to SPA-1 For 100 Watts (Base Operations) • SPA-1 Includes Internal HF Antenna Tuner • SSB, CW, AM, FM and C4FM Digital



FTX-1 Field | HF/50/144/430MHz All Mode SDR Xcvr

- Compact QRP SOTA/POTA Xcvr (8.4" W, 3.5" H, 2.2" D) • 6W (5W for QRP) • Includes 6400mAh High Capacity Li-ion Battery • SSB, CW, AM, FM and C4FM Digital • 10W of Power w/External Power Supply • Upgradable to 100W with Purchase of SPA-1



FT-70DR | C4FM/FM 144/430MHz Xcvr

- System Fusion Compatible • Large Front Speaker delivers 700 mW of Loud Audio Output • Automatic Mode Select detects C4FM or Fm Analog and Switches Accordingly • Huge 1,105 Channel Memory Capacity • External DC Jack for DC Supply and Battery Charging



FT-5DR

C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz Dual Band

- High-Res Full-Color Touch Screen TFT LCD Display • Easy Hands-Free Operation w/Built-In Bluetooth® Unit • Built-In High Precision GPS Antenna • 1200/9600bps APRS Data Communications • Supports Simultaneous C4FM Digital • Micro SD Card Slot



VX-6R | VHF/UHF Dual Band Hand-Held

- Big-Radio Features in a Compact Package • Wide-band Receiver Coverage for Catching All the Action! • 900-Channel, 24-Banks Memory System • Outdoor-Ready Features including Waterproof Rating • Smart Search Automatic 31-Channel Scanning/Loading System

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