



599 VA - . - . - . - December 2008

News Letter of the Central Virginia Contest Club

Meeting Notice:

The December meeting of the CVCC will be the annual Christmas Dinner at 6:30 p.m. December 2nd at Topeka's Steakhouse, 1776 E Parham Rd., Richmond, VA 23228. Contact n4den@arrl.net for head count if you have not yet done so.

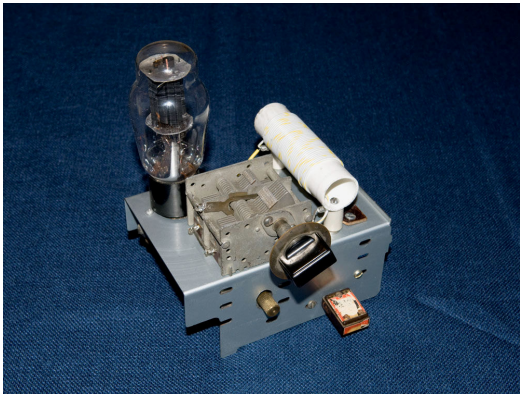
Program:

Good food, good company. Happy Holidays to one and all!

Random Skip by W4DR

If you have been following the recent postings on the PVRC reflector you will see that many of the members are telling stories about their Novice days. I have been tempted to tell my own story, but didn't for two reasons. First I never had a Novice license and second I wanted to use this medium to tell a little of my story. More of the story including pictures will be told at either the January or February CVCC meeting when K4VIV and I have finished the power point program. Back to the story. One of my best friends Jim D. Lehman who lived across College Avenue from me got a General license in the summer of 1949 under the elmering of W4NZD a twenty something bachelor who lived at the far end of our street. Jim, W4POL immediately began telling Jay and me about the fun building things and getting on the air was. I started by building a one-tube receiver, which actually picked up the signal of the local FM station 5 miles west of our home. My next project was a crystal oscillator using a 6L6 and parts from an old AM receiver I found on a junk pile while my dad was making a pastoral visit to a family in the country. This family soon became faithful church members and years later after they moved to Florida they both became amateurs and I was able to QSO with them. Their son also got a license. Amateur radio really does connect people! To go with my new transmitter was a 3525 crystal and a BC454 aircraft receiver, which came from a B-29 bomber, used in WW2. These were available for \$5 in 1949 and my headphones were 25 cents and a JT38 key sold for 19 cents. For a kid who made 10 cents an hour mowing lawns and weeding flowerbeds these prices were at least within my budget. I rented an Instructograph code machine and within 3 months I passed the W1AW 20 WPM proficiency test. The ARRL License Manuel was my study guide and by Christmas vacation Jay and I traveled to Washington, DC to take our test. Although I was as nervous as a cat on a tin roof I bore down and felt that I was nearing my perfect minute of the 13 WPM code test. With my head bent low in deep concentration my headphones fell to the table. Needless to say my perfect string was broken. So with several minutes to go I buckled down and tried for another perfect minute. I must have made it because the examiner smiled and said I passed. He asked me to send and after only a few characters he signaled that he was satisfied. I don't remember anything about the theory test except that in those days there was no question pool to study, but both Jay and I knew we had passed. As we eagerly awaited our licenses the temptation to try our identical stations out for an across village QSO was too great. I still have a QSL from W4MUD, Jay's nickname was Mud and I suspect he has his W4BOB handmade card. We used only very short pieces of wire on our link coupled 6L6 oscillators and we didn't tell our straight-laced elmer about our transgression! The wait for the license seemed forever, but finally on January 10, 1950 an elderly man a block down our street whose last name was Eshleman called and said he had a piece of mail for me. The precious piece of paper with the call sign W4QCW was mine and thus began a 59 year career in my beloved hobby. A few

hours later a QSO with W3TVA was in my log, but I was soon to learn that 10 watts and a single crystal made working anyone difficult. Some of my ARRL log pages would contain only two contacts and a long list of stations called or unanswered CQ's. In those days we were supposed to log every call we made. The highlight of my 10 watt days was working W7MSB in Coos Bay, Oregon on 80 meters at sunrise on February 22 and a VE3 several weeks earlier. It was time to get a VFO and more power. I bought the companion transmitter to the BC453 and BC454...a BC458 which ran 100 watts to a pair of 1625's (military versions of 807's) With this new weapon I got my first DX, a CO8 in October and a week later I hit the jack pot with VK2OY. I was hooked on DX. A local ham sold me a ham band receiver, a NC-101X, but my wire antennas didn't cut it on 20. Finally my father built a new house about a half-mile south of our previous home. I was very unhappy that he bought two lots at the bottom of a big hill to the west, but he did have a friend of his set a 45 foot telephone pole in the back yard. It was stepped every 18 inches and I bought the cheapest 20 meter beam on the market, a Gotham. It was a piece of junk with a flimsy boom, but the elements were useable and I obtained a 20 foot section of aluminum TV tower to use as a boom. By this time I had obtained a Collins 310B exciter and a homemade amplifier with a pair or 4-250A's. By the time I left for dental school in the fall of 1956 I had won Rosalie's heart, worked over 200 DXCC countries and made a DXpedition to Navassa Island with my friend W4VZQ who had started out in the beginning of the Novice era as WN4VZQ. The twin highlights of this part of my journey was working Floyd McCoy, VR6AC and being the 11th W to work AC5PN in Bhutan. It is interesting how things often come full circle. I have found myself increasingly interested in reconstructing the station I cut my teeth on. I have obtained two BC454 receivers and if I can get one of them to work I will have half of the original station.



The other half is the 6L6 oscillator/PA and along with grandson, Gabe, I am building a similar rig to go with the crystal I have saved all of these years. It is amazing how interested this six-year-old is in the project. The chassis for this project is a part from a junked computer, which he and I tore apart in his late father's workshop. He is soldering all of the connections and made me promise that I wouldn't finish it till his next visit. He can already name all of the parts. Will he continue the tradition? I hope so! Bob W4DR, ex-W4QCW

Photo by W1ZA

November Program:

Bob, W4DR, showed the BS7H DXpedition video. If you missed it you missed a very interesting video! Bob also lugged in his newly refurbished prop pitch motor for "show and tell". What a beauty! How long will it be before his big 40M Yagi is turning again?

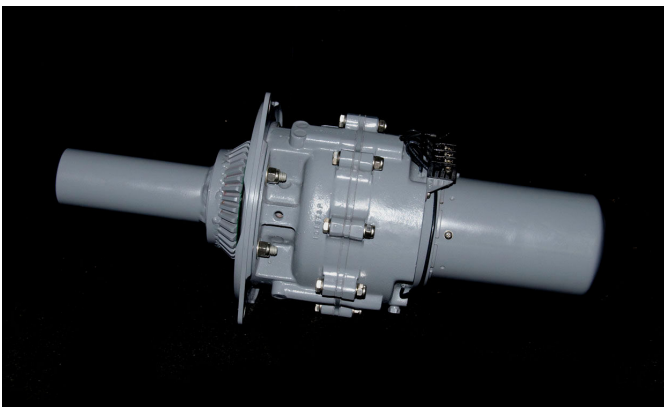


Photo by W1ZA

Field Day 2008:



Milt Coleman, K4OSO (foreground) and Walt Komienko, K2WK, operate the 2A stations for the Central Virginia Contest Club during Field Day 2008 activities. Looking on is Mike Baker, N4LSP. The club operated with generator power from a park near Richmond, Virginia.

Picture and text from the December issue of QST.

As Ed, NW4V, pointed out Walt's name is spelled KORNIEENKO

The CVCC placed third in the highly competitive 2A category. Of the 1,694 entries, 487 or 28% were in this category. Below are the scores of the top three 2A entries. See QST for complete results.

	<u>QSO's</u>	<u>Pwr</u>	<u>Part.</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont W1NVT (+W1PU)	4,779	2	29	14,754	VT
Buckhead CC W4KJ (+W4TE)	3,753	2	8	12,774	GA
Central Virginia Contest Club W4ML (+WK4Y)	3,110	2	44	11,840	VA

You'll notice we had 44 participants. That's outstanding support for an outstanding effort. This was the best field day in every respect your editor has ever attended. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make this a great success. Let's do it again in 2009!

December Contest Calendar

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW

ARS Spartan Sprint

ARCI Topband Sprint

NCCC Sprint

ARRL 160-Meter Contest

TARA RTTY Melee

Wake-Up! QRP Sprint

TOPS Activity Contest

NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint

NA High Speed Meteor Scatter Winter Rally

NCCC Sprint

ARRL 10-Meter Contest

MDXA PSK DeathMatch

SKCC Weekend Sprintathon

NCCC Sprint

AGB-Party Contest

Russian 160-Meter Contest

OK DX RTTY Contest

Lighthouse Christmas Lights QSO Party

Croatian CW Contest

International Naval Contest

Feld Hell Sprint

ARCI Holiday Spirits Homebrew Sprint

Run for the Bacon QRP Contest

SKCC Sprint

DARC Christmas Contest

RAC Winter Contest

Stew Perry Topband Challenge

Original QRP Contest

RAEM Contest

0000Z, Nov 29 to 2400Z, Nov 30

0200Z-0400Z, Dec 2

0000Z-0600Z, Dec 4

0230Z-0300Z, Dec 5

2200Z, Dec 5 to 1600Z, Dec 7

0000Z-2400Z, Dec 6

0400Z-0429Z, Dec 6 and

0430Z-0459Z, Dec 6 and

0500Z-0529Z, Dec 6 and

0530Z-0600Z, Dec 6

1600Z, Dec 6 to 1800Z, Dec 7

0130Z-0330Z, Dec 10

0000Z, Dec 11 to 0200Z, Dec 15

0230Z-0300Z, Dec 12

0000Z, Dec 13 to 2400Z, Dec 14

0000Z, Dec 13 to 2400Z, Dec 14

0000Z-2400Z, Dec 14

0230Z-0300Z, Dec 19

2100Z-2400Z, Dec 19

2100Z-2300Z, Dec 19

0000Z-2400Z, Dec 20

0001Z, Dec 20 to 2359Z, Jan 4

1400Z, Dec 20 to 1400Z, Dec 21

1600Z, Dec 20 to 1559Z, Dec 21

2100Z-2400Z, Dec 20

2000Z-2400Z, Dec 21

0200Z-0400Z, Dec 22

0100Z-0300Z, Dec 24

0830Z-1059Z, Dec 26

0000Z-2359Z, Dec 27

1500Z, Dec 27 to 1500Z, Dec 28

1500Z, Dec 27 to 1500Z, Dec 28

0200Z-0959Z, Dec 28

Permission was received from Bruce Horn to use his contest calendar. It can be found by following links on www.contesting.com.

This is a big month for the CVCC with both the ARRL's 160 and 10 meter contests. We will enter in the local club category again this year. As you know, we won the gavel in the 160 contest in 2007 and would have won 10 meters also had it not been for one too many entries. Even so we had a very respectable score for that one in the medium club category. Please support the club and either participate at one of the multi-op stations and/or put your home station on the air for these two contests. Our effort in these contests will be discussed at the Christmas Dinner. For you RTTY enthusiasts check out the OK DX RTTY contest. Also of interest are the Croatian CW Contest, the RAC Winter Contest and the Stew Perry Topband Challenge. These smaller contests are great fun and good practice for the big ones. You'll notice there is a November contest added to the top of the December calendar. The CQWW DX CW contest is the weekend after Thanksgiving. This is a BIG one. If you do CW at all give this a go.

Contests, Contests, Contests – October / November 2008 (CVCC Members & Friends)

<u>Call</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>QSO's</u>	<u>Mult.</u>	<u>Points</u>
SS:					
W4PM	SS CW	SOHP (U)	811	79	128,138
W4ML	SS CW	SOHP (U)	743	80	118,880 op. W4MYA, Station W4MYA
N3UA	SS CW	SOLP (U)	625	79	98,750
KG4W	SS CW	SOLP (A)	630	77	97,020
W4MYA	SS CW	SOHP (U)	619	78	96,564 Station NR4M
K4TS	SS CW	SOHP (U)	387	67	51,858 op. K2WK, Station NR4M
WA4PGM	SS CW	SOQ (Q)	299	79	47,242
K2WK	SS CW	SOHP (U)	200	70	28,000
NW4V	SS CW	SOHP (U)	180	66	23,760
N2QT	SS CW	SOHP (U)	17	12	408
N2QT	SS SSB	SOHP (U)	1,021	80	163,360
W4MYA	SS SSB	SOHP (U)	769	80	123,040
KG4W	SS SSB	SOLP (A)	767	76	116,584
W4V	SS SSB	SOHP (U)	577	76	87,704 op. W4MYA, Station NR4M (80M only)
N3UA	SS SSB	SOLP (U)	415	80	66,400
W4ML	SS SSB	SOHP (U)	502	62	62,248 op. K2WK, Station NR4M
NW4V	SS SSB	?	260	73	37,960
W4PM	SS SSB	SOLP (A)	159	63	20,034
W4HZ	SS SSB	?	?	80	13,200 (score & mults compute to 82.5 Q's ☺)
W4PK	SS SSB	SOHP (U)	105	43	9,030
Other:					
PJ4E	CQWW SSB	M2HP	7,710	138/510	14,571,576 ops.(see comments in Member News)
W4PM	UR DX CW	SOHP	55	17/19	14,760
KG4W	OK OM DX CW	?	163	131	64,059
W4PM	OK OM DX CW	SOHP	107	93	29,853

Editor's note: This is all I could find. There could be others. Send them to me and I'll put them in the January issue of the News Letter. Puck, W4PM

Sweepstakes 2008 PVRC:

The following was posted on the PVRC reflector. It appears we had great participation in SS this year have a definite shot at winning the club competition. Time will tell. Please note the last part of Rich's message. Make sure you submit your logs before the deadlines!

I think the NCCC big guns have probably outscored the PVRC big guns - owing to the inherent imbalance in 20/15 meter operating. That happens every year. The question will come down to participation volume. We have 10.35MM points on CW so far. I believe that number will move closer to 10.7MM when all is said and done. On SSB, I have stats on 121 logs for exactly 10.0MM. Assuming that we're in the 170 range for logs, I would expect a score in the 13.0 - 14.0MM range which is an incredible number. Regardless of score guessing, what is absolutely CRITICAL, is that all stations turn in their logs and do it before the deadlines. December 3, 2008 is the CW deadline - just about 2 weeks off. 73 Rich NN3W

Equipment Reviews:

Ten Tec 40th Anniversary Paddle by W4PM

Being a long time Ten Tec fan and in a weak moment I ordered one of these keys. It's made by Bencher and is one of their keys that they make for the JA market, a model JA-1. The JA-1 is a BY-1 with the adjustable spring tensioning feature found on their ST-1 single lever model. It seems to me the adjustable spring tensioning is more of a gimmick than being a useful feature. Others may well disagree with this. The main difference from a normal Bencher is it has blue finger pieces and has a Ten Tec 40th anniversary label instead of the Bencher label. It also has a serial number incised on the bottom of the base, in my case, T-161. The serial number is applied in a very amateurish manner and is almost unreadable. Overall it works as well as any Bencher paddle of this type. Personally I prefer a paddle that is heavier and has a heavier touch. That's why my paddle of choice is a Mercury that Steve, N2DAN, made for me in 1993. If you like the way Benchers work you'd like this key but you'd be much better off saving money a pile of money and getting a model BY-1 instead.

Member News

W4DR, Bob: The family wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the memorial gift made by the club in honor of our mother, Arlene Eshleman. Mother lead a good life and she and my father were strong supporters of mission work both at home and abroad so the gift to Mennonite Missions was a great way to honor her. Blessings to all.

W4PM, Puck: Judy and I celebrated our 41st wedding anniversary on November 18, 2008. We spent a few days in Wintergreen staying in a friend's condo. It was cold with snow flurries, the ski slopes were not open and the golf course was closed but the numerous wineries were open so we did a lot of driving through the area visiting them. In December we will be going to Orlando for an FOC gathering so I'll miss the ARRL 160 contest this year. As previously reported my wire antenna broke just a few hours before SS SSB! I still managed 159 Q's loading up the antenna as it lay of the roof. I hope to repair it if I ever get some time off from leaf removal. The oak trees at this QTH are great antenna supports but a real pain this time of year after they drop all those leaves.

KG4W, Ed: I usually enter various contests and it takes so long for the results, I forget about them. Well in Monday's mail, I received a plaque for winning last year's OK/OM contest in the low power DX category with 32,670 points!

WA4PGM, Kyle: As you may have read we had numerous problems this year with antennas and rotors, but we continued to push forward to the end. The operation of PJ4E has concluded and logged over 25,000 QSO's, working all 50 States, 39 Zones, and 194 Countries during the 2006-2008 CQWW SSB. We appreciate every contact, thank you! A BIG thanks goes to each operator that made the trip to Bonaire - K0RAY, K6AM, N0KE, N0VD, PE2KY, PE2MC, PJ4NX, W0CN, **WK4Y**, and WZ8P. 73, Kyle **WA4PGM**

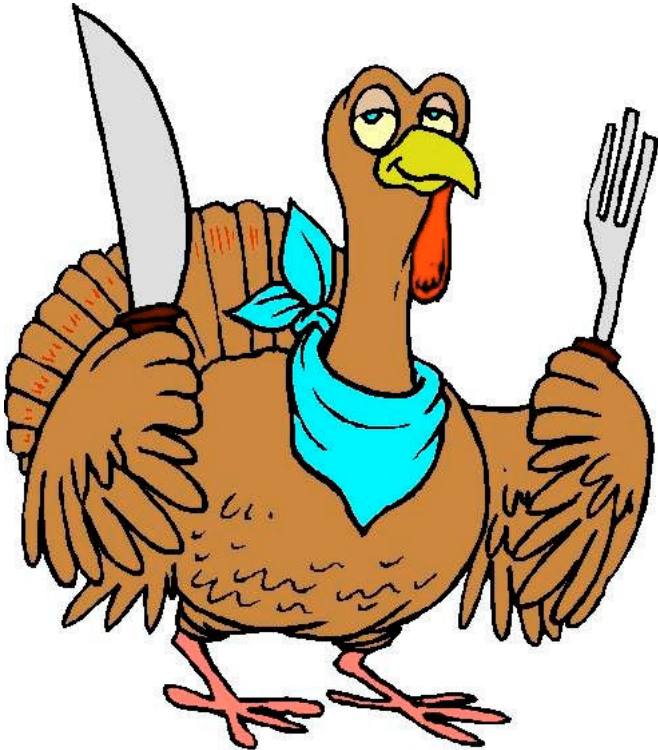
The Swap Shop or “Puck’s List”

Here’s where you can post items for sale or swap, as well as wants. Someone may need what you have or have what you need!

W4PM, Puck: I have a number of Vibroplex bugs that need new homes. They are of various ages, models and finishes. Even if you never send with them they make great display items as well as good paperweights. They will be priced right to CVCC members in my pre-Estate Sale. Inquiries welcome.

W4PM, Puck: Ten Tec Delta II HF 160 through 10 transceiver back from Ten Tec service and not used since. It’s in the shipping box and has the original manual. Everything should be fine except the backlight on the LCD display is not working. Ten Tec no longer stocks the parts to repair that but the display is easily readable in decent lighting situations. An after market backlight is available for those who would like to repair this feature themselves. \$350 or make an offer.

W4HZ, Jonathan: I still have the Heil headset & the Vibroplex Iambic Paddle for sale. I may put it on the PVRC reflector if I don't get any local interest.



Happy Thanksgiving!