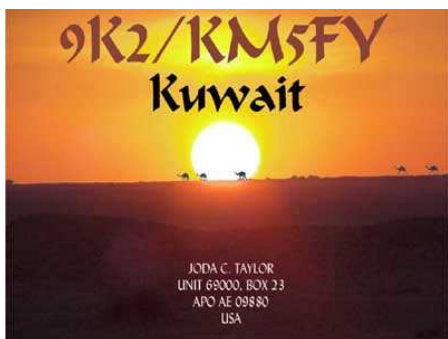


On Being DX in the Middle East

JODA TAYLOR'S 9K2/KM5FY EXPERIENCE



KM5FY's Kuwait QSL Card



Towers from Sharq Market, Kuwait



Joda, KM5FY, BVRRC Presentation



Kuwait Amateur Radio Club

We were delighted to have Bella Vista ham and Arkansas native Joda Taylor, KM5FY, and his XYL Mary present the March 2017 program for the Bella Vista Radio Club.

Trained initially as a geographer, Joda eventually became a trainer for the U.S. Customs and Commerce department. After working at the World Trade Center in New York, Joda found himself in a thrilling multi-year assignment as an advisor to the government of Kuwait from 1998 through 2001. The mission was to assist the Kuwaiti government in modernizing their customs service. XYL Mary Taylor accompanied Joda as a professional elementary school teacher, and has her own assortment of stories relating to teaching at the local American school.

Joda described his initial on-air experience from his personal residence as frustrating due to what he later learned was an Iraqi jammer. However, he soon met Bob, 9K2ZZ, a South African national who had a huge KW HF station well-equipped with a tall tower & beam antennas high above a six story building. With easy access to this super station and the high on-air demand for Kuwait, Joda was soon making 1,000 DX QSOs each month.

Propagation was so good that he frequently heard his own signal traveling all the way around the world, with its slight echo delay. The DX “pile-ups” were wide and deep. During one of his operating sessions, Joda observed that the pile-up had suddenly dissipated and mysteriously no one was calling any longer. Thinking it must be a solar flare, he was soon jolted along with much of the rest of the world watching television to see the towers of the World Trade Center collapse. Fortunately, friends in an adjacent WTC Customs building were safe and uninjured.

Among other interesting topics the couple shared was the harsh summer climate, during which the temperature soars near 130F. In August, Joda reports that much of the Kuwait population essentially “empties out.” Planes land only at night because of the risk that landing aircraft tires may blow-out due to the extreme heat.

Joda described a typical Kuwaiti ham club meeting. Most often the locals will gather at one another’s homes. They will be seated in a circle on the floor drinking tea or coffee, socializing for many hours, until the wee hours of the morning.

KM5FY says that after experiencing the exhilaration of being the hunted at the DX end of massive pile-ups, his interest in the hobby waned upon returning to the U.S. His current primary hobby is photography, and Joda says his photo and portrait services are available to locals—often for free. Samples of his work, including more photos from the Middle East can be seen on the ‘FlickR’ photo sharing site under his username, “jodact.” <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jodact/albums> .

Thanks Joda and Mary for sharing highlights from four remarkable years being...
“DX in the Middle East!”

DX Is! 73, de Ron K5XK