

# THE SIGNAL



*Newsletter of the  
Bella Vista  
Radio Club*

**VOL. 3, NO. 3      JUNE 2020**

Monthly Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays @ 7 p.m., Highland Christian Church, 1500 Forest Hills Blvd, Bella Vista  
Club Call: N5BVA • Repeater: 147.255 +offset, pl 162.2 • Website: [www.bellavistaradioclub.org](http://www.bellavistaradioclub.org)

### **WEEKLY NETS:**

3.830 kHz Roundtable - Sundays @ 4 pm

147.255 Repeater Net - Wednesdays @ 8 pm

Wide Area Net - Wednesdays @ 9 pm on the N5UFO NWA Linked Repeater System

## **Features In This Issue:**

- ✴ *Portable Operation is Fun!!! — K5QBX*
- ✴ *S. A. M. E. Weather Radios*
- ✴ *Building the SW40+ — WB5L*
- ✴ *The Prez Addresses Field Day/Covid-19 — W5XNA*
- ✴ *QSL Stories from Jay — W5JAY!!!*

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[arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com)**NEXT BVRC  
MONTHLY MEETING****THURSDAY - JUNE 4, 2020 - 7 PM****BVRC YOU TUBE CHANNEL****JUNE MEETING**

With the Covid-19 issue at hand, BVRC has conducted the past two monthly meetings online on the BVRC YouTube Channel. Last month's meeting was a Show & Tell format in which several BVRC members welcomed us into their shack for a tour and story sharing of some of their more memorable ham radio moments.

Last month's meeting has garnered many accolades and very positive remarks via e-mail, on the Sunday Roundtable, and over the area repeaters. So much so, that it has been decided to make this the format for all future monthly BVRC YouTube meetings until the virus issue lessens, and things return to normal.

So, tune-in on Thursday, June 4, for another great "Showin' Off the Shack Show" for new installments from some of our members as they welcome us into their ham stations.

See you then!!!

(Also, we are continuing to work on quality live speakers for our future meetings, when we return to our venue at Highland Christian Church.)



# BVRC MAY MEETING FEATURES MEMBER SHOW & TELL

Due to the coronavirus issue causing BVRC's meeting venue to be closed for the month of May, BVRC once again vaulted over the pandemic "hurdle" and conducted its May meeting via the BVRC You Tube Channel. 38 members tuned-in on Thursday evening, May 7, to be treated – for this month's meeting agenda – to touring some of the shacks and workbenches of a few of our members.

President Tom Northfell – W5XNA was the MC for the meeting and conducted the virtual presentation excellently with great comments along the way. He then introduced Dr. Bill Durham – KG5ZCI, Steve Werner – K5SAW, Ed McCarroll – KCØDX, and Don Banta – K5DB, to display their various shacks, workrooms, workbenches, outside antenna work, and other interesting aspects of the hobby that each member has taken a keen interest to. Super shack tour, gentlemen! Don then wrapped-up the meeting with information on the 2020 Arkansas QSO Party, which was coming up in two day on May 9.

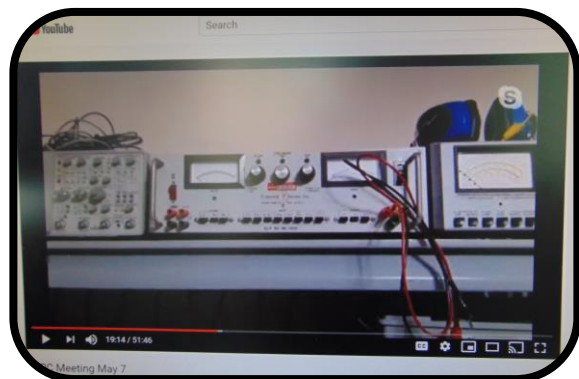
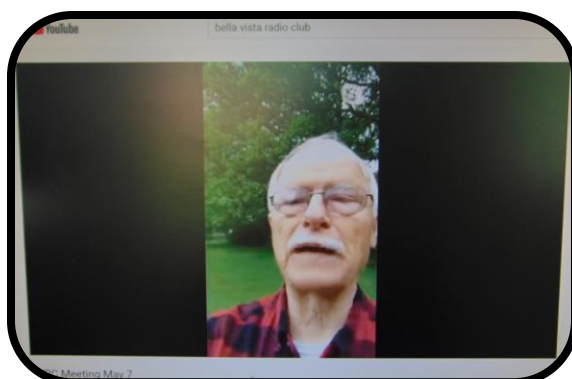
Screenshots of the featured guest speakers are below, but if you have not viewed the meeting on BVRC's You Tube Channel as yet, be sure and do so.

This link will take you straight to the program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7XuVJelfz4>.



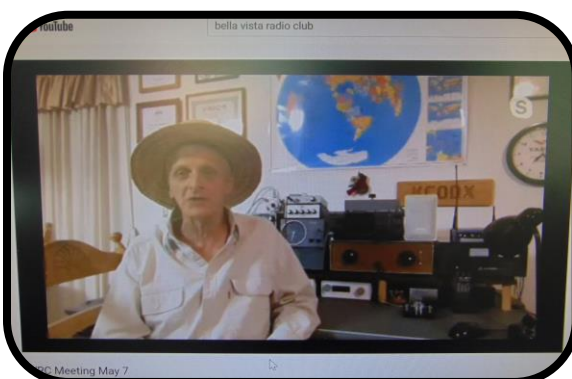
W5XNA

KG5ZCI



K5SAW

KCØDX



# The 2020 Arkansas QSO Part y

## Portable Operation is Fun !!!

By Fred Lemley – K5QBX

This year for the 2020 ARQP I had decided that I would approach it differently than I did in past years. Prior to this year, I have always done it from the home QTH and since my XYL, Margaret, and I had purchased a camper for our truck, I wanted to utilize it for portable ARQP participation. Being we were under the COVID-19 restrictions, I thought that it was a good excuse to get out of the house for a while and to be following guidelines put forth by the powers that be.



This year for the 2020 ARQP I had decided that I would approach it differently than I did in past years. Prior to this year, I have always done it from the home QTH. But since my XYL, Margaret, and I had purchased a camper for our truck, I wanted to utilize it for portable ARQP participation. So, because we were under the COVID-19 restrictions, I thought that it was a good excuse to get out of the house for a while and to be following guidelines put forth by the powers that be.

I also decided to build an antenna for portable use that would cover the bands used in various QSO parties, contests, and my own personal portable operations.

After a little thought and some help from Steve, K5SAW (he modeled the antenna for me), I put together a linked dipole using banana plug and jacks instead of alligator clips. The reason for this was that I would be running an amplifier at around 500 watts and the banana plug/jack arrangement seemed to have more surface area for conducting antenna current than the alligator clips. The other reason was it would be an antenna to cover my needs without having to deal with the multiple wires of a fan dipole. After all, we are hams and are supposed to be in an experimental frame of mind, aren't we?

I used PolySteath 18 gauge wire from Davis RF, banana plugs and jacks (from Amazon), a Balun Designs 1:1 balun, Budwig HQ-2 insulators at the end of each section, tent ground stakes to anchor the antenna, and fiberglass military poles and tripod for the main support. The antenna was built to have a resonant section for 20,30,40,75, and 80 meters. I started tuning the antenna lengths at the 20-meter section, worked outward to the 80-meter section and when done I had accomplished my goal. The linked dipole seemed to tune up easier than a fan dipole as there wasn't the interaction of multiple wires to change the tuning going from one section to

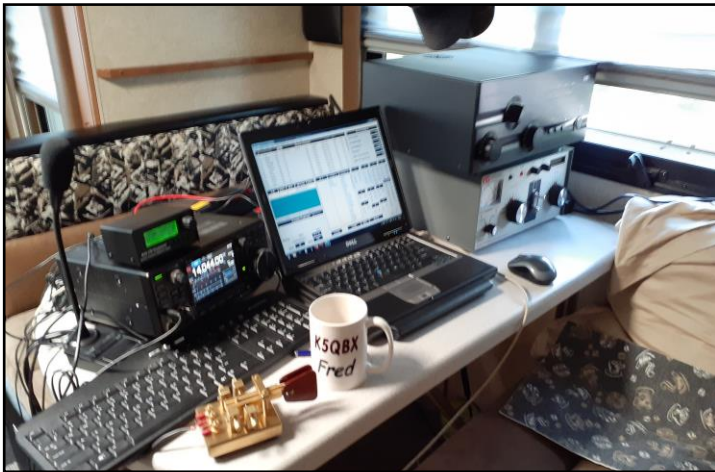




to the other. I have experienced **some** frustration tuning fan dipoles in the past. Every section had an SWR of 1.5:1 or less at design frequency with the antenna supported at 24' in the center and antenna ends at 8' or so from the ground when done. I used about 100' of RG-8/u to feed the antenna and get the camper out of the near field of the antenna as much as possible (to avoid possible RFI in the shack) and still have reasonable loss in the feed line. This would be pretty much typical of how it would be setup just about anywhere I decided to deploy it.

I used the camper as my "shack" as well as the onboard generator to power the radio equipment and as a comfort feature for me. Like a fellow I used to work with advised me, "ya can't do your best work unless you're comfortable". All the equipment fit on the dining table (barely) and I still had enough room for the ever-present coffee cup at the operating position. I was at Metfield Park in Bella Vista as a shakedown run for the antenna and camper to see if all would work together well in portable style operation.

My first choice of locations, the Core of Engineers Lakefield Park at Bull Shoals, was where I could have operated as a "two-fer" (two counties—two contacts in the log for one real contact). It was closed and my second choice of Dam Site Park was pretty much full, with only one slot available. I thought for the safety of other campers at Dam Site and to keep from destroying my antenna that I would go elsewhere. I got permission from the POA to operate at Metfield Park here in Bella Vista. The Bella Vista Historical Museum was my back up plan if Metfield Park was not allowed.



I thoroughly enjoyed building the antenna, setting up the "shack", and operating portable during ARQP. Even though I didn't do as well as some others, it was an opportunity to get out of the house, support the ARQP, improve my operating skills a bit, and to check out my portable setup for future portable operations.



So, in closing, whatever you do when deciding to operate portable, mobile or fixed, don't let location or band conditions discourage you from operating and making contacts. My elmer, WA5ATH (sk), told me from the beginning that if you do not make some noise calling CQ or answering a CQ, your logbook will never get any entries. Enjoy our hobby. I have, as a Novice since February 1983 continuously to present as an Advanced class operator. Ham operators being prepared for portable operation also keeps us prepared for the other part of our hobby...the service we can provide utilizing our equipment and skills during the need for emergency communications. So, get off the couch, out of the house, and go operate portable somewhere...

Glenn – WB5L drops by to make a few QSOs

73, Fred – K5QBX





## From the Desk of the President

As I write this column for this issue of *The Signal*, ARRL Field Day is only five weeks away. No matter how BVRC proceeds, it is extremely doubtful that Field Day will mirror last year's event and participation. Just yesterday, Jay – W5JAY, sent me a list of upcoming hamfests in Illinois and Missouri and many have already been cancelled. The Halloween Hamfest in Kirkwood, MO, sponsored by the St. Louis Amateur Radio Club has been cancelled and it was scheduled for October 31!

I have given much thought regarding the current Covid-19 situation, the position of the governor at this point in time, a prediction regarding state guidelines in five weeks, and BVRC member involvement in Field Day 2020. My thoughts are:

- There are probably those who will continue to isolate well past the time when sanctions are lifted. They have valid reasons for their concerns, and we must respect their decisions. Operating from home IS participating in Field Day.
- There are also those who have already chosen to try and get their lives back to some sense of normalcy. I see more drivers on the road, shoppers in the stores, and people in the parks.
- In addition, many people are somewhere in the middle.
- I believe Field Day, like most things, will be a matter of personal choice. Here are some of the options:
  - Plan for FD at Metfield Park (if available) or another venue for those members that would like BVRC to proceed with that option. **This will necessitate an immediate plan of action and volunteers.**
  - Inform the membership of the many options listed in two publications on the ARRL Field Day tab (*Field Day 2020 – A Time to Adapt* and *Creative Approaches to Field Day 2020*). This information could help when deciding on individual, small group, or club-wide participation.

I hope that whatever choice you decide on, it will involve getting on the air and having fun. Do you want to get involved with others for this event, but not sure how? The forum tab on the BVRC website is a great way to communicate with others.

GL AND 73,  
Tom W5XNA

# Get Concise Weather Alerts With Weather Radios Equipped with S.A.M.E

With the peak of severe thunderstorm / tornado season upon us, tornados and severe thunderstorms, a year 'round threat, are almost always on our minds. Many of us have weather radios, and many of us have been jarred awake at night from a deep slumber to the piercing alarm sounds of a weather alert – not for you, but for some county a hundred miles away! Today, as a standard feature the counties only to be reported for, and even the types of weather alert message can be tailored to the specific location and desires of the individual so that you are sure not disturbed by false alerts.

## NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR)

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Known as the "Voice of NOAA's National Weather Service," NWR is provided as a public service by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NWR numbers 1000 transmitters, covering all 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific Territories. NWR requires a special radio or scanner capable of picking up the signals and broadcasts are found in the VHF (public service) band at these seven frequencies: 162.400, 162.425, 162.450, 162.475, 162.500, 162.525 and 162.550 MHz.

## S.A.M.E. ALERTS

Specific Alert Message Encoding (SAME) alerts are the ultimate in safety and convenience. Watches and warnings are issued via both the original 1050 Hz tone and the digital SAME format. SAME technology allows you to specify the particular area for which you wish to receive alerts. Most warnings and watches broadcast over NOAA Weather Radio are county-based or independent city-based. Since most NWR transmitters are broadcasting for a number of counties, SAME receivers will respond only to alerts issued for the area (or







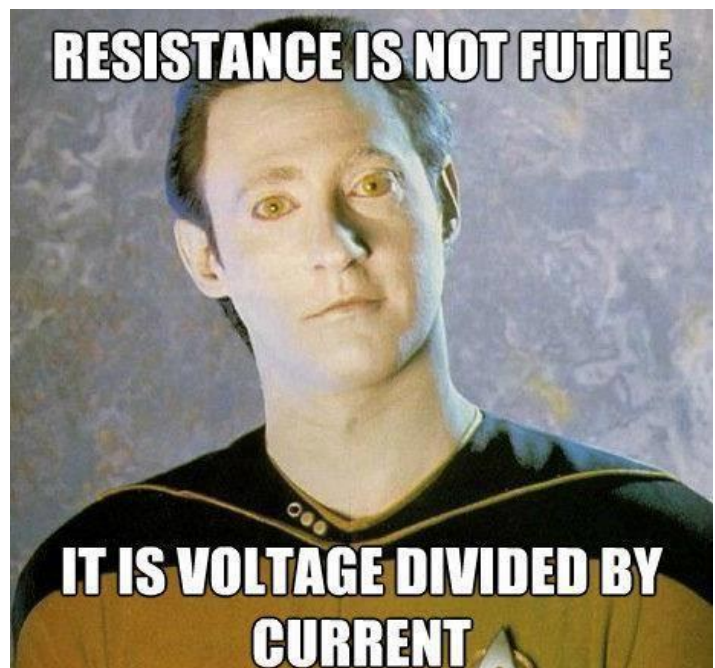
areas) you have selected. This minimizes the number of "false alarms" for events which might be a few counties away from where you live. In addition, while SAME allows you to specify a particular area of interest, some receivers allow you to turn off alarms for certain events which might not be important to you. For example, if you live in a coastal county, but not right at the beach, you might not care about coastal flood warnings. On particular weather alert radio models, this feature may also be called "Event Blocking" or "Defeat Siren." Being able to ignore non-critical warning can ultimately enhance the user's safety, for just as in the fable of the "Boy Who Cried Wolf," the human mind has the tendency to become 'de-sensitized' to incessant and too-frequent warning calls.

### WEATHER ALERT RADIOS

Weather radios are very plentiful these days – and that's a good thing. Or, at the least, you may find weather radio reception and features integrated with your popular modern amateur radio transceivers. You can buy weather alert radios at many retail outlets such as electronics, department, sporting goods, boat and marine accessory stores, and even grocery stores. An online shopping site such as Amazon.com may bring the best deal. Prices range from \$20 to over \$100, and when considering a radio to purchase, look for those displaying the SAME, Public Alert, or NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) All Hazards logos on their case. Some NOAA approved manufacturers and models can be found at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrrcvr.htm#programming>



SOMEHOW, CLYDE NEVER FULLY GRASPED THE CONCEPT OF HOW TO ROTATE A BEAM





**N7BAZ** – New member Hal out in Tucson AZ is no stranger to NWA, as a longtime Springdale ham. Hal was impressed to join BVRC after hearing K5DB's 4/25 interview on the 'QSO Today' podcast.

**K5OY** – New member Steve was the CW operator for WR5P, an AR QSO Party 'Bonus Station.' A keen contester, Steve is also a new ['CW Ops'](#) club member.

**W5AAJ** – Formerly KI5DJP, Scott is very active and enjoying his new call sign. He recently received a letter from a contact, K5KW in Colorado, with the 'back story' of the original holder of W5AAJ. The OM was K5KW's Elmer in the 1950s & 60s. The call had been silent for 55 years! Scott is now active in ADXA, having attained his digital DXCC Award for working & confirming 100 countries using FT-8.

**K5VCA, KI5FPD, & KI5HTX** – Vinson, Jere and Clara, operating club station W5YO in the multi-operator category, won the 5<sup>th</sup> call district going away, and placed 2nd in the nation in the recent Rookie Roundup! And the trio almost won the national title but were narrowly outscored by an Ohio station. Congrats to these fine new operators.

**W5XNA** – Kudos to Tom for placing #5 in the 5<sup>th</sup> Call Area in the most recent CQ World-Wide DX Contest. Tom was a single operator using high power SSB on the highly competitive 20-meter band, with a simple unity-gain, wire antenna!

**K5SAW** – Steve, who loves experimenting with new antennas, may be the first local to evaluate a "[DX Commander](#)" multi-band HF Vertical. The UK design is somewhat of a vertical "fan dipole." Steve is also investigating a "[folding Hexbeam](#)" (2 element HF wire yagi) for portable use.

**W5XH** – Among other projects, Murray maintains an [Echolink](#) connection to the U of A Club repeater, 147.135+ MHz, 110.9 PL, as shown on the [W5YM](#) website.

**N4EW** – Jacob, a commercial pilot, has accepted a new aviator job and is QSY'ing back to Kentucky.

**AB5UN** – John, our recently re-activated founder of the Club in the 1990s, emphasizes that he monitors the 147.255 Repeater throughout the day. When you're looking for a contact, give John a call.

**N5HUB** – New member Richard in Springdale has reactivated, and building a 75/40 Meter 'fan dipole' to use with his Kenwood HF station.

**KC5MXV** – Craig is experiencing aggravating electrical noise, and has posted details on the "Elmer's Forum," [here](#). Check it out for a number of interesting responses.

**K5YY** – San is reducing his inventory of quality HF and 6 Meter gear & antennas, and encourages everyone to use the "[Forums](#)" page on the club website.

**WB5L** – Glenn is outfitting an RV Camper with some new QRP gear for portable use.

**NM5AB** – Noel is reportedly beginning to study Morse Code using the "CW Teacher" module in the popular N3FJP logging program.



**FROM RON EVANS – K5XK**

K5UNX – Wayne made his first-ever CW contact recently using a 'straight key.'

N5SU – like many of our members, John is busy 'Elmering' new hams in the area.

K5SAW & N5TFC – In addition to electronics, Steve and Derryl are skilled in metal and wood working, with well-appointed shops. Both are generously offering to share tips, how-to's and techniques with anyone interested in learning a new skill set.

KG5ZCI – Bill is experimenting with a 6 Meter Loop antenna and a UHF yagi.

WA0TDQ – Hugh is featured in a new TV commercial promoting his Neosho senior living apartments.

K6RLA – Ken celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, reporting he continues to be active on HF.

W5XNA & K5XK – Tom and Ron continue to respond to various inquiries as a result of our [Website](#), its design and maintenance courtesy of club webmaster WB5L!

K5DB – Don reports that the 2020 running of the Arkansas QSO Party is in the books. The log submission deadline is Saturday, May 23. Tabulation and results processing will commence on Sunday, May 24, and he will have a summary story on this year's event in the next month or so for inclusion in a coming Signal issue. He has already received a splendid ARQP story from Fred – K5QBX, which appears in this month's issue!

Please send your news and activity reports to [k5xk@bellavistaradioclub.org](mailto:k5xk@bellavistaradioclub.org) !

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## REMINDER: DON'T FORGET OUR VHF/UHF WEEKLY NETS!

### **BELLA VISTA RADIO CLUB WEEKLY 2-METER NET**

The BVRC weekly 2-meter net meets each Wednesday evening at 8pm local time on 147.255 / pl tone 162.2. You do NOT have to be a BVRC member to participate. All licensed amateurs are welcome to join us for on-the-air fellowship and good discussions. This is an excellent way for all new hams to become accustomed to operating protocol and procedure and gain experience in operating through a repeater. Join-in on the fun!

### **WIDE-AREA NET**

The Wide-Area Net meets each Wednesday evening at 9pm local time on the NW Arkansas Linked System. All licensed operators in the NW Arkansas/SW Missouri/NE Oklahoma area have a standing invitation to join-in on great discussion topics, announcements of upcoming events, good ol' VHF/UHF fun, and sometimes very useful information on this Net. Hams from all over the area participate in this Net, and a good time is experienced by all each week. **NEW HAMERS ARE ESPECIALLY WELCOME!** You can access the Linked System through any 1 of 8 repeaters!!! The list of the repeaters used in the Linked System can be found [here](#). See you then!



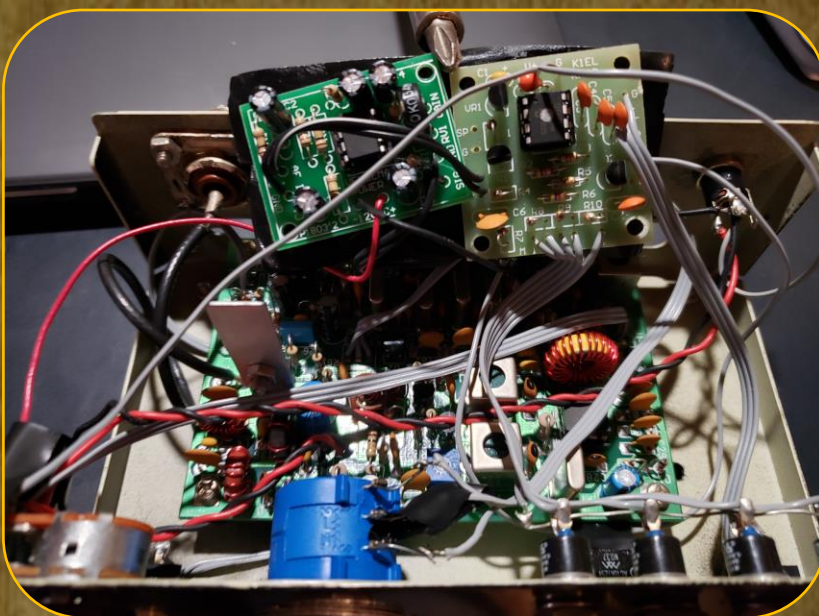


# My First Radio – Building the SW40+

By Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L

I was going to build “my own” radio. An original WB5L design, allowing me to gain a deeper understanding of not only how it works, but providing something more. I had built various projects for the shack; two versions of soundcard interfaces, DC power controls, etc., but not a single radio. Yes, I was bitten by the builder’ bug.

I researched and decided that a good primer was the Pixie. I picked up two of them at the local Hamfest for a song. After several months of playing around with various Pixie designs, I had decided that the Pixie was good to understand the basics of direct conversion receivers, but not so good of an operating radio. It has an annoying constant tone, which is transmitted all the time, albeit in the micro-watt range, but I could still hear it in my “big rig” with the antenna disconnected. The design, although simple, was just not what I envisioned as my first home brew rig. After researching on-line, I decided on the SW series of mono-band CW radios from Small Wonder Labs. Dave Benson, K1SWL, has quite a reputation with his radio kits. I ordered the SW40+ kit from Dave on November 1, 2015. I had already scavenged a nice box from an old computer serial port switch. I also purchased the K-PCB Tiny CW Keyer Kit from K1EL. I had already put that together originally for the Pixie radio. The K-12 keyer board is only 10 bucks, what a deal! It has memory, and all the options one would need to use an Iambic keyer. After all the research on-line, I also ordered a 100k ohm 10-turn pot for the tuning of the SW40+, and a 5k ohm pot with an on-off switch for the receiver gain from Mouser Electronics. I had a 10-turn dial in my junk box, given to me by my Elmer K4COF Phil (now SK), way back when. I always kept that little black dial, and just “knew” that I would use it someday. With that black dial, I decided to paint the re-purposed switch box black as well, it looked much better than the dull tan color of the original enclosure.



The excitement peaked as I received a package from Small Wonder Labs in the mailbox about a week and a half later. I could hardly eat dinner as I opened the package from Dave. It had a nice-looking printed circuit board, a CD with the docs, along with a bag of parts with various internal bags, of which I decided to finish up dinner before un-packing. I told the XYL, “I guess you know what I am going to be doing this weekend, see you later”. And with that, I disappeared into the depths of the basement man cave, as the wife calls it. Dave’s documentation was quite good. His “first things first” section is something that is lacking with most kit building documentation. Failure to plan is a plan that fails, they say, so I proceeded to cautiously remove the various components and place them where I can identify them quickly. This turns out to be a great idea: I printed a copy of the parts list on some good thick paper, and started punching holes with a piece of wire, for the components. I inserted the correct components in the holes, next to their respective names. What do you know? Everything was accounted for! This took an hour or so, however I decided that this time, I was going to take my time and do things right. After feeling good about my parts as placed, I warmed up the soldering iron. Soldering with plated



through holes was a real treat. It took a few parts to discover that if I held the iron on the pad just a second longer, the solder would fill the hole through the other side. I finished about one fourth of the board, before my eyes started getting blurry, and went to bed.

Saturday morning, I could hardly wait until I got back into the shack for the SW40. I took my time, double checked the parts placement, and finished the board around 3 PM. Looking good! After wiring in the various controls, along with the K-PCB keyer, it was time for the smoke test! There is nothing quite like the first sounds coming from that pile of parts you just soldered together. I would say it was much like that first QSO after finally getting your license. There was only one problem, it would not tune! Looking at the schematic, the 10-turn pot was checked, and I discovered that it was not changing the 8-volts as mentioned in Dave's troubleshooting section of the docs. So, after considering that I was just tired, I left it again for the night.



Sometime early in the morning of Sunday the 14th, I had an epiphany. A vision of the schematic of a variable resistor was floating in my head. There has to be 100k across the resistor for pins 1 and 3, all I have to do is find which two pins have 100k ohms across them, and that 100k reading does not change while turning the knob. That would be the next thing to check after breakfast. As it turns out, I was right, the pin out was 2-1-3, instead of the proverbial 1-2-3. After connecting the tuning pot the correct way, I had tuning! Imagine that! The alignment went as prescribed afterwards, and I have a nice 2 watt output signal from 7.000 through 7.035 Mhz. Rather than mess around with the rig, I decided that was good

enough. I could turn the power up to over 5 watts, but decided to keep it back at 2 where it was designed.

After getting it all buttoned up, I proudly displayed the new rig to the XYL. "All is well", I proclaimed. I finally had built my own radio. "All the planets are in alignment", I joked. She was very supportive and applauded my accomplishment. (Is this still a dream?). I spent the rest of the afternoon listening to the crisp sounds of CW on my new rig. The 4-pole crystal filter has some ringing but can be eliminated by simply moving the tuning dial just a little. The 10-turn pot was worth all the trouble, and that little black 10-turn dial, well, it's finally got a purpose in life besides filling a drawer in my junk box. K4COF, The "Crafty Old Fox" is somehow looking down and smiling. The bandwidth, as measured by Ham Radio Deluxe from the sound card, shows to be around 600 Hz. The side-tone comes in around 800 Hz, pretty much in the middle of the passband. I could actually hear some signals that was too far down in the noise with my "big rig" (TS-450). I heard many stations from all around the world!

While not my own design, it was a great experience. Not only have I proven to myself that I could actually build a radio, I now have a renewed interest in brushing up on the code. I have accomplished the goal of learning more about how a radio works, and now I am ready for tackling more advanced projects. I can see myself using the little SW40+ at field day, or just anywhere while traveling or camping. It will be a treasured piece of the shack forever.

I hope this story will be an inspiration to some of our new hams to add kit building to their ham radio experience. Give it a try sometime! You will enjoy it and definitely learn a lot from the experience.





# BVRC WEEKLY NET REPORTS



## BVRC Wednesday Night Net – N5BVA Repeater

**April 22, 2020**

**NCS: KE0QFO – Alan**

Check-ins (15)

K5ANW Darryl  
K5DB Don  
K5SAW Steve  
K5UNX Wayne  
KC0DX Ed  
KD0ULQ Sean  
KG5SZQ Chris  
KG5TTZ John  
KG5YGV Jessie  
K6GHSJ James  
K1SEQL Faith  
K0ETA Sheila  
N5SQY Rob  
WB5L Glenn

**April 29, 2020**

**NCS: KG5SZQ – Chris**

Check-ins: (15)

AB5UN John  
AC0QU Bill  
K5ANW Darryl  
K5DB Don  
K5SAW Steve  
K5UNX Wayne  
K5XK Ron  
KC0DX Ed  
KE0QFO Alan  
K6GHSJ James  
K1SDUV Bonner  
K1SEQL Faith  
N5SQY Rob  
W5HB John

**May 6, 2020**

**NCS: K5SAW – Steve**

Check-ins (10)

AB5UN John  
AC0QU Bill  
K5DB Don  
K6RLA Ken  
KC0DX Ed  
KG5MWG Rick  
KG5TTZ John  
K1SDUV Bonner  
N5NET Jimmy

**May 13, 2020**

**NCS: KE0QFO – Alan**

Check-ins: (14)

AB5UN John  
AD5AM Buster  
K5DB Don  
K5SAW Steve  
K5UNX Wayne  
K5XK Ron  
KC0DX Ed  
KE0VQL Dennis  
KG5SZQ Chris  
K6GHSJ James  
N5LML Randy  
N5SQY Rob  
W5HB John

## BVRC Wide-Area-Net – NW Arkansas Link System

**April 22, 2020**

**NCS: W5XNA – Tom**

Check-ins: (12)

K5DB Don  
K5UNX Wayne  
K5VCA Vinson  
KG5YJV Jessie  
KG5YJW Jeff  
KG5ZCI Bill  
K1SDUU Dallas  
K1SEQL Faith  
N5SQY Rob  
W5HB John  
W5ZQI Shane

**April 29, 2020**

**NCS: K5XK – Ron**

Check-ins: (16)

AC0QU Bill  
K5DB Don  
K5DVT Jon  
K5UNX Wayne  
K5VCA Vinson  
K9DPT Jeremy  
K1SCXH Susan  
K1SDUU Dallas  
K1SEQL Molly  
K0JWG Jonathan  
N5KWL Tem  
N5SQY Rob  
W5HB John  
W5XNA Tom  
W5ZQI Shane

**May 6, 2020**

**NCS: K5VCA – Vinson**

Check-ins: (22)

AC0MG Marc  
AC0VM Debbie  
K5DB Don  
K5DVT Jon  
K5DXR Mark  
K5XDR Ryan  
KA5BMK Lee  
K6SMWG Rick  
KD8NLM Mark  
KG5TTZ John  
KG5YJW Jeff  
KG5ZCI Bill  
K1SCPT Daniel  
K1SCXH Susan  
K1SFPD Jere  
K1SHTX Clara  
N5KWL Tem  
N5LML Randy  
N5SQY Rob  
W5XNA Tom  
W5ZQI Shane

**May 13, 2020**

**NCS: K5DB – Don**

Check-ins (12):

K5VCA Vinson  
K5XDR Ryan  
K5XH Mark  
K6SUWK Jerry  
K6SMXV Craig  
KG5ZCI Bill  
K1SDUU Dallas  
K0JWG Jonathan  
N5SQY Rob  
W5HB John  
W5XNA Tom

# BVRC VE REPORT

May 9, 2020

**THIS MONTH'S VE TEST SESSION  
CANCELLED DUE TO  
CORONA VIRUS OUTBREAK**



**WELCOME NEW  
BVRC MEMBERS !!!**

Richard Wiggins – N5HUB – Springdale  
Hal Long – N7BAZ – Tucson, AZ



# Curious QSLs

By Jay Bromley – W5JAY

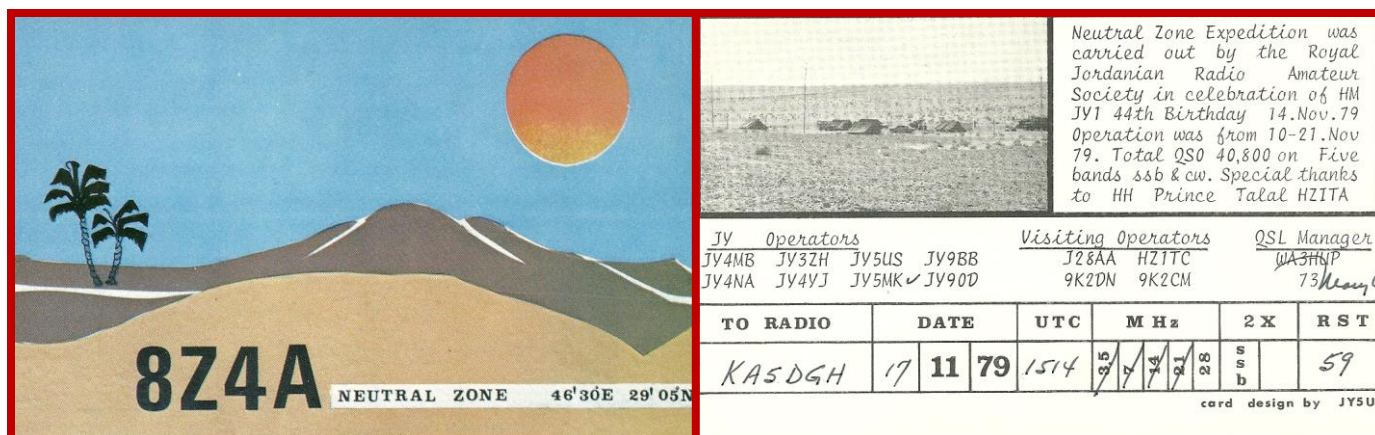
Have you ever noticed that many of these cards have a story to tell, much like old CW keys? If only they could talk!! Well out of a few thousand QSL cards I have about a dozen of so that would qualify for a memorable story. This first QSL is one of them - it was before I became a DX hound. Plus, this story includes one of my dear friends, BILL – W5SJ, who spoke at BVRC a few months back.

Bill was one of my heroes growing up in Fort Smith, AR. Back then, the big guns all had Drake gear and if you were a real ham, no matter the rig, you had a 2-element quad up in the air! All my Fort Smith elmers had 2-element quad antennas. In fact, I do not remember anyone during this time period having a yagi beam up in the air.

I forget the quad Bill had up during this time, but I had a HyGain with aluminum spreaders. It was diamond shaped and I thought it was a work of art!

This was back in the 70s, which compared to today's solar cycles, it was awesome – the bands were great, but especially on 10-meters! I thought the fun would never end, and 10-meters was open for months on end during those years. Many times I stayed on 10 day and night!

One day while cruising 10-meters, I came across Bill working DX. I lived one hill over from Bill and heard him work a very weird callsign – 8Z4A. The entity was called the "Neutral Zone". This one is listed as Saudi Arabia/Iraq Neutral Zone. The year was 1979 and they were on – guess where?...10m SSB. That expedition made 40,800 QSO on SSB and CW. There was another Neutral Zone called Kuwait/Saudi Arabia Neutral Zone with the prefix of 8Z5 instead of the previous 8Z4. I am sure both had something to do with a war. It was probably considered by the named countries as no man's land or a disputed territory.



Neutral Zone Expedition was carried out by the Royal Jordanian Radio Amateur Society in celebration of HM JY1 44th Birthday 14.Nov.79. Operation was from 10-21.Nov.79. Total QSO 40,800 on Five bands ssb & cw. Special thanks to HH Prince Talal HZITA

JV Operators				Visiting Operators		QSL Manager
JY4MB	JY3ZH	JY5US	JY9BB	J28AA	HZ1TC	W5JAY
JY4NA	JY4YJ	JY5MK	JY90D	9K2DN	9K2CM	73 Mary

TO RADIO	DATE	UTC	MHz	2X	RST
KASDGH	17 11 79	1514	10.1	SSB	59

card design by JY5U

When I heard Bill break-through the 8Z4A pileup with one call and since we both had quads up in the air, I thought "Hey I can do this! If Bill can do it, then I can too!" Well, it *wasn't* quite that easy! After 3 hours of calling them, not knowing how to work a pileup, I finally got them in the logbook as well. In retrospect, this must have amused Bill and the other DXing locals big time, hi. In the aftermath, Bill insisted on me QSLing with 8Z4A to confirm the contact. At this point in time, the DX bug had not bit me, but about 15 years later, it would.

Ham Radio has many facets and they all don't come at once, such as me taking over 22 years to get going on DX. It isn't the chase or even the awards that is the most fun – the real draw to me is all about camaraderie within the hobby! Whether DXing, contesting, QRP, etc, the awards are nice to look at, but it is the memories with friends created along the way that makes the hobby! Like hearing Bill on 10m work that rare station, and then have me try. That was truly priceless!

The second QSL I would like to share a story with you about, was a 40-meter contact, down on the lower bands.

One night I was tuning across 40-meters and heard what I thought was this awful QRM. Underneath all that QRM was a very weak signal. Like so many times I put my headset on and began listening to what all the ruckus was about! As my friend Jim – K5JUC says, "Work them first, worry later." What was happening that night on 40m was a DX station that couldn't hear a stateside roundtable QSO near his frequency and decided it would be a great place to fire-up and call CQ DX. Like so many groups on our lower ham bands, they decided they 'owned' that frequency and it should be clear 24/7. So instead of moving down a little to a clear frequency, they decided they would QRM the DX station *and* the ones calling him!

**ZS8M** IOTA AF-021 **MARION ISLAND** ITU ZONE: 57 Latitude: 46° 55' S  
CQ ZONE: 30 Longitude: 37° 52' E

QSL Address: Pierre Tromp, PO Box 151, Worcester, 6850, South Africa  
QSL Manager: Dirk Lotz - ZS1X

ANTENNA: Multiband Dipole RIG: IC-7200 IC-7000

TO RADIO	DATE	UTC	RST	MHz	2Way
W5JAY	21/Sep/2010	04:19	55	7	SSB

Thank you for the QSO!  
73's  
Pierre Tromp  
ZS8M / ZS1HF

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The callsign of the DX station was ZS8M, on Marion Island. Marion is southeast of the African continent, about halfway between Africa and Antarctica. The only human inhabitants there are the staff at the meteorological and biological research station maintained by the South African government.

This operator was a technician, and his tour of duty was for one year on that island. Like so many times, I didn't look-up the call and assumed since it had ZS in the prefix of the call, it was in Africa. Good thing I did work that station as it was an all-time new country for me and pretty darned rare! I learned to *never* just assume a callsign is a particular *country*! Remember: work first, worry later! Marion Island doesn't come on the air much and like most stations from that part of the world, they are not that easy to work even with a good antenna up in the air! Back then, NO CW, NO digital modes like FT8 to help out. The ham technician on the island said he was running entry level or beginner's rigs with just 100 watts ON SSB! I think it was an Icom 718? Anyway, his rig was without CW filters. He was hoping to get some CW filters later and have them installed, but I don't think he ever did get on another mode other than SSB. By the way, I have only worked Marion Island on once since being a ham and it was *this* lone contact on 40m SSB.

So, while I called ZS8M, the QRM-ers were saying stuff like "You guys can't possibly be hearing that station (much less working them) as we don't hear it!" Well I got in-and-out with one call. "W5JAY you are 59 on Marion Island!" When this happens (trust me it doesn't very often) it can be quite a rush to bust through not only a huge pileup, but especially through the QRM! I gave him a 59 as well, and I was gone. I left the scene smiling.

In fact, these days I love beating-out the QRMers more than the pileup itself!! Instead of allowing it to upset me, it has turned into satisfaction of beating-out a bunch of misfits. This demeanor is weird, and I can't explain exactly why I am like this, ha. I will admit that it took many years to enjoy the "bad" part of DXing. There are always a few – just a very few – that are bent on ruining fun for others. Don't let them!

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