



# THE SIGNAL

Newsletter of the  
Bella Vista area Radio Club  
*Arkansas' Largest Amateur Radio Club*

November 2023

Monthly Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays @ 7 p.m.  
Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy (ALETA)  
3424 S. Downum Road, Springdale AR

*(HAM 101 Workshop for Newcomers @ 6pm preceding meeting)*

Club Calls: N5BVA / W5NX

Website: [www.bellavistaradioclub.org](http://www.bellavistaradioclub.org)

Repeaters: 147.255 +offset, pl 162.2

444.100 +offset, pl 162.2

## WEEKLY NETS:

### BVRC Legacy Net

Wednesdays @ 7 pm on the  
BVRC Dual Linked Repeaters

N5BVA/Bella Vista: 147.255, +offset, pl 162.2

N5BVA/Springdale: 444.100, +5 MHz, pl 162.2

### BVRC 3830 Roundtable

Sunday Afternoons

4 pm during CST

4:30 pm during CDT

3.830 MHz

### BVRC HAM 101 Net

Tuesdays @ 7 pm on the  
WX5NAS Skywarn Link System:

Bentonville – 146.865, -offset, pl 103.5

Fayetteville – 147.315, +offset, pl 97.4

Winslow – 147.315, +offset, pl 110.9

Huntsville – 443.625, +5 MHz, pl 97.4

Green Forest – 145.310, -offset, pl 103.5

# NEXT BVRC MONTHLY MEETING

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023 @ 7PM  
ARKANSAS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING ACADEMY  
3424 S. DOWNUM ROAD  
SPRINGDALE, AR

## November Meeting Info

**HAM 101 WORKSHOP, 6 PM** – A really special Ham 101 Workshop is in store for our November meeting – “HELP WITH PROGRAMMING HTs”. The program will be led by BVRC’s Technical Officer Tem Moore – N5KWL along with several club Elmer hams, to help you in programming your Handi-Talkie with repeater frequencies, offsets, repeater access tones, etc.

Be sure to bring:

- 
- Your HT
  - Your laptop with programming software
  - Any cable that came with your HT to connect to your PC
  - Your HT User’s Manual

This will be a very fun and educational Workshop gathering! Don’t miss it!

**NOVEMBER MEETING, 7 PM** – Our November program features BVRC’s Dennis Tune – W9DCT. Dennis’ presentation is entitled “A Little Bit of Everything”. Since becoming a ham less than two years ago, Dennis’ interest, knowledge, and operating skills have grown by leaps and bounds. He has already acquired awards that many veteran hams have taken years to attain. He has also won many contests in which the competition is at a very high level and is a remarkable accomplishment considering his short time in the hobby. Dennis will be sharing some of his experiences as well as software programs that have greatly aided him in his ham radio pursuits and has graciously accepted the invitation to share them with the BVRC membership – in particular our new hams in the club. Included in his topics will be: Grid Tracker, PSK Reporter, Club Log, QRZ.com, LotW, and various spotting websites. This will be a very informative program, so be sure to bring your pen and paper, or e-tablet.

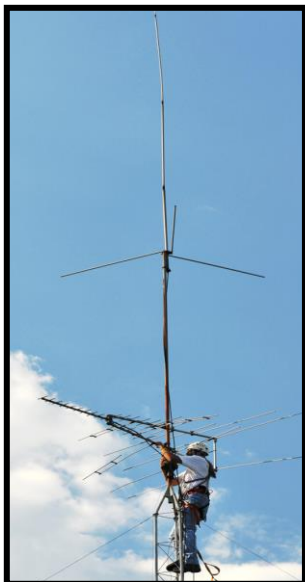
*See You Then!*



# October Program Features Tower Climbing Safety

It was another large turnout for BVRC's October 2023 meeting on Oct. 5. Members were treated to a very unique topic and stellar presentation by BVRC member Chuck Korzendorfer – KM5G. Chuck brings vast knowledge and experience to the table climbing many different towers, both commercial and ham, for decades. Since this editor joined the club almost 7 years ago, BVRC has not had a presentation on tower safety, so this was a very special and informative program by Chuck.

Chuck said there are 680,000 hams in the U.S. and 38,000 towers. The average amateur tower is 40-feet in height and supports an HF beam, a VHF/UHF beam, and wire antenna(s).



Chuck then highlighted a plethora of information to the attendees:

- The most common tower fatality is electrocution.
- A good, quality base for towers 40' or higher would be 4-5' square and at least 3' deep.
- Always follow the tower manufacturer's recommendations.
- Always consider wind load (the antenna's resistance to wind).
  - Ex: Beam antennas will have more of a wind load than hex beams, quads, dipoles, etc.

Chuck then discussed OSHA statistics, which bear-out that hams are 4X more apt to have a tower accident than a professional. – All the more reason to familiarize yourself with tower climbing safety guidelines.

An excellent source for training and preparing to tower climb is the Zero Falls Alliance website, managed by Jim Idelson – K1IR: <https://zerofalls.org/> . Chuck advised that Jim also has many quality YouTube videos in which you can watch reviews on tower safety.

Chuck said that some of the main types of unwanted tower events are freefall with tower collapsing (riding the tower down), freefall, and electrocution. Furthermore, Chuck said that adding temporary guy lines in addition to existing ones, is always a plus when tower climbing, especially towers with considerable height. If the foundation is of the pier-pin type, temporary guys are a must.

Unless the tower has been constructed by the manufacturer to be free standing, guy lines are paramount. Normally, the foundation will not support and un-guyed tower. *Never* climb an unsafe tower. While on the tower, *never* perform unsafe maneuvers. (Use common sense.)

Chuck concluded the great presentation by illustrating some of the various tower climbing tools and equipment:

- ❖ A few decades ago, safety belts were the going thing for tower climbing. With today's increased emphasis on tower safety, harnesses are much better
- ❖ Lanyards and new-style Carabiners
- ❖ Hard hat – Should be worn by both the climber *and* ground crew in case the climber drops a tool, nut, bolt, etc.
- ❖ Drop zone – The area directly under the climber. Stay clear of this area unless told by the climber that it is ok, usually when climber needs something pulleyed up to them
- ❖ Fall arrest lanyard – a newer piece of safety equipment, and a good one. These can save your life.
- ❖ In years past, tower climbers performed the “free climb”, that is climbing straight up the tower without attaching any type of safety lanyard. Today, the climber should be attached at all times ascending and descending the tower.

**THANKS CHUCK FOR YOUR SUPERB PRESENTATION! WE APPRECIATE YOU!**

***Also, thanks to Glenn-WB5L for his great antenna analyzer presentation in the HAM 101 Workshop!!!***



## BOARD MEMBERS

### *President*

Jan Hagan – WB5JAN  
[ianhagan51@gmail.com](mailto:ianhagan51@gmail.com)

### *Vice President*

Joe Hott – W5AEN  
[joe.hott@gmail.com](mailto:joe.hott@gmail.com)

### *Secretary*

Dana Hill – W5DGH  
[dana.hill1979@gmail.com](mailto:dana.hill1979@gmail.com)

### *Treasurer*

Mark Whittlesey - WØKYZ  
[almarc11@yahoo.com](mailto:almarc11@yahoo.com)

### *Technical Officer*

Tem Moore – N5KWL  
[temmoore@gmail.com](mailto:temmoore@gmail.com)

### *Trustee*

Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L  
[wb5l@arrl.net](mailto:wb5l@arrl.net)

### *Board Member At Large and Public Information Officer*

Tom Northfell – W5XNA  
[w5xna@arrl.net](mailto:w5xna@arrl.net)



## APPOINTED OFFICERS

### *VE Testing Committee*

Chair: Don Cooper – KC7DC  
[don\\_c@hotmail.com](mailto:don_c@hotmail.com)

### *Elmer 911 Committee*

Chair: Vinson Carter – WV5C  
[vinsoncarter@gmail.com](mailto:vinsoncarter@gmail.com)

### *Nets Committee*

Chair: Dana Widboom – KI5TGY  
[dcwidboom@gmail.com](mailto:dcwidboom@gmail.com)

### *Membership Committee*

Chair: Tom Northfell – W5XNA  
[w5xna@arrl.net](mailto:w5xna@arrl.net)

### *Social Media Committee*

Chair: Rebecca Garrett – N5REB  
[rebdgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:rebdgarrett@gmail.com)

### *Webmaster*

Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L  
[wb5l@arrl.net](mailto:wb5l@arrl.net)

### *Newsletter Editor*

Don Banta – K5DB  
[arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com)

# From the Desk of the President



## **“It was the best of times ...”**

This quote from the opening lines of Charles Dicken’s “A Tale of Two Cities” sums it up best ...what a wonderful time we are living through to be an amateur radio operator!

For those new to the hobby, you picked a great time to take up this wonderful hobby! We find ourselves in the middle of a surprisingly active Solar Cycle 25 that is scheduled to reach its peak in 2025. Solar cycle 25 is the 25th cycle since 1755, when extensive recording of solar sunspot activity began.

With the active solar cycle we are now experiencing, amateur radio operators are seemingly able to make contacts on all HF bands around the country and, indeed, around the world on a more regular basis than in the past several years during the low ebb of the sun cycle. What is even better, the current sun cycle that is helping us send out signals on all modes – phone, cw, digital – is not expected to reach its peak until 2025, meaning that the open and active bands we are now experiencing are going to get even better!

Those who focus their radio activities on VHF and UHF are not being left out on this bonanza of propagation. With the winter months comes the falling of the leaves and a noticeable increase in our signal strength into our local repeaters and across simplex frequencies as the foliage blocking our signals falls away.

It is also the best of times for our Bella Vista Radio Club. As the largest amateur radio club in Arkansas with over two hundred active members, we plan to use the rich backgrounds and considerable gifts and talents of our club members to plan, create and schedule many exciting and fun amateur radio related activities and events in the coming months. We are committed to developing opportunities that will help our members of every experience level enjoy this exciting hobby even more.

So, stay tuned ... it IS the best of times for our hobby and our Bella Vista Radio Club.

73,  
Jan  
WB5JAN

# Ham license renewal drawing near? Not sure how to renew online? ARRL VEC CAN HELP!



Have you ever used the FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS)? If you have, you probably concluded that it is **NOT** user friendly. Whether you have used it or not, in this day and time you now WILL. That is, if you wish to conduct any type of business with the FCC.

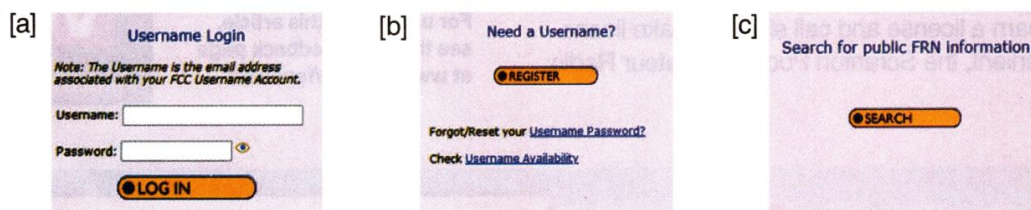
The days of renewing or modifying your license by hard copy forms and using regular mail are over. The FCC now only conducts transactions electronically, online.

Do not let this dissuade you, however. It's like anything else – once you've gotten your feet wet and "been there and done that", using the ULS won't be that hard. Below are easy to follow instructions from the ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator department on using the ULS to renew your license (*reprinted from QST, October 2023*):

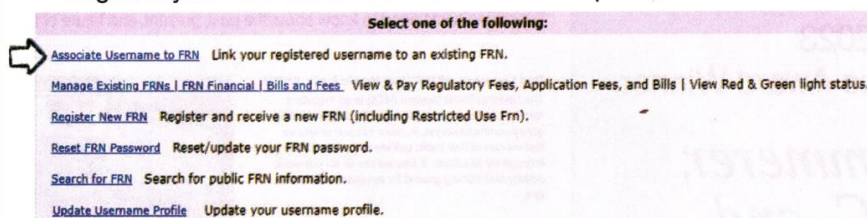
Before you renew your license, you will need to create a new FCC CORES username account, and then link your FCC Registration Number (FRN) to your new account. As of April 2022, the FCC charges a \$35 fee to renew amateur radio licenses. You must create the new account to pay the fee. Follow the steps below to create a new CORES account, and then after you complete the license renewal application, the License Manager system will automatically direct you to the CORES system. Log in and pay the fee.

## Setting Up Your New FCC CORES Username Account

**1** If you haven't already created a CORES account, you must register a username (your email address) and a password (see [a] and [b]). Visit the FCC CORES web page at <https://apps.fcc.gov/core/userLogin.do> to set up your account. If you don't know your FRN, you may search for it on that web page (see [c]). You will need your FRN for the next step.



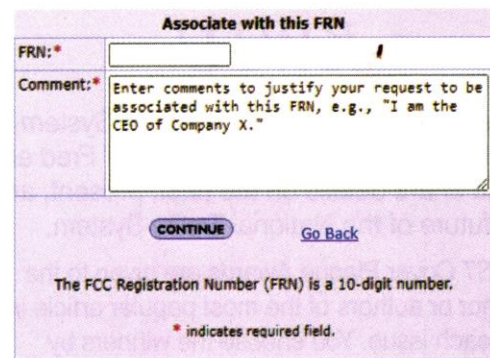
**2** Log in to your new account and click the first option, **ASSOCIATE USERNAME TO FRN**.



3 Enter your FRN and comment. An example [d] of a comment is "Associating FRN" (see [d]).

4 Click CONTINUE.

5 If you know the password for your FRN, enter it now. This password will likely be different from the one used for your username account. If you do not know your FRN password, click the CONTACT TECH SUPPORT link, which is next to the FORGOT YOUR PASSWORD? option and underneath the SUBMIT button. **Please do not try more than twice, as you will be locked out of your account after repeated failed attempts.** You can also call the FCC at 877-480-3201 to have them reset your password for you.

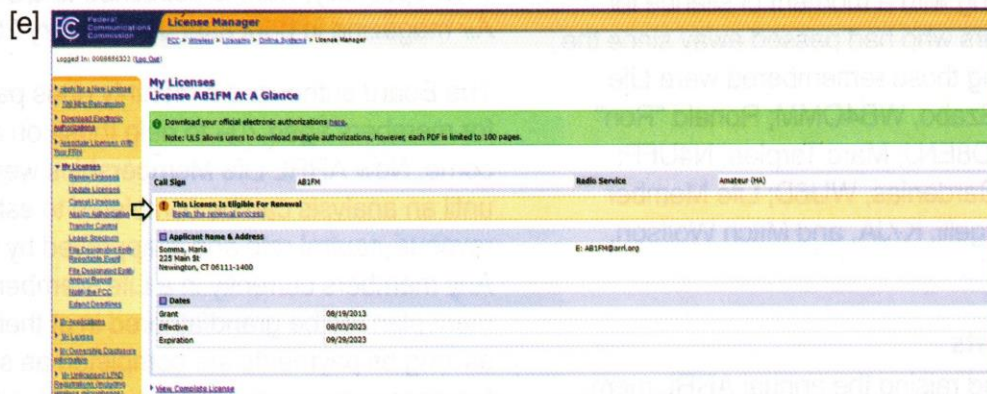


6 Once you have completed these steps and your FRN has been associated with your username, the site should bring you back to the main menu. **Log out.**

## Apply for License Renewal

7 File your renewal application by using the FCC ULS License Manager system at <https://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsEntry/licManager/login.jsp>. License renewals are allowed at 90 days or less before the license expires, as well as after the license has expired while still being within the 2-year grace period.

8 When you are logged in to the FCC License Manager system and your license is in the renewal window, a box will be displayed stating **THIS LICENSE IS ELIGIBLE FOR RENEWAL**. Click the **BEGIN THE RENEWAL PROCESS** link (see [e]). Follow the steps of the FCC renewal and payment process to pay the \$35 application fee. Print or save the payment confirmation page, and then log out. You (the license holder) will receive an email from the FCC with a link to your official license, or in rare instances, an explanation for why the renewal application was dismissed or denied. The license link will be valid for 30 days. Print out the license or download the PDF of the license to your computer.





Before you attempt to use/navigate through the FCC ULS, watch this YouTube video from the ARRL VEC Department.

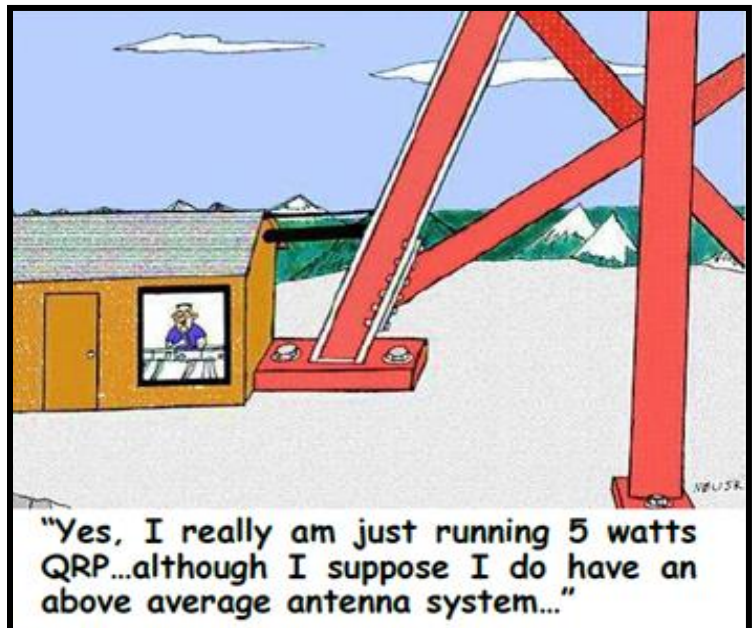
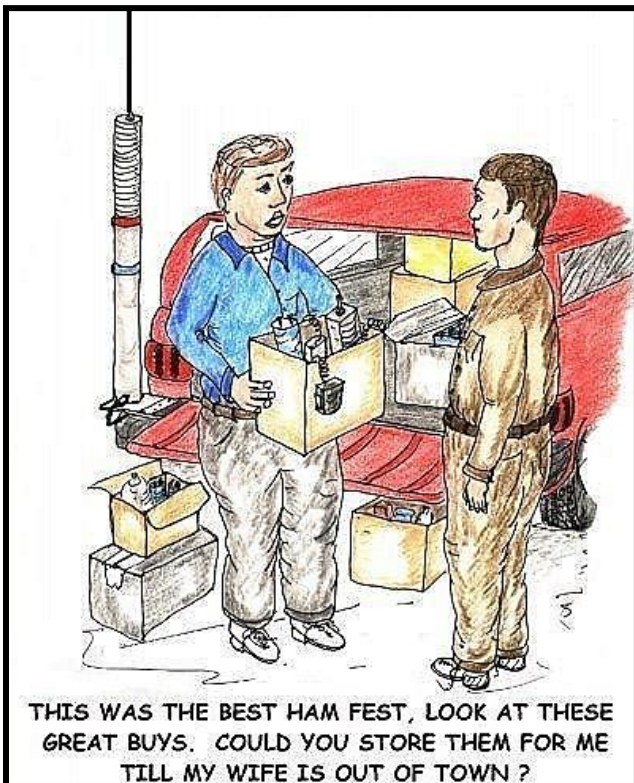
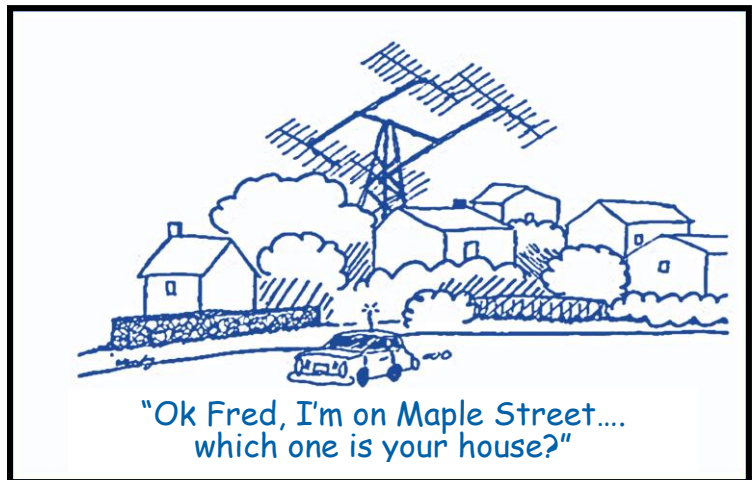
Department head Maria Somma-AB1FM (at right) takes you on a computer tour of the FCC website on license renewal, plus Josh from the ARRL VEC Department discusses the pitfalls that many hams encounter when renewing their license online, and how to avoid those problems.



To view the very helpful video on license renewal from the ARRL VEC Department, click [here](#).



# HAM RADIO HILARITY



**THANK YOU**

**A SALUTE TO WEBMASTER WB5L**



He works countless hours on BVRC's outstanding website with little recognition. He keeps the website regularly updated, without fail, with current information on club news, club meetings and events, VE testing sessions, ham license classes, quarterly spotlight on club members, ARRL news, contest calendar, and the list is endless. He has performed this service to the club for many years.

**For the phenomenal job you do, Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L, a heartfelt thanks and salute!**

*BVRC members – Make it a habit to check our club's great website for everything you need to know about the club. The Signal newsletter is just one of BVRC's information outlets and it only comes out once a month; but you can get real-time news and information on the website 24/7! – [www.bellavistaradioclub.org](http://www.bellavistaradioclub.org)*



# WELCOME

## WELCOME NEW BVRC MEMBERS!!!

**Caleb Whitsett – KCØYG0 – Bentonville**

**Trey Acord – KJ5CWT – Bella Vista**

**Justin Phillips – Fayetteville**

**Walter Kenyon – N5BYS – Eureka Springs**

In the October 2023 issue of QST on the “Letters from Our Members” page, there appears a post from Thomas Sullivan – W1AUV from Lenox, Massachusetts. For BVRC/ARRL members who might have not noticed it, or for those not yet ARRL members who do not receive QST, your Editor determined that this was worthy of re-publication in this month’s issue of *The Signal*. It is an excellent post and first-rate food for thought:

### Support Digital Operations

“I operate CW, SSB, and any digital modes. I started operating RTTY when I was 19 and have tried many digital modes, including WSJT. I have operated on frequencies from 160 meters to 10 GHz from my home and mobile stations. After I make a contact (or during it), I look up the call sign on [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com). Recently, after making an FT8 contact, I saw a cartoon on a QRZ page, and the caption was something like, “He thinks he’s a DXer, but he only operates FT8.”



If digital is considered bad by some hams, then what is amateur radio? Over the years, I have heard many definitions, like “real” ham radio is AM, CW, or only CW on 160 meters. I’ve even heard a member proudly say that he’s never made a contact below 50 MHz. That’s off-putting because ham radio started with (and is still alive on) frequencies below 50 MHz.

Today, the new thing some hams don’t like is FT8 (and other digital modes). Could it be because a computer – and not the ham – makes the contact, or the contacts are over almost as soon as they start? Or maybe it seems less personal?

We must stop caring about people’s critical opinions regarding what we do in any hobby. We need to encourage people, and especially young people, to find something they love, like ham radio, and latch onto it. If ham radio is to survive all these technological changes, then we must help people. We have to extend a hand to kids and newcomers, and we have to let them like what they want about our great hobby. If that means more digital modes of communication, then as the saying goes, the only constant is change.”

# BVRC VE REPORT

FROM DON COOPER – KC7DC  
BVRC VE COORDINATOR  
OCTOBER 7, 2023



## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

**Trey Acord – KJ5CWT – Bella Vista  
NEW TECHNICIAN!**

**Bradley Ponder – KJ5CWR – Fayetteville  
NEW TECHNICIAN**

**Ron Aronica – WØRCA – Uniontown, AR  
UPGRADED TO AMATEUR EXTRA!**

### **Next month's test sessions:**

- Nov. 12, 10 am at Shiloh Museum, 118 W. Johnson Ave, Springdale**
- Nov. 4, 2 pm at Bella Vista Public Library, 11 Dickens Place, Bella Vista**

**Help promote the availability of the Club's monthly test sessions.  
Tell your friends and acquaintances!**



# **BVRC VE TEST SESSION CHANGES FOR NOVEMBER 2023**

*From: Don Cooper – KC7DC, BVRC VE Testing Committee Chair/Bella Vista VE Liaison  
and  
Don Banta – K5DB, BVRC Springdale VE Liaison*

**Due to scheduling conflicts, BVRC VE Test Sessions will be changed for November 2023. The testing schedule will be as follows:**

**Bella Vista: Saturday, November 4, 2pm**

**Springdale: Sunday, November 12, 10am**

**ALSO NOTE:** The testing location in Bella Vista has been temporarily changed to Bella Vista Public Library, 11 Dickens Place, Bella Vista. Springdale will remain the same at the Shiloh Museum in Springdale.

These changes are also reflected on the VE Testing Location page of the ARRL website. Be sure and note these changes if you intend to test with BVRC during November.



**BREAKING  
NEWS**

***Bella Vista  
VE Testing Location  
Temporarily Changing***

**From BVRC**

**VE Testing Committee Chair Don Cooper – KC7DC**

**Bella Vista Fire Station #1 has just advised us that they have been planning a major remodeling of the inside of the station for quite a while, and they are now ready to implement that remodeling project.**

**This means the room that BVRC has been using will be unavailable for our monthly radio license examination sessions.**

**We have been immediately exploring options, and have been able to make arrangements with the Bella Vista Public Library for VE testing. We appreciate the library working with us.**

**The main element to this change will be that the monthly Bella Vista test sessions, starting in December, will now be held **on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month instead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday.** The start time for each session will remain at 2:00.**

***See the monthly BVRC VE Report page in this and each future issue of The Signal for monthly locations and start times.* For any additional test info contact me at: [don\\_c@hotmail.com](mailto:don_c@hotmail.com).**



# HAVE FUN IN THE FINAL MONTHS OF 2023 WITH YOUR PURSUIT OF THE BVRC WORKED-ALL-STATES AWARD!



This past July, the Bella Vista area Radio Club Board approved for issuance the BVRC 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Worked All States Award. General class licensees and above can have a lot of HF fun and enjoyment for the remainder of 2023 by working all 50 United States and achieving this handsome award for your shack wall! (There are still 2 months left!)

All contacts made during calendar year 2023 count toward this award. You do NOT have to be BVRC member to pursue and acquire the award. Any General licensee and above is welcome to apply. If you would like a copy of the requirements/rules for the award, send an e-mail to Don-K5DB at: [arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com), and he will be happy to send you a .pdf file with that info.

Go get 'em, and have fun working the states!

# 2023 BVRC 30th ANNIVERSARY WORKED ALL STATES AWARD RECIPIENTS THUS FAR

**#1 Michael Kemper – W5KMK**

**#2 Jan Hagan – WB5JAN**

**#3 James Wood – N5ZMX**

**#4 Mark Whatley – K5XH**

**#5 Mike Calvi – KF5RUO**

**#6 Tom Thibeault – KN4SLP**

**#7 Don Cooper – KC7DC**

**#8 Dennis Tune – W9DCT**

**#9 Mark Sutherland – K5DXR**

**#10 Bill Durham – KG5ZCI**

*If you have HF privileges and an HF rig, join these club members on the BVRC 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award Worked All States list and acquire your WAS! The deadline for working all 50 states is Dec. 31, 2023. Award rules and guidelines are available from Don – K5DB: [arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com) (Go work 'em!)*



# BVRC Members:

**CELEBRATE  
BELLA VISTA AREA RADIO CLUB'S  
30<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY WITH A  
COMMEMORATIVE CLUB MUG!**



**NEW**



Embroidered Memories, official supplier of BVRC accessories (owned and operated by club members John and Kim – W5HB & KD5TVX), now has available the Bella Vista area Radio Club commemorative mug. This handsome mug includes the club's N5BVA commemorative QSL card on both sides, with your callsign opposite the handle.

The mug price is \$15.00, not including s&h.  
(Can be delivered to club meetings free of charge.)  
A great piece of memorabilia for years to come!

To order your mug, click [here](#).

**Attention all BVRC DXer members and other members interested in DXing!!  
Make plans to attend the**



# **2023 Annual Convention**

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 9am – 4pm**

**Holiday Inn Express**

**Russellville, AR**

## **SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**

**World Renowned Dxpeditiонер and  
Member of the 3YØJ Bouvet Island Team  
Adrian Ciuperca – KO8SCA**



Adrian – KO8SCA

### **A FULL DAY OF HAM RADIO ENJOYMENT!**

- Additional DX Topics & Speakers
- Noon Luncheon
- DXCC Card Checking
- ADXA Awards
- Door Prizes
- Hospitality Suite after meeting

**Registration Fee: \$50 / person**

**Registration ends October 26!**

**Register today!**

**To register, click [here](#)**

# CHOOSING AN HF VERTICAL

By - Don, K5DB

In the different situations that we encounter in our walk of life, we usually have to deal with the positive and negative elements of that situation. Vertical antennas are no exception. Several times, I have heard hams proclaim, "I wouldn't give you a plugged nickel for a vertical. I'm a 'wire man'. Dipole antennas are where it's at.....not a stinkin' vertical."

But, I beg to differ with those individuals. While dipole antennas are generally the mainstay of most hams all over the world (and a very good antenna they are), the vertical antenna is also an excellent antenna and a force to be reckoned with. The big DX-pedition teams that you hear and read about that travel to rare and difficult locations on the globe.....Guess what, along with beams, they use as another antenna of choice, especially on the *low* bands? - THE VERTICAL.

The big advantage verticals have is in the application of limited space as opposed to a dipole antenna, at least where you're wishing to operate the lower bands of 40, 80, or 160-meters. With a dipole, you either cannot install it simply because of its length being too great for the size of your property, or you have to revert to a trap dipole which could give you disappointing results. (Now, there's a big difference in trap dipoles and trap verticals! But we're here to discuss verticals, so let's move

on....) If you want to have the ability to operate on the HF bands with limited antenna space, you're not going to beat a vertical. That is its single-most big advantage.



The main disadvantage of a vertical - if you choose to term it as such - is that you will not normally be able to contact close-in stations very well, "close-in" meaning 50-100 miles or so, especially on 75/80 meters. The closer-in stations

may hear you, but not very well, as will also be the case in you not hearing them at a comfortable level. This is due to two contributing factors: #1, many of the other stations will probably be using dipole antennas which are more or less horizontally polarized, whereas you with your vertical are obviously vertically polarized. #2, the RF take-off angle of the vertical will be fairly steep, thus rendering it semi-ineffective for close-in communications. However, when the distance is increased to around 150 miles or more, you have a whole other ballgame - the polarity problem relatively decreases with distance, and the radiation angle begins to become your friend and not your enemy.

A secondary disadvantage of a vertical (again, if you consider it as such which I would not), is that with most verticals, you have to install radials. These are simply certain lengths of wire that can vary in number from three up to many wires that are attached to the bottom of the vertical. Unless you have a vertical that does not require them, radials are a must - ya gotta have 'em. They can either be laid on top of the ground (which is the more popular installation method), or bury them several inches below ground level to avoid the lawn mower, aesthetics, etc. You'll get better results if you install the radials *on top* of the ground with

weed barrier anchoring pins and then allow your lawn to grow-up over them, taking care as to your mower deck cutting height. You can configure radials in many ways, also.

But the results! I've worked many, many countries with a vertical and in pileups, too. Much of my inspiration with verticals stems from my cousin, John-W5OX in Harrison, who began his radio experience in 1969 with a Hustler 4-BTV 40-10m trap vertical (which was the first vertical I had ever seen) and a Swan 500C transceiver. He worked stateside and DX with ease.



Hustler  
4-BTV Vertical

But now we come to the kicker: We've been talking about the transmitting aspects, but now we bring you to the **REAL** beauty of the vertical – **RECEIVING**.

When it comes to receiving weak signals, verticals are awesome, and I'm not kidding – they are extraordinary. Years ago when I had my GAP Challenger vertical, I was an NCS (Net Control Station) for the GERATOL (Greetings Extra Radio Amateurs Tired of Operating Lately) Net, which is a Worked-All-States net that operates in the Extra class phone sub-band of 75-meters. I retired from the net, but still check-in occasionally and it's still a great net (you do have to be an Extra class license holder to participate in it, however). At that time, I used both my GAP vertical and my Carolina Windom

dipole for low bands, and especially for The Geratol Net.

If you're going to be a good NCS, I don't care how much output power one runs, you **must** be able to hear the other net stations. Otherwise, you cannot direct the net efficiently. Many times, during my Friday nights as NCS on that net, around midnight and into the early morning hours, Alaska, Hawaii, and Canada Northern Territory stations would check-in to the Net. You had to stay up that late to work them not only because of the 4-hour time zone differential, but also because of increased nighttime propagation on 75-meters (obviously). Yes, many of those net members (like myself) run amplifiers, but we had a lot of good operators running low power and QRP stations on the net as well.

I cannot tell you how many times I heard weak stations at S-2 or S-3 on the dipole, but after switching over to the vertical my reception of them increased to S-7 and greater—usually a 4 S-unit or more jump! Plus!...the vertical drastically nulled-out the wintertime "white noise" on the band that the dipole did not. You can take it to the bank when I tell you that the vertical is a remarkable receiving antenna (especially if you don't have room for a Beverage, ha).

So, in closing, let's quickly run through the different types of verticals:

### TRAP VERTICALS

These verticals use "traps" that are parallel resonant circuits to electrically isolate portions of the antenna when transmitting on various bands. The traps make the antenna act as if it were a resonant quarter-wave vertical. For example, when an antenna such as the afore mentioned 4-BTV is being used on the 10m band, only the lower portion of the antenna is active. When operating 40m, the entire length of the antenna is active. This is an antenna that DOES need radials to operate effectively, and the more the merrier. Again, consider the "radial factor" if you're thinking about purchasing a trap vertical. *(By the way, and I am not a sales rep for any of the manufacturers or dealers, but you can buy a brand new Hustler 4-BTV 40-10m*

*right now from Ham Radio Outlet for around \$230.00. The 5-BTV includes 80m, and the 6-BTV includes 30m. These are higher in price, of course.*

*And yes...this is the same antenna that my cousin used in 1969. – It is still widely used and is readily available from most all major distributors. Prices will vary, of course.)*

### NO-RADIAL VERTICALS

*In recent years, several manufacturers have introduced vertical antennas that do not need radials. GAP and MFJ are two manufacturers that offer these types of antennas.*



Butternut  
HF6V Vertical

The manufacturers claim that these antennas are more efficient than trap verticals, and many amateurs use them with good results. There are some drawbacks, however. They can, at times, be difficult to tune, and they do require mounting at some distance above ground. The reason for this is that they are, in effect, vertical dipoles and if the end of the antenna is too close to the

ground, the antenna will detune due to capacitive coupling. However, and overall, these are good vertical antennas that have performed well.



### NON-RESONANT VERTICALS

A third class of vertical antenna that has become popular is the non-resonant vertical antenna. An example of this type of antenna is the LDG S9v43. It is a heavy-duty, telescoping, self-supporting fiberglass vertical designed for amateur radio use from 80 through 6 meters. The S9v43 weighs under 9 pounds, making it the lightest tall vertical on the market. It is just over 42' tall and has the same 50 Ohm resonant frequency of 5.44 mHz as some traditional 43' telescoping aluminum verticals. Other manufacturers also make this type of vertical antenna.

One reason that this type of vertical antenna has become popular is that it can be used across a wide frequency range. The resonant frequency of this antenna is actually about 5.4 mHz. With an antenna tuner however, you can use the antenna on all bands from 80m–6m. The tuner can be located in your shack, but for the lowest loss, you will want to

locate it near the base of your antenna. Don't try using it with the internal tuner in your rig. On some frequencies, the antenna impedance will be quite high, and most internal rig auto tuners do not have adequate range to provide a 50-ohm match. These antennas also require radials. There is no formula to calculating the length of the radials, but they should be at least 0.2 wavelength at the lowest frequency that you wish to operate.



*One huge word of advice with ANY vertical – do your best to insure it's at least 30 or more feet from any metal building or tower structure, or serious detuning could result.*

Without a doubt verticals, like dipoles, definitely have their place in the ham radio world. If you are cramped for space, if you want a terrific backup/secondary antenna to add to your primary one, or if you desire a great receiving antenna, consider **the vertical!**

# THE LARGEST AMATEUR RADIO CLUB IN ARKANSAS!



You're a part  
of it!  
Thanks for  
your support!



Get involved  
in club activities!



# N3FJP LOGGING SOFTWARE

*(NOTE: BVRC neither endorses nor opposes the purchase and/or use of N3FJP logging software. The following article is for informational purposes only. The Signal welcomes any article submissions of reviews on other logging software programs for future issues. Contact the Editor at [arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com).)*

There are many logging software programs on the market today – some good, some not so good.

If you are looking for one of the good logging programs, you might consider N3FJP Amateur Contact Log software, developed by Scott Davis – N3FJP. BVRC uses this software in Field Day operations for its SSB station, for Special Event Stations and other contests, as well as in use by **many** of our individual members at home. This program has been in use since 1997 and still growing strong.

In an overall summary, it downloads quickly and is easy to learn how to use. Updates are free for life and its “cosmetics” on the screen are very pleasant and easy to view, especially during contests when you’re looking at the monitor for long periods of time.

N3FJP comes with three options:

- Amateur Contact Log (ACL) – This is the ‘general’ logging program that is used for everyday logging.
  - You can sort the log many different ways to your liking.
  - You can upload and download to ARRL’s Logbook of the World directly from this log without having to go to the main LotW website
  - You can engage the DX spotting service
  - Interface the software with your radio for rig control
  - Interface the software with WSJT-X and JT Alert
  - Print QSL strips for QSL cards you send to other stations
  - Amateur exam study buddy (Technician, General, and Extra)
  - Weather warn
  - Grayline map
  - ACLog tracks needed states, countries, counties, etc.
  - If you have duplicate contacts in your log, you can remove them without affecting all other contacts.
  - Many, many other features

ACL is available for a one-time, lifetime purchase fee of \$39.99.

- N3FJP contest and event logging programs – These range from ARRL contests to state qso parties to CQ Magazine contests, and many, many other contests and events. There are currently 34 fee required programs and 8 free programs.
  - Each of the fee required programs are \$8.99 (one-time, lifetime fee). If you purchased/registered each of the programs separately, the cost would be over \$400.00.
- N3FJP Software Registration package – If you purchase this package, you get everything: ACL and all the accompanying logging programs.....for \$20 more - \$59.99 (one-time, lifetime fee).

Scott is also constantly updating his programs. When a new version occurs, you will get a pop-up window when you open the program advising you that a new version is available. You click the “upgrade” tab, and the new version will automatically download to that program. Also, updates are free for life after paying the registration fee.

If you are a newcomer (or experienced op for that matter) looking for an electronic logging program, give Amateur Contact Log (ACL), a look. ACL is a full featured, simple to use, logging program, which runs under Microsoft Windows. I have used it for years, and never had an issue with it. Offers backup options, keeps track of who approved your QSL cards, does spotting, and in general is just handy to have on hand. I have used it for a very long time now. Although I use another logging program for DXing, N3FJP ACL is my “go to” program for all contesting. The learning curve is simple, the install is fast. What more can one say about a piece of software. In my opinion, it will be the best \$60.00 you have spent on ham radio related software. I would highly recommend this software to anyone (and again, especially newcomers).

For all the info on N3FJP: <https://www.n3fjp.com/purchasepackage.html>

73 – Don, K5DB

The screenshot shows the N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log 7.0.9 software interface. At the top, there is a menu bar with options like File, Edit, Settings, Clear, CallBook, List, Search, Awards, eLogs, Recall, Net, View, and Help. Below the menu is a 'Recent Contacts' table with 1,934 listed QSOs. The table columns include Rec#, Call, Date / Time, Bnd, Frequency, Mode, Power, Snt, Rec, Off, Country, ST, Name, S, R, and Other. Below the table is a data entry form with fields for Call, Date, Band, Mode, Power, Time On, Sent, Rec, and Country. There are also checkboxes for QSL Sent and QSL Rcvd, a 'Spot Last' button, and a 'Log Contact' button. At the bottom, there are fields for Bearing, Miles, Cont, and a 'Time Off' button.

Rec#	Call	Date / Time	Bnd	Frequency	Mode	Power	Snt	Rec	Off	Country	ST	Name	S	R	Other
1934	VE1ARN	14/Jul/2023 17:38	20	14.240	SSB	1000	58	58	17:38	Canada		Robert	Y	Y	
1933	K4CAB	16/Jul/2023 15:11	20	14.222	SSB	1000	59	59	15:13	USA	VA	Dewey	Y	Y	
1932	KQ4CVX	15/Jul/2023 22:13	20	14.262	SSB	1000	59	59	22:13	USA	FL	LEO	Y	Y	
1931	DL2JX	14/Jul/2023 17:58	20	14.262	SSB	1000	59	59	17:58	Federal Rep...		Erich	Y	Y	
1930	KC1KVY	14/Jul/2023 17:36	20	14.240	SSB		59	59	17:36	USA	MA	Robert	Y	Y	
1929	KD8EDN	14/Jul/2023 17:15	20	14.240	SSB		59	59	17:15	USA	KY	Paul	Y	Y	
1928	KD8YWF	14/Jul/2023 17:07	20	14.290	SSB	1000	59	59	17:07	USA	WV	JAMES	Y	Y	
1927	N1FTP	14/Jul/2023 17:01	20	14.240	SSB		59	59	17:01	USA	MA	HAROLD	Y	Y	
1926	KC6JLN	04/Jul/2023 19:19	17	18.122	SSB		57	59	19:20	USA	CA	ROBERT	N	N	
1925	N6RND	04/Jul/2023 19:18	17	18.122	SSB		55	59	19:19	USA	CA	NICHOLAS	N	N	
1924	KA8NAB	04/Jul/2023 19:16	17	18.122	SSB		58	59	19:17	USA	OH	MICHAEL	N	N	
1923	KE8DAX	04/Jul/2023 19:16	17	18.122	SSB		58	59	19:16	USA	OH	Raymond	N	N	
1922	VE3VFS	04/Jul/2023 19:15	17	18.122	SSB		59	59	19:16	Canada		Glenn	N	N	
1921	K3FE	04/Jul/2023 19:14	17	18.122	SSB		58	55	19:15	USA	PA	JOSEPH	N	N	
1920	K1FJG	04/Jul/2023 19:13	17	18.122	SSB		55	59	19:13	USA	CT	Jay	N	N	
1919	WA4WVDV	04/Jul/2023 19:12	17	18.122	SSB		59	59	19:12	USA	FL	ALEXANDER	N	N	
1918	N1DU	04/Jul/2023 19:11	17	18.122	SSB		57	59	19:12	USA	MA	MARK	N	N	
1917	F4HZN	04/Jul/2023 19:10	17	18.122	SSB		56	59	19:11	France		Lawrence/ Laur...	N	N	

N3FJP ACLog screenshot





# THE DXCC DEN



By Don – K5DB

## This month's featured country:



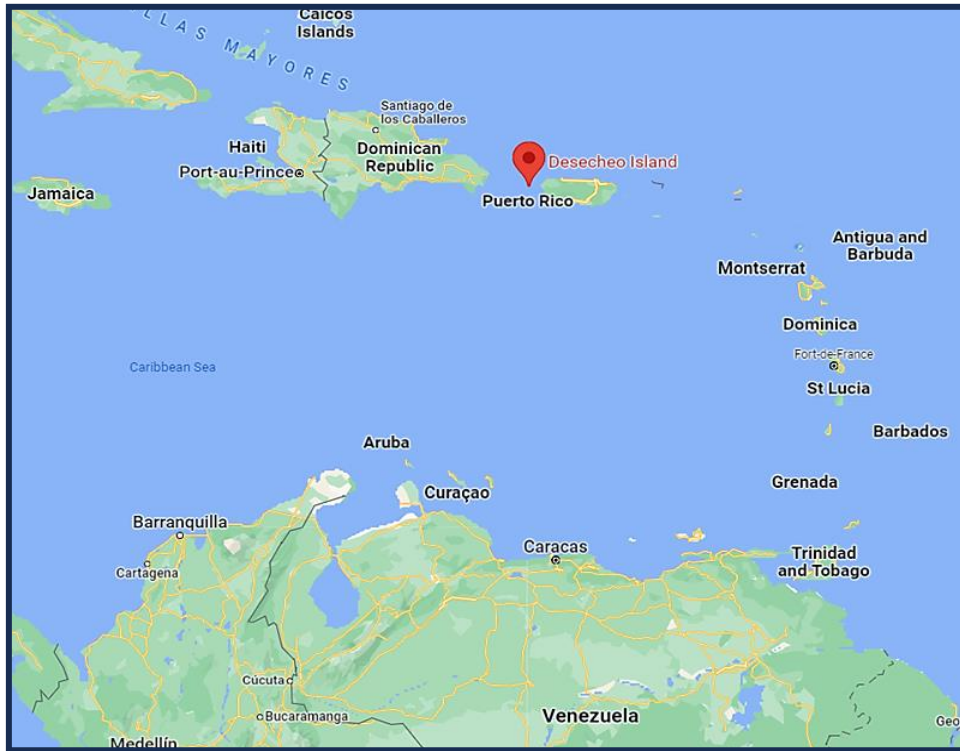
### Desecheo Island

Primary Callsign Prefix: KP5

Desecheo Island isn't that far from northwest Arkansas – about 1900 miles – roughly the same distance from Springdale to Seattle, WA. Ask the average American if they've ever heard of Desecheo (Dess-eh-kay'-ō) Island and most of the time they won't know what you're talking about, as it doesn't get much publicity or exposure.

**Desecheo** is a small uninhabited island of the archipelago of Puerto Rico located 13 miles from Rincón on the west coast of Puerto Rico. It has a land area of 0.589 sq mi (377 acres). Politically, the island is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as the Desecheo National Wildlife Refuge.

In essence, it is a wildlife sanctuary and strictly forbidden to the public.



### Location of Desecheo Island

Access or admission to the island must be granted by the USFWS and in modern times it practically “takes an act of God” to obtain a grant.

Most of the pictures you will see of Desecheo in this article were either taken from the air or on boats near the coastline. Scuba diving is permitted in the waters surrounding the island, but no physical stepping upon the island proper is allowed. This is due to the preservation of the wildlife found there, as well as the

presence of military ordinances. Trespassers are subject to arrest by Federal law enforcement officers.

In the early 1900s, Desecheo National Wildlife Refuge was still a major nesting ground for thousands of seabirds.

Invasive mammals, including goats and rats, began to impact Desecheo NWR early in the 20th century. Around and during the time of World War II, the island was used as an artillery range by the US Air Force. That, and the invasive species’ damage to Desecheo’s ecosystem, have been severe and by the turn of the millennium virtually no seabirds were using the refuge. In response in 2016, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Island Conservation, and other key partners, including the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Bell Laboratories and Tomcat, worked together to remove invasive black rats and Rhesus macaques from the island.

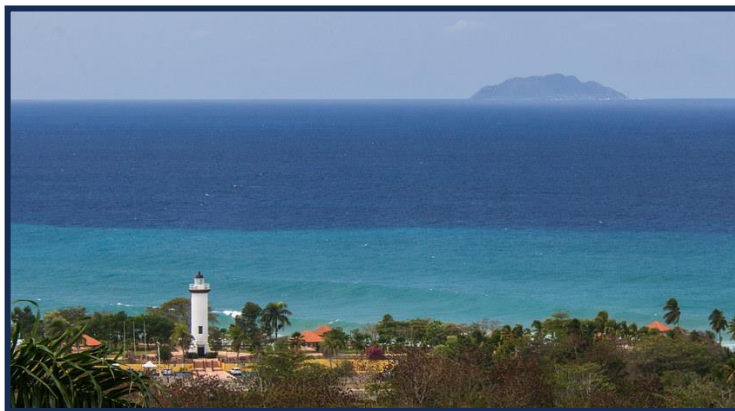
One year later, Desecheo Island was declared free of invasive species, and signs of recovery were observed, including Audubon’s shearwaters (a common tropical seabird in the petrel family) sighted on the island for the first time along with new bridled tern nests. In addition, 72 Federally protected Higo Chumbo cactus were found and measured pre (2003-2010) and post eradication (2017). In 2017, individuals with flowers and huge yellow fruits were observed which is a good sign for the overall reproductive status of the wildlife population.

In the amateur radio world, although Desecheo is restricted to the public, it is listed as an ARRL DXCC entity (country). It was added to the DXCC list in 1955. So needless to say, the *only way* you can work and add it to your confirmed list of countries worked, is for a DXpedition to be granted permission to go there. In other words, to make a QSO, Desecheo is “so rare...so near...yet so far”.

The first DXpedition allowed on the island didn't occur until 24 years from its DXCC designation date in 1979 when KP4AM/D activated it for the first time. Again, admission to the island is highly restricted by the USFWS but thankfully, there have been a dozen DXpeditions being given permission to operate since the first one. The most recent DXpedition used the callsign **K5D** in 2009. So, we are now at 14 years since that DXpedition, and a future activation is not presently known.

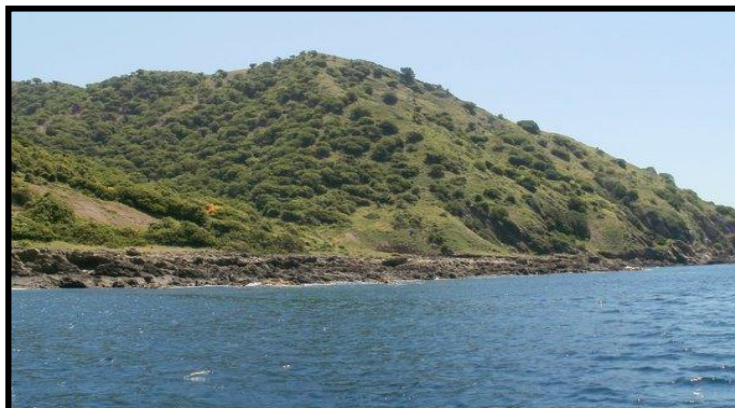
It was a special time in the amateur radio DX world when the K5D team visited Desecheo. This was due to the forming of the *KP1-5 Project*. The purpose the KP1-5 Project is to work toward a solution to the closure of Desecheo and Navassa (another USFWS refuge between Jamaica and Haiti) Islands to amateur radio operators by achieving lawful, periodic access to these islands pursuant to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service authorization.

While operating from these islands is a worthwhile goal, the KP1-5 Project is dedicated to a long term partnership that jointly benefits the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Amateur Radio

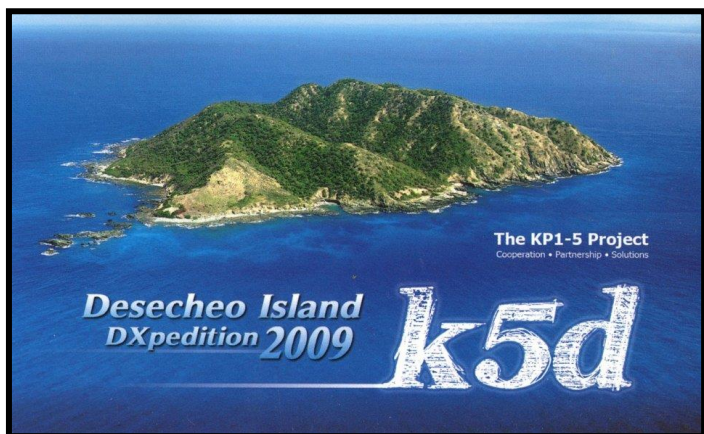
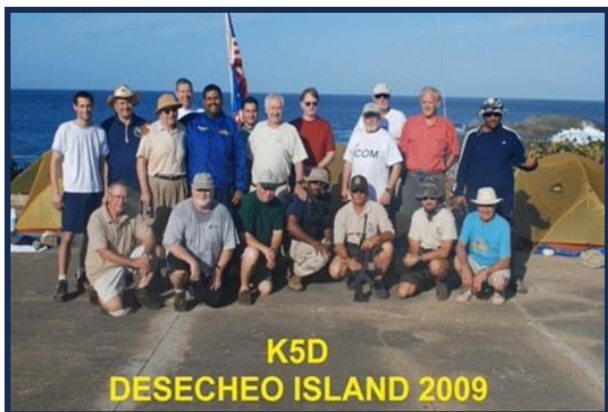


**Desecheo Island as viewed from the Rincon, Puerto Rico lighthouse ▲**

**Additional views of Desecheo ▼**



## Photos from the 2009 K5D DXpedition



Wildlife Service and amateur radio operators worldwide.

On October 1, 2008, the USFWS selected the KP1-5 Project team, K5D, to be the first USFWS-approved DXpedition to Desecheo Island in fifteen years.

They were most fortunate to be chosen from among several excellent proposals. Their commitment was to a first-class DXpedition that would meet or exceed all the requirements of USFWS while providing tens of thousands of radio contacts to the international ham radio community. They accomplished this goal and to spare during their approved operating window of February 12-26, 2009.

During their stay on Desecheo, the team tallied 115,787 QSOs.

If you've never worked Desecheo Island, hang in there and be patient..... A USFWS grant to access the island is slow and arbitrary. But considering the 12 DXpeditions that have previously been given permission to operate there, a new future DXpedition is hopeful.....someday.

Watch the ham radio DX outlets and publications for when that day occurs.

**My K5D QSL card**

**THE SIGNAL** newsletter is published monthly for members of the Bella Vista Radio Club. BVRC disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or the content of articles published herein. The opinions expressed are solely those of the authors. BVRC neither necessarily endorses nor opposes said opinions, brand names, products, businesses, organizations, etc. Submission of any amateur radio related articles is encouraged and welcomed. Submit your article to the editor: Don Banta-K5DB, 3407 Diana St., Springdale, AR 72764 (or E-mail to: [arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com)) for publication in THE SIGNAL. The deadline for articles is the 10th of each month.