



# THE SIGNAL

Newsletter of the Bella Vista area Radio Club



Arkansas' Largest  
Amateur Radio Club

April 2024

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**

Repeaters: **147.255 +offset, pl 162.2**

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

**444.100 +offset, pl 162.2**

## WEEKLY NETS:

### BVRC HAM 101 Net

**Tuesdays @ 7 pm on the  
WX5NAS Skywarn Link System:**

Bentonville – 146.865, -offset, pl 103.5  
Springdale – 147.315, +offset, pl 97.4  
Fayetteville – 147.315, +offset, pl 110.9  
Huntsville – 443.625, +5 MHz, pl 97.4  
Green Forest – 145.310, -offset, pl 103.5

### 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**



# NEXT BVRC MONTHLY MEETING



Thursday, April 4, 2024 @ 7pm  
Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy  
3424 S. Downum Road  
Springdale, AR

## April Meeting Information

**HAM 101 Workshop, 6pm preceding monthly meeting** – BVRC member Mike Calvi – KF5RUO will be our featured speaker for the 101 Workshop this month. Mike's program will be on "CW QRP Kit POTA learnings". Recently, Mike went on a business trip to the San Francisco area, operated QRP, and activated several POTA (Parks On The Air) parks while there. Mike will be sharing the ins-and-outs that he learned during these activations, and the information he will be sharing will be valuable for anyone planning on activating for POTA. Mike recently activated Hobbs State Park where he made a contact with AL7KC in Alaska. Over 2900 miles on 5 watts!

**BVRC April meeting, 7pm** – BVRC's valued Webmaster Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L will provide this month's program with a very informative program on "An Introduction to WinLink".

WinLink is a network of amateur radio and authorized government stations that provide worldwide radio email using radio pathways where the internet is not present. The system is built, operated and administered entirely by licensed ham volunteers. It supports email with attachments, position reporting, weather and information bulletins, and is well-known for its role in interoperable emergency and disaster relief communications. *It is capable of operating completely without the internet – automatically – using smart-network radio relays.* Licensed Winlink operators/stations use both amateur radio and government radio frequencies worldwide. Support for the system is provided by the Amateur Radio Safety Foundation, Inc., a US 501(c)(3) non-profit, public benefit entity.

If you are looking for another element of amateur radio operation to add to your station activities, don't miss this program.

*See you then!*

## 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)

### *N5BVA 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)



# APRS

## HIGHLIGHTS BVRC

### MARCH PROGRAM

It was just shy of SRO for the BVRC March meeting as members and guests exhibited a huge turnout to hear BVRC's own Jon Williams – K5DVT for the evenings program on APRS (Automatic Packet Reporting System).

Jon has been a ham since his early teens and has over the years excelled in his knowledge of VHF/UHF and digital communications. Jon currently owns and operates the WX5NAS Skywarn Link System of which he graciously allows BVRC's use for the weekly Tuesday evening HAM 101 Net.



Although APRS isn't mentioned as much these days as when it first premiered in the ham radio world, it is still a very integral part of the hobby and is used every day by thousands of operators. It was invented and developed by Bob Bruninga – WB4APR on an Apple II computer in 1982, and was fully introduced for use on the ham bands in 1984.

Although APRS is primarily used for position reporting, Jon discussed the MANY other aspects of the platform.





Jon began the program illustrating and discussing the various icons on the APRS website ([www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi)) and what they stand for: home stations, weather stations, I-gates (Internet gateways), etc.

He showed how instant messaging is used via APRS, just like cellphone texting except via radio. – A critical and valuable tool to have when there is no cell service.

He also illustrated how APRS provides an idea of a guaranteed coverage area.

Obviously when the discussion of APRS is brought-up, a logical question would be, “What is a packet?”

Jon answered that question during his PowerPoint: A packet is serial data converted into tones and transmitted over the air. The sending rate of a packet is usually 1200 baud on VHF and 9600 baud on UHF.

Jon then discussed how running a mobile station is excellent for APRS use. You do not have to have a gold mine to get started in using APRS as a mobile. An older model analog 2-meter or dual band radio (you for sure must have 2-meter capability to operate APRS), a “Tiny Trak” beaconing unit, and a good VHF (or dual band) mobile antenna is all you need. *(You can find great deals on older model VHF/UHF radios at hamfest flea markets.)*



**Jon – K5DVT**

When it comes to a home station, once again old mobile radios can find good use on APRS. Raspberry Pi (or equivalent) and a TNC (Terminal Node Controller used to participate in packet radio networks) will get you going on APRS from home with a modest investment.

Jon then defined Digipeaters and I-gates and their use in APRS. Simply put, a digipeater is a repeater that, instead of repeating analog signals, repeats digital (packet) signals. NW Arkansas has several digipeaters in operation. An I-gate (internet gateway) is a device that



**Tiny Trak unit for APRS mobile use**



transfers on-air packet signals to the Internet and especially the APRS website ([www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi)). NW Arkansas has several I-gates in operation as well.

Jon then further explained some basic of getting started with APRS such as the national APRS frequency: **144.390 MHz**.

He also talked about the basic APRS settings such as the

digipeater path, setting your callsign in the packet you will be sending, setting the corresponding icon to designate on the APRS map what type of station you are, and assigning the correct designator for your station (Ex: K5DVT-9 would designate a mobile station).

Jon, THANK YOU FOR AN OUTSTANDING AND INFORMATIVE PROGRAM! We look forward to other interesting programs from you in the future! Thanks for being in the BVRC family!

**AND ALSO! – In addition to Jon’s excellent program, the highlight of the evening was the recognition of, and presentation of Certificates of Completion to, the graduates from the recently held BVRC Spring Technician class. A big round of applause of recognition accompanied the presentation of the certificates to these new hams. Although there were 20 graduates from the class, 11 were present to receive their award. 9 were not able to attend the meeting, whose certificates were sent to them.**



**Congratulations graduates and Instructor Tom – W5XNA!!!**



# From the Desk of the President



Bella Vista Radio Club is blessed with so many members who not only have a vast knowledge of so many aspects of our amateur radio hobby, but are ready and willing to use their knowledge and experience to assist our new members as they grow in their amateur radio journey.

With this edition of the President's Message, I would like to highlight four of our members who have been instrumental in paving the way for many of our new amateurs and new members. Their efforts have had a very real and direct impact on growing the hobby and bringing the excitement of amateur radio to many men, women, and children throughout Northwest Arkansas:

***Tom Northfell, W5XNA*** – Tom has designed and conducted very successful classes for non-amateurs to pass the Technician class test and earn their first amateur radio license call sign. His concentrated classes take place over two weekends. At the end of the second weekend, his students take the Technician license test. As a testament to his teaching skill, Tom has over a 90 percent pass rate with Mercy, an 11-year-old girl, as one of his recent successful class graduates!

***Glenn Kilpatrick, WB5L*** – Glenn has designed and taught successful amateur license classes for the **General** class license for the past two years. These classes are conducted over weekend sessions that are spread out over several weeks to allow time in between classes to study the more challenging material covered in the General class license test. Glenn has a very successful pass rate for those who have taken his class and upgraded their amateur license to allow HF operating privileges for around the world communications.

**Don Banta, K5DB** – Don has designed and run the BVRC CW Academy for the past two years, teaching Morse code to club members in a format and atmosphere that is productive and fun. Learning to operate and communicate with Morse code is very challenging but opens a whole new world of communicating around the world. Don's classes are successful because of his encouraging and fun methods to tackle this challenging operating mode.

**Don Cooper, KC7DC** – Since 1984 the Federal Communications Commission has authorized dedicated amateur radio operators to be trained to administer amateur radio tests to those seeking to earn their amateur radio license, or to upgrade their existing license to a higher level. Working with the national American Radio Relay League, amateurs can certify to become a "VE" or Volunteer Examiner to administer these tests. Don serves as BVRC's VE Testing Committee Chair. In this role, Don oversees our team of BVRC volunteer VE testers who monthly conduct amateur radio license testing sessions in two Northwest Arkansas locations – Springdale and Bella Vista. Don's coordinating efforts and his encouraging and welcoming demeanor have helped many nervous test takers feel relaxed and ready to take their amateur radio test.

Yes, BVRC is blessed with so many talented members who embraced the club's culture of being welcoming and helpful to new amateurs. These four truly exemplify this through their wonderful efforts. Thank you, gentlemen!

*Jan*  
WB5JAN



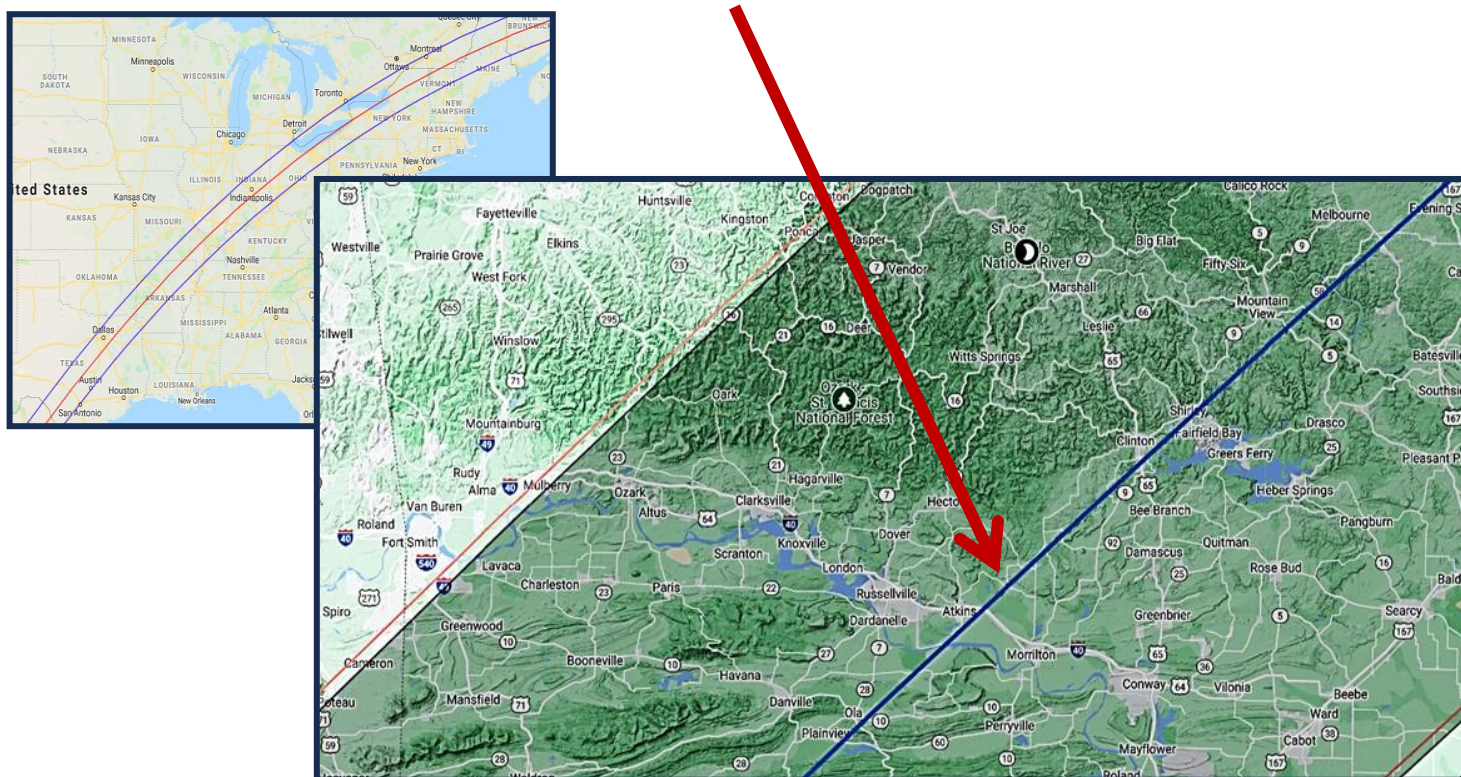
**At the March meeting, Technician class instructor Tom-W5XNA congratulated new 11-year-old licensee Mercy Crandell-KJ5EQA in acquiring her Certificate of Completion, and Mercy surprised him with a reciprocal gift.**



# BVRC Will Have Activities To Accompany The Great Solar Eclipse of 2024!

By BVRC President Jan Hagan – WB5JAN

The Great Solar Eclipse of 2024 will occur on April 8, 2024. The maps below show the path of totality (where total darkness will occur) of the eclipse through Arkansas and a close-up view of the path through central and northeast Arkansas (the closer to the blue line you are, the longer the duration of the eclipse):



Our esteemed BVRC President, Jan – WB5JAN, has supplied us with a wealth of information on some activities that will complement this extraordinary event! :

Our BVRC Solar Eclipse Adventure is coming up soon at Spadra park in Clarksville and we have requested sunny warm days for the entire weekend including the day of the eclipse, Monday, April 8th! This should be an interesting and fun event, with lots of time to operate different bands and modes with five operators camping out for the weekend:

Jan, WB5JAN and Prudence

Glenn, WB5L

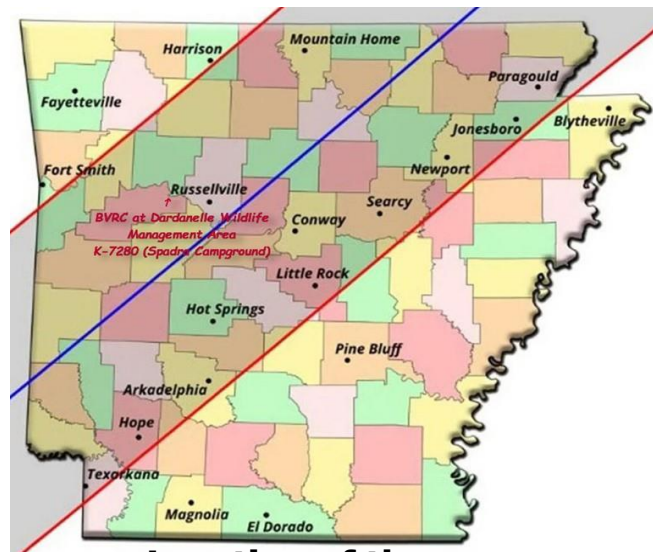
Robert, K5NZV and Dana, W5DGH

Dana, KI5TGY and XYL

Joe, W5AEN and XYL

Joining us for Monday's eclipse at the park will be:  
 Tom Northfell, W5XNA and XYL  
 Rebecca Garrett, N5REB  
 Mark Whittlesey, W0KYZ  
 Jill Grow, KOMQT and OM (one of our new members!)

One feature of operating from Spadra Park in Clarksville is that it is part of Parks On The Air entity K-7280, Dardanelle Wildlife Management Area. Part of our POTA operations will be on 80 meters, so we hope to make many local contacts with BVRC members. We will post Facebook listings of our operating times and modes to share.



**Location of the "BVRC Eclipse Party" !**

But the weekend is not only about radio operations. It is also about the camaraderie of being together during an incredible natural event, the Solar Eclipse of 2024! With this in mind, here are some of the fun things on our schedule for our BVRC campers during this exciting weekend.

**Weekend Schedule of Activities**

We will have lots of time for radio operations, relaxing and "hanging out" during the weekend, but, in consideration of our significant others who will not be operating here is a schedule for this special weekend that will balance opportunities for on the air with fun with interesting activities surrounding the solar eclipse designed to be interesting to us all. Here is the schedule:

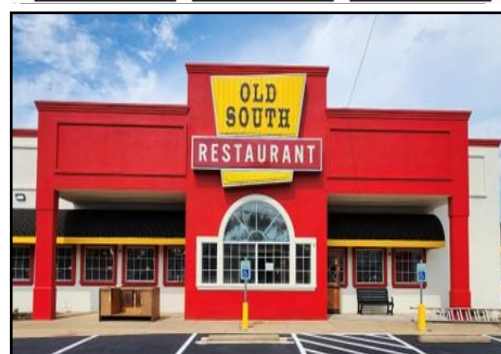
**Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**

"Dessert Night Around the Firepit" 7:30 pm – After our campers arrive, set up and have dinner they will join the Hagans for dessert and conversation around the firepit. Besides bringing a beverage and a dessert to share, the Hagans will have desserts to sample as well. Plans will be coordinated for our radio operations for the weekend over dessert.



**Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>**

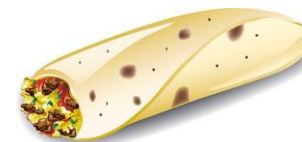
At 11:00 am, we'll take a trip into Russellville for NASA's Solar Eclipse Presentation and a visit to the Eclipse Market 2024. Afterward, we can have a homestyle early dinner at one of Russellville's local favorites, the Old South restaurant, recently rebuilt after being destroyed by fire last year. Later in the weekend Russellville will be packed, so this is a good opportunity for us to avoid the biggest crowds.





**Sunday, April 7th**

“Breakfast burritos with fresh fruit by WB5JAN and KI5TGY” 8:30 am. Our BVRC group will gather at the Hagan campsite for a Sunday breakfast with burritos filled with eggs, bacon, and cheese as well as fresh fruit, orange juice and coffee to get our Sunday going.



**“Antiques, Resales, Shopping, and Lunch” 11:00 am** – For those not busy with radio operations, explore the many antique stores and other shopping opportunities around the area.

**Monday, April 8th – Eclipse Day**

The Zone of Totality starts shortly after 1:45 pm. We'll take a quick break from our “oohs and aahs” during the totality to get a group picture with our solar glasses! The totality will go fast, but the memories will stay with us for life.

**Total Solar Eclipse Potluck 4:00 pm** – Sure, it's called a potluck, but in our case it's mostly luck as many people are bringing one of their specialties to share. With our guests joining us for the day, we will have about 14 or 15 of us for the potluck.

Here is the menu:

**Angus Cheeseburgers on Brioche Buns** – The Hagan's

**Famous Family Recipe Baked Beans** – The Hill's

**To Die For Deviled Eggs** – The Widboom's

**Best Potato Salad Money Can Buy** – Glenn Kilpatrick

**Solar Salad and Eclipse Chips** – The Hott's

**Potluck Side Dish or Dessert** – Tom Northfell, W5XNA, Rebecca Garrett, N5REB, Mark Whittlesey, W0KYZ, Jill Grow, K0MQT

OK, we're going to have some fun!





Bella Vista area Radio Club is pleased to announce the 2024 amateur radio license class for the General class license.

*(Note: You must already hold a current and valid Technician Class amateur radio license to enroll in this class.)*

**CLASS DATES:** Saturday & Sunday, July 13-14 and Saturday & Sunday, July 20-21, 2024

**CLASS LOCATION:** Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy (ALETA)  
3424 S. Downum Road  
Springdale, AR 72762

**CLASS SCHEDULE:** 4 classes on 2 weekends:  
9:00am – 12:00pm Morning Session  
12:00pm – 12:30pm Lunch Break  
12:30pm – 3:30pm Afternoon Session

**TESTING:** A special General exam test session will be given at the end of the July 21 class.

**INSTRUCTOR:** BVRC Webmaster, Club Call Custodian, and past BVRC President  
Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L

**The enrollment period of this class is now open! To complete the enrollment form, click [here](#). When the page opens, scroll down to view and complete the form.**

**For more information contact Glenn at:**  
[wb5l@arri.net](mailto:wb5l@arri.net)



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

## ***BELLA VISTA RADIO CLUB LEGACY NET***

The BVRC Legacy Net meets each Wednesday evening at 7pm local time on 147.255+ / pl tone 162.2 or 444.100+ / 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!

## ***BVRC HAM 101 NET***

The HAM 101 meets each Tuesday evening at 7pm local time on the WX5NAS Skywarn Link System. This net is geared especially for newcomers to the hobby. Make notes on any questions or problems you have, then check-in to the net and have your question(s) ready. We have experienced hams on frequency to help you with any problems or issues that you may have in getting started on the right foot in the hobby. Mark your calendar each week and join us! (The list of the repeaters used in the Skywarn Linked System are on page 1 of this issue of The Signal.) See you on the nets!



# BVRC VE REPORT

From Don Cooper – KC7DC

BVRC VE Coordinator

March, 2024



*Congratulations!*

Charles Ramer – KJ5FDT – Wesley, AR – New Technician!

Kyle Safarik – KE2CWX – Bella Vista – New Technician!

Nick Laughlin – KJ5FEY – Bella Vista – New Technician!

Kyle Schoeller – KJ5FEX – Rogers – New Technician!

Ralph Wood – KJ5FDZ – Centerton  
New Technician & General!

Tom Salerno – KJ5ECZ – Siloam Springs – New General!

Bill Cassidy – KJ5EKK – Greenland – New General!

Tom Harris – KG5ZTR – New Amateur Extra!

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

- **April 13, 10 am – Shiloh Museum, 118 W. Johnson Ave, Springdale**
- **April 13, 2 pm – Bella Vista Public Library, 11 Dickens Place, Bella Vista**





# ***NEWCOMERS: BVRC Is Here For You!***

If you're new to BVRC and amateur radio, there are many of us who know EXACTLY what you're going through:

- What do I do now?
- How do I program my HT?
- How do I make a contact?
- What is FT8 all about?
- What's the best coax to use?
- What is APRS?
- What is a "hamfest"?
- What does "greyline" mean?
- What kind of radio should I get?
- Where can I find the repeater frequencies?
- Can I buy a decent HF radio on a budget?
- What kind of logging software should I use?
- What are these strange calls I'm hearing?
- Should I use just a VHF, or dual band, radio?
- What is Field Day all about?
- How do I ground my station?
- What kind of antenna should I use?
- I have high SWR – what can I do?
- How do I learn Morse code?
- How can I learn about propagation?
- How do I operate on a Net?
- What are radials?
- How do I become a Storm Spotter?
- What is UTC?

We've all "been there and done that". – You have your license, but where do you go from here? That is why BVRC has many experienced hams that are here to guide and help you avoid some of the "walls" that you might run up against when learning the ins-and-outs of the hobby. And.....even if you're not new to ham radio and are in a quandary about something, *we're here for you too!* With BVRC, you have several resources that are available to you that will assist you in understanding what amateur radio is and how it works, and they're all out there waiting on your call for help!

- **ELMER 911** – This is an exclusive service for BVRC members, and in particular, our newcomers. You can pose a question 24/7 through ELMER 911. All you have to do is go to the ELMER 911 page on the BVRC website, then go to the ELMER 911 tab: <https://bellavistaradioclub.org/elmer-911/>. You will see a form that you can complete and describe your question or issue. Complete the form, then click "SEND". Our ELMER 911 Coordinator will then assign your question to one of our team of Elmers who will contact you via e-mail. You should get your answer in 12-24 hours, and sometimes sooner.
- **HAM 101 In-Person Meetings** – Just before each regular BVRC monthly meeting at 7:00 pm at the ALETA facility, come join us for the HAM 101 sessions, beginning at 6:00 pm. These sessions are designed specifically with newcomers in mind, so you can bring your questions, have those questions answered by our experienced Elmer (Mentor) hams present, and also learn more about the hobby from the Q&As of other participating newcomers. We've had very good turnouts from this new feature on each BVRC meeting night. Our ELMER 911 feature is, of course, ultra-convenient. But if you'd rather enjoy the fun and excitement of in-person newcomer get-togethers, you can join-in with the monthly HAM 101 sessions, or you can join on-air newcomer gatherings each week on the BVRC HAM 101 Net. *Experienced hams are welcome to these sessions, anytime.*
- **BVRC HAM 101 Net** – Get your questions answered or issues resolved (as well as gaining on-air experience!) by joining us on our weekly HAM 101 Net. This net resembles the in-person HAM 101 monthly meetings, except it occurs on-air. A panel of Elmers will be on hand to field any questions or issues you might have. It's a fun on-air experience that you'll really enjoy and also learn net operation protocol in case you're unfamiliar with nets – a great learning experience! This net takes place on the WX5NAS Skywarn Link System. You can find the repeater that is closest to you and it's operating frequency, offset, and PL tone on page 1 of this newsletter. *Experienced hams are also encouraged to join us. You're welcome anytime!*

**So, take advantage of all these opportunities when you need help with something (experienced operators, too!) Send-in your question via the website, and also join us at the monthly in-person newcomer meetings and on the HAM 101 Net. Even if you may not have a question, join us anyway! BVRC has your back!**



**WELCOME  
NEW BVRC  
MEMBERS!**

**Ron Brinkley – KJ5EW – Rogers**

**Janet Caneen – Fayetteville**

**Charles Ramer – KJ5FDT – Wesley, AR**

**Kyle Safarik – KE2CWX – Bella Vista**

**Ralph Wood – KJ5FDZ – Centerton**

**Nick Laughlin – KJ5FEY – Bella Vista**

**Kyle Schoeller – KJ5FEX – Rogers**

**Jim Venske – KØVEN – Shell Knob, MO**

**Miles Lowe – KJ5EQT – Fayetteville**

## ***FROM ARRL.....***



The theme for 2024 ARRL Field Day is "Be Radio Active." The event will run on June 22 - 23, and it will be one-part contest, one-part emergency communications exercise, one-part open house, and – a great time. The theme encourages radio amateurs to take advantage of the peak of Solar Cycle 25, which we are nearing. Activity this year is likely to be extremely high thanks to favorable solar conditions. The upper HF bands, such as 15 and 10 meters, should benefit most from the Cycle's peak.

There are resources available already for clubs and individuals to make their Field Day plans. ARRL will publish more information and tools so that hams can make the most of the event as it draws near.





# THE 2024 ARKANSAS QSO PARTY IS GETTING CLOSE!



**Join in on the fun & excitement !!!**

Each year on the 3rd Saturday in May, the state of Arkansas takes center stage in the amateur radio world, as hams from all over the globe tune the bands to make a QSO with one of the fine hams in our great state. This year's Arkansas QSO Party date is May 18.

Whether non-Arkansas stations are pursuing their Worked-All-States award, needing a particular county or counties, or just enjoying operating in our annual event, they know that Arkansas is a fairly rare state to be found and worked, no matter if they are a stateside or DX operator. So, they will be scanning the bands for Arkansas stations.

Each year The Noise Blankers Radio Group is pleased to sponsor The Annual Arkansas QSO Party. NBRG promotes the ARQP by keeping all national journals and major ham radio websites updated on the event, and maintaining the ARQP website.

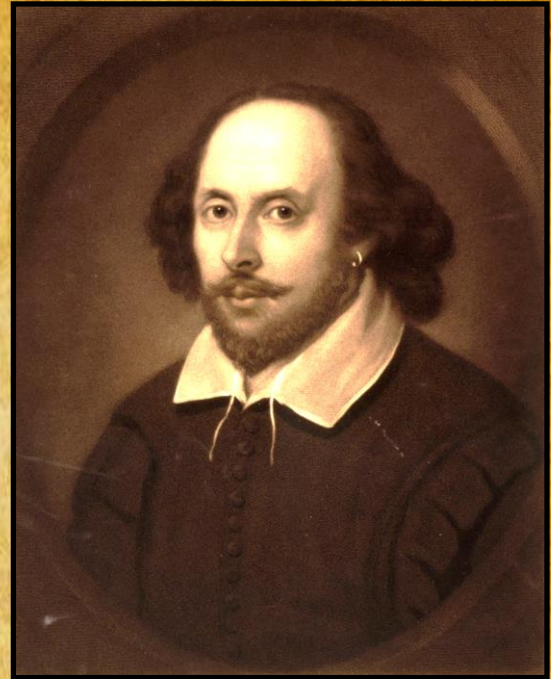
Even though it *is technically* a contest, non-contesters return each year to enjoy meeting new friends while operating in the annual event at their own pace and convenience. If you've never operated in an Arkansas QSO Party, give it a try this year! For returning participants.....see you on the bands!!!

*The Noise Blankers Radio Group station – callsign WR5P – will be the Bonus Station for this year's ARQP.*

**Get all the info you need at:**  
**[www.arkqp.com](http://www.arkqp.com)**



You don't have to write like William "Bill" Shakespeare in order to write an article for The Signal. --- In fact, we prefer articles without the words "thy", "whilst", "'tis" and "oft".



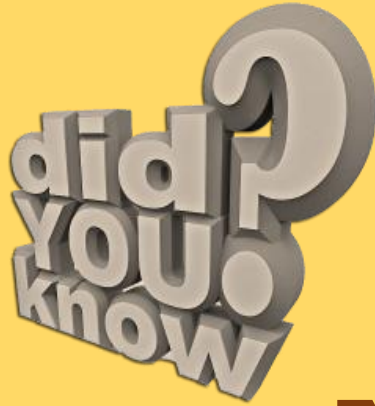
Working on a new kit or homebrew project? Have you recently received a rare or interesting QSL card to share? Received a new radio award? Or, you have a cool photo (ham radio related) or some comments to share with other club members? Maybe you have acquired a new piece of equipment or constructed a new antenna! Taken a trip focused around ham radio to share an amateur radio related experience? Why not write an article for The Signal? The article can be short or long, simple or elaborate. Please include pictures! We're always looking for material for the BVRC newsletter and feedback from our readers goes a long way toward keeping the newsletter interesting. So why not give it try? Write an article and send it to the newsletter editor, and we'll get it in there! It's fun, and at the same time your contribution helps support BVRC and our hobby! Articles can be submitted electronically or on paper, whichever way you feel most comfortable with. Send pictures, too! As The Signal editor, I *particularly* look forward to putting a new issue together when I have material submitted by our club members. Hope to hear from you soon & 73! (Send it in!)

*Submit your material to:*

Via e-mail: [arsk5db@gmail.com](mailto:arsk5db@gmail.com)

Via regular mail: Don Banta, K5DB  
3407 Diana St.  
Springdale, AR 72764





# Early Broadcasting Pioneer

## Norman G. Baker

A Signal newsletter "thanks" goes out to BVRC Treasurer Marc Whittlesey – WØKYZ for sending us this interesting article for inclusion in this month's issue. Marc, an Iowa native, tells us:

*"I received some information from a ham friend up in Iowa of an early broadcaster named Norman Baker from Muscatine, Iowa. Norman was into commercial radio as well as medicine and health care and was a bit of a rogue. He operated a station in Muscatine, KTNT, (Know The Naked Truth) as he liked to say. He also invented the portable air calliope. He eventually bought the Crescent hotel in Eureka Springs, Arkansas and turned it into a sort of hospital that supposedly revived the depressed local economy. He also operated a "border blaster" station, XENT, on the Mexican side of the border."*

Although Baker was not a ham, this article makes for interesting reading in the free-for-all early broadcast radio days. To expound on Marc's comments, let's take an abridged look at Norman G. Baker.....



Norman G. Baker (November 27, 1882 – September 10, 1958) was an early American radio broadcaster, entrepreneur, and inventor. He operated radio stations KTNT in Muscatine, Iowa and the border blaster XENT in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Baker was also the creator of the Tangley calliophone (an air blown musical instrument similar to a calliope).

Baker was born to a wealthy family in the small Mississippi river town of Muscatine, Iowa. He was the tenth and last child of locally prominent parents. His father, John Baker, had reportedly patented 126 inventions, and his mother, Frances Mary (née Anshulz), was a writer before she married.

Although Baker is usually described as having begun his career as a vaudeville performer, he showed early promise as an inventor and a machinist. Norman Baker invented and, through his Tangley Company, successfully manufactured and sold the Tangley Automatic Air Calliope or calliophone, a variation of the

then-common steam organ. This mobile device was much in demand for fairgrounds and circuses. Baker also formed numerous local businesses under the Tangley or Baker name.

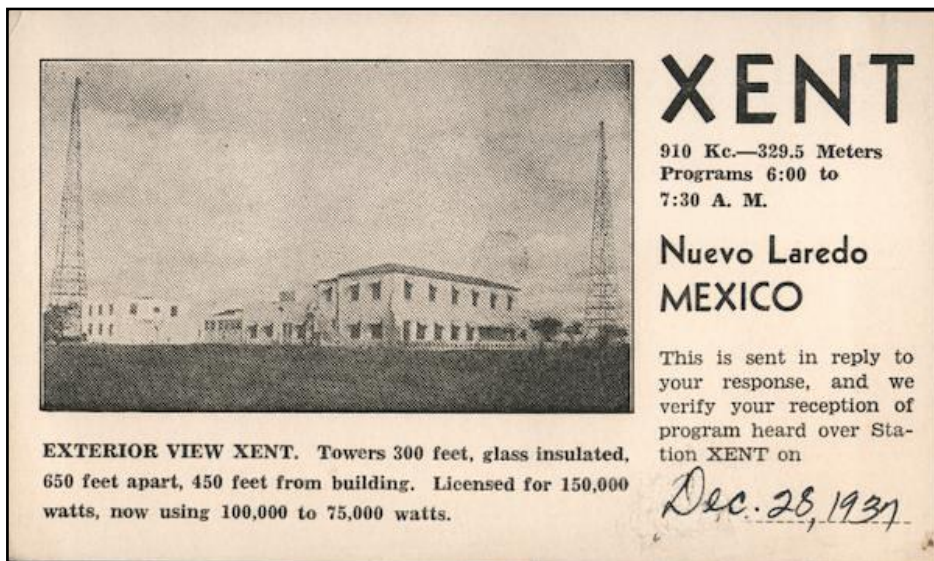


In 1924, convinced of the potential of the burgeoning field of radio broadcasting, Baker asked the town of Muscatine to permit a station that would make the town famous across the Midwest. In operation by November 1925, the station received the call sign KTNT, chosen for its explosive connotations but explained as "Know The Naked Truth." It broadcasted with 500 watts on 1170 kHz. It used the calliaphone for a sign-on signal, and Baker put his skills as a veteran carnival barker to exquisite use as a radio promoter and announcer.



**The first KTNT radio station**

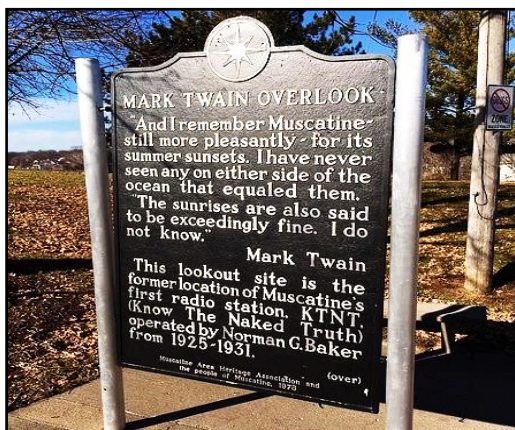
Baker immediately began campaigning against an alleged "cartel" of broadcasters aimed at independent stations. This was before the broadcast spectrum was regulated, and the many new stations interfered frequently. By 1925, Baker was president of the American Broadcasters Association, a short-lived lobbying group (to 1927) against "monopolists." In particular, Baker railed against AT&T, which then (through Western Electric) had a de facto monopoly on radio station transmitters.



In 1933, Baker obtained Mexican permission to operate XENT in Nuevo Laredo on the Rio Grande. This station was a so-called "border blaster" operating on 910 kHz with a power variously reported at from 50,000 to 150,000 watts, and outside the reach of the new U.S. Federal Communications Commission. This reportedly made XENT the most, or second-most, powerful station in North America.

Baker retired to Miami, FL where he died on September 10, 1958. At the time of his death, he was living aboard a large yacht that was once owned by railroad developer Jay Gould. Baker is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Muscatine next to his sister.

**The historical marker in Muscatine denoting the original location of KTNT, with an accompanying quote by author Mark Twain**



# BVRC HAMS LICENSED THREE YEARS OR LESS: JOIN US, AND PARTICIPATE IN THE 2024 SSB ARRL ROOKIE ROUNDUP!!!

*The ARRL Rookie Roundup is a contest aimed at amateurs who have been licensed for three years or less, to introduce them to HF operation. This fun-filled 6 hour event is held three times per year (April for SSB, August for RTTY, and December for CW).*



***The Rookie Roundup for SSB (microphone) this year is on  
Sunday afternoon, April 21, 2024, from 1800 – 2359 UTC (1pm – 6:59pm local time)***

As we do for each year, several of our BVRC experienced operators will be welcoming you into their shacks to host this event. If you presently do not have HF privileges and/or do not have an HF station, you can still operate from one of the experienced operator's locations and enjoy & learn the fun world of HF! You will also learn the fun of logging contacts.

*(The experienced operator will be there as a Coach and control operator for you, but they are not allowed to operate or log.....YOU will do the logging and operating!)*

You will be using a callsign chosen by your Coach/control operator, BUT...  
If your station wins in one of the categories, you will win a certificate with your callsign on it:



If you were first licensed any of the years 2020-2024 – *no matter which class of license you hold* – you are eligible to participate! Several new BVRC hams have already signed-up for this fun event, along with some of last year's participants!

***Our coaches for this year are:  
Don Cooper – KC7DC – Bella Vista  
Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L – Bella Vista  
Dale Locander – W5DSL – Bella Vista  
Dennis Tune – W5DM – Fayetteville  
Tom Northfell – W5XNA – Fayetteville  
Vinson Carter – WV5C – Springdale  
Don Banta – K5DB – Springdale***

***If you would like some real ham radio HF experience and fun, get on the sign-up list today! To sign-up, send an e-mail indicating your interest to participate to:***

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

***See you April 21!***



# BOB HEIL – K9EID

## SILENT KEY



The amateur radio world has lost another pillar and pioneer in our hobby. Bob Heil – K9EID passed away on February 28, 2024. Bob founded Heil Sound which is based in Fairview Heights, Illinois, and manufactures a variety of microphones, headsets, and accessories for professional use as well a variety of gear for amateur radio operators.

Below is a statement issued by Heil Sound:

**Our beloved founder, Dr. Bob Heil – K9EID, is now a silent key. Bob fought a valiant, year-long battle with cancer, and passed peacefully surrounded by his family. Bob’s lifelong passion for amateur radio was clear to everyone involved in the hobby. Everything Bob did for the betterment and growth of amateur radio – from his instructional**



**handbooks and countless presentations to his support of the ARRL and youth programs – was based on the foundation and spirit of service. Bob was an Elmer to all of us. While Bob’s presence will dearly be missed, his impact on the hobby and everyone in it will forever be felt. On behalf of Bob to all ham radio operators worldwide, 73.**

Bob was born in 1940 in St. Louis. He resided in Marissa, Illinois. He became a proficient theater organ musician at a young age, beginning to perform at various local restaurants at the age of 14. At the age of 15, he became house player for the Wurlitzer theater pipe organ in the Fox Theater in St. Louis. During that time he learned how to tune and voice the thousands of pipes in the great Wurlitzer. It was that platform that taught him how to listen - mentally dissect discrete tones which became so important throughout his several careers.

In his teens he also became a passionate amateur radio operator, and began designing and building homemade transmitters, amplifiers, and antenna systems. His lifetime call sign was K9EID.





In his early twenties Bob began designing and building various theater pipe organ installations in the Holiday Inn North restaurant in St. Louis, playing the instruments six nights a week. After having played the organ for eight years solid, he opened a successful professional music shop in the small town of Marissa, Illinois.

In 1966 he founded Heil Sound, experimenting with live sound systems and becoming the technician to several venues around St. Louis, from auditoriums to bowling alleys. Large sound systems at the time were comparatively weak and primitive; in 1965 The Beatles had played New

York's Shea Stadium using only a Shure Vocalmaster PA system plugged into the baseball park's PA system.

In the late 1970s Heil Sound entered the amateur radio market, with Bob ostensibly working to fix his perception of problems in the industry involving poorly transmitted and received audio. He applied science he had learned from Paul Klipsch, Don Leslie, Martin Wick, and the Bell Labs Fletcher–Munson curves. He developed his HC series microphones, intended for amateur radio communication. Heil Sound was also an early installer of large satellite dishes for radio.

Bob developed sound systems, including the “Heil Talk Box”, which were extensively used by major artists such as The Grateful Dead, The Who, Joe Walsh, Peter Frampton, and Jeff Beck. He became very good friends with Joe Walsh of The Eagles who is also an avid radio amateur – WB6ACU.



**Bob-K9EID with Joe Walsh-WB6ACU**

Many, many, many BVRC members are proud owners of one or more ham mics and accessories from Heil Sound, and have met Bob in person on several occasions. He was always cordial, humble, and willing to help anyone. When attending hamfests he was usually the center attraction with many hams waiting to visit with him. Even with his jam-packed schedule, Bob always took the time in conversing with new and veteran hams alike.

For a period of time, Bob moved to Springfield, MO (where he had his own private pipe organ in his house!). It was during this time that he discovered BVRC's Sunday 75-meter Roundtable, and

joined the Sunday afternoon group quite often. It was always exciting to hear Bob check-in, as you never knew what subject he would discuss from his vast plethora of ham radio knowledge.

We will forever remember Bob in our hearts and his absence from the airwaves will definitely be felt. RIP Bob.



# THE DXCC DEN



By Don – K5DB

## This month's featured country:

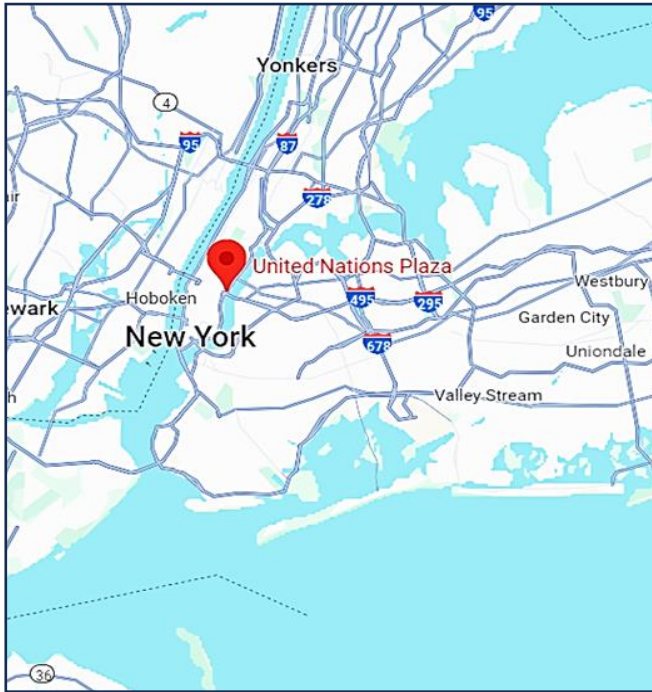


**United Nations Headquarters**  
**Primary Callsign Prefix: 4U**

There are 340 current countries/entities on the ARRL DXCC countries list. Many of them are quite easily worked, whereas others are extremely difficult either due to distance, lack of amateur radio activity there, spotty propagation, etc.

But did you know that on the North American continent – besides Canada, Mexico, and Central America – you have yet another country directly under your nose right here in the good ol' USA?

Yes, you surely do – the headquarters of the United Nations in New York City, callsign **4U1UN**. But, it didn't start that way. Let's take a look at the story:



### Location of UN Headquarters

The UN was established after World War II with the aim of preventing future world wars, and succeeded the League of Nations, which was characterized as ineffective. On April 25, 1945, 50 nations met in San Francisco, California for a conference and started drafting the UN Charter, which was adopted on June 25, 1945. The charter took effect on October 24, 1945, when the UN began operations. The UN's objectives, as defined by its charter, include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development, and

upholding international law. At its founding, the UN had 51 member states. As of 2024, it has 193 – almost all of the world's sovereign states.

But even while the original organizing of the UN was taking place, plans for an amateur radio station to represent it were also taking place. And, after twelve months of joint planning and co-operation between the United Nations Department of Public Information and the International Amateur Radio Union, K2UN—the United Nations Amateur Radio Club station—went on the air for the first time with a broadcast from the UN's temporary headquarters at Lake Success, NY on the evening of May 17, 1948.

The powerful station transmitted its first official signal to the world at 6pm (EDT) when, George W. Bailey, President of the International Amateur Radio Union and of the American Radio Amateur League, directed the station's antenna towards Europe and spread the word that a special United Nations certificate would be awarded to the amateur radio operator who sent the first reply to the signal. Despite local thunderstorms over New York, a reply came through within a few seconds from Victor E. Motto, operating amateur station I1RM, in Como, Italy. In the studio at Lake Success, the microphone was picked up by Benjamin Cohen, Assistant Secretary General for Public Information, who broadcast a congratulatory message in Italian to the amateur in faraway Italy.





The new station had two transmitters, each capable of running up to 1000 watts, the maximum input-power permissible in the United States at that time. One station, operated on the 80 and 40 bands using "doublet" antennas. The other station fed a rotating beam antenna for 20 and 10 meters.

“Hey, I thought the international radio callsign prefix for the UN is ‘4U’. Why was the first station’s callsign ‘K2UN’? That’s one of the prefixes for the United States.” As was stated earlier, 4U1UN didn’t start that way. The United Nations was “brand

new to the world as was its club station. Hence, the ARRL had not classified it as a separate country as yet. After the United Nations moved to its present well-known address on the East River in midtown Manhattan, K2UN was reactivated in October 1976, located on the third floor of the Church Center for the United Nations, across First Avenue from the Secretariat Building (but still UN territory).

However, there was still no official approval for the station from the Secretary General of the United Nations to operate as an amateur station under the UN flag and sanction. So, K2UN was just another FCC-licensed station in New York, albeit with an interesting call, operated by members of the UN Amateur Radio Club.

But! Dr Maximilian C. DeHenseler – HB9RS, from Switzerland and Chief Cartographer of the United Nations at the time, who also was president of the United Nations Amateur Radio Club went to work on this dilemma. Through his undying efforts, the Secretary General approved the operation of a specifically designated UN amateur station using the call 4U1UN in early 1978. It was to be located on the 40th floor (top floor) of the UN Secretariat Building. And it was also Max’s one-man drive and determination that finally established 4U1UN as a separate DXCC country. In later years, separate entity status was also granted by the ARRL to 4U1ITU – the amateur station at the headquarters of the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva, Switzerland. (All United Nations entities’ callsigns now begin with ‘4U’.)

Here's Max's rendition of what happened the first night that 4U1UN went on the air:

*"So it was, that a group of us gathered on the top floor of the UN building on February 4, 1978, for that first new-country operation from the United Nations. That was the beginning of the phone weekend of the ARRL DX Contest. I thought that would be a great time to introduce 4U1UN to the world. The equipment was all hooked up and in operating order in the UN employees recreation room on the 40th floor. This large room was shared with the art club, the exercise club, the ballet club and others. . . most especially a club we would soon meet.*

*About 6 PM local (2300 UTC), one hour before the contest started, we decided to first have a little supper. Down we went to the UN cafeteria, talking about the exciting feeling of putting a "new one" on the air. At 2350, we went back to the 40th floor. As we approached the recreation room we heard strange loud bangs and yelps and thuds. What was going on here?*

*Uh-oh! Standing within a foot of our operating table was a short, stocky, scowling gentleman dressed in a shaggy white uniform with a black belt around his middle. It was the UN karate class instructor, along with 20 or so of his students jabbing and pounding each other to the floor. And, "Mr. Black Belt" showed no inclination to allow us to approach our equipment, which he appeared to be guarding. What do you do when a black belt karate instructor is conducting class almost on top of your equipment? You wait! So we waited. About 0045 UTC, Mr. Black Belt finally moved, and we scampered across the karate mats to get on the air, 45 minutes late.*



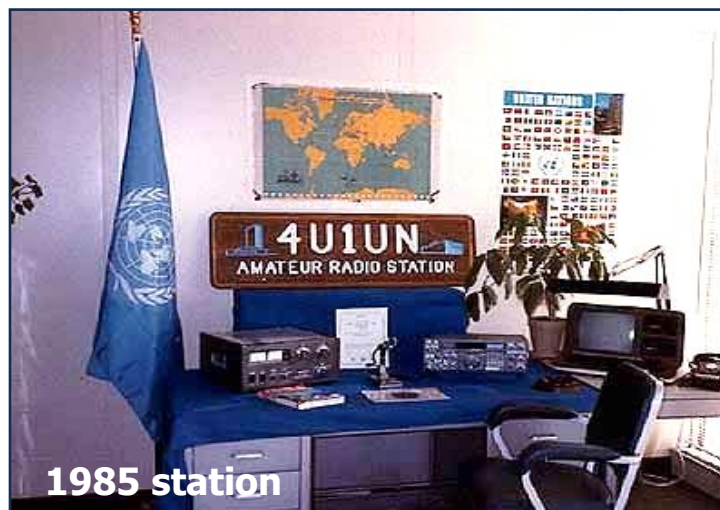
Max – HB9RS

*There was a lot of explaining to do on the air. The stations we worked asked us all kinds of questions like, "What was that call again?" "Where are you located?" "Never heard of 4U1UN." "You say it is a new multiplier?" "You count as New York?" "You in Geneva?" and so on. It appeared that not everyone had gotten the word that the ARRL had approved 4U1UN as a new country. Indeed, we doubted that*

*many of those stations realized that they were among the first to work a brand-new country. But we were having fun with the whole event, despite the fact that many of those we worked thought we were a pirate!"*

Of course, the confusion finally dissipated, and the rest is history. (Max became a Silent Key on December 30, 2013 in Montreux, Switzerland at the age of 80.)

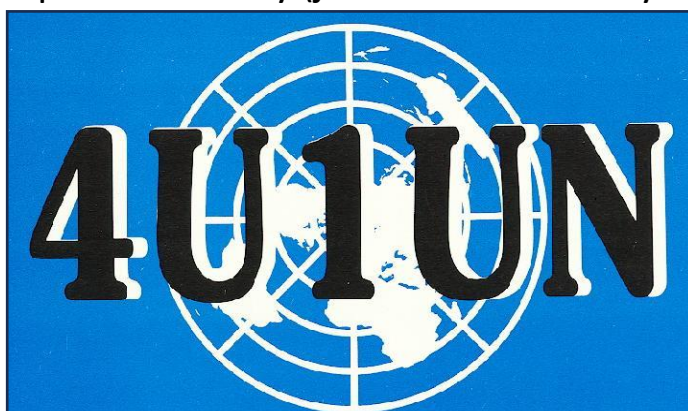
In 2015 the station went off the air due to waning support from the UN, along with new administrative and security measures. But, thanks to the continuing efforts of UN Amateur Radio Club, the station was able to return to the airwaves on December 4, 2019. Adrian Ciuperca – KO8SCA, who was the featured speaker at the Arkansas DX Association conference last November, was largely involved in getting the station back on the air. It has remained operational since.



Today, 4U1UN can be found relatively often on the DX spotting websites. Lately, operation has been mainly on – you guessed it – FT8. Operation from the station is highly restricted, the only persons allowed to operate being members of the UNARC or guests of members.



So, if you haven't as yet, best wishes in adding the UN Headquarters to your DXCC confirmed countries list. If you do hear the station on the bands and the propagation is good, they'll probably have a terrific signal. But remember, they are a separate country (just like Vatican City is NOT a part of Italy). There will be a pileup!



**4U1UN IS LOCATED AT  
THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

Confirming QSO with K5DB					
Date	UTC	Band	Mode	RST	QSL
12 Oct 03	15:41	20M	SSB	59	

Verified by KA2RTD  
73.. 4U1UN

Thanks for the QSO  
*Jendoubi*

**4U1UN**

LAT. N. 40° 45' 04"  
LONG. W. 73° 58' 04"  
LOCATOR FN30AR

ITU ZONE 8  
WAZ ZONE 5  
VY 73

**UNITED NATIONS AMATEUR RADIO STATION**  
United Nations Headquarters, Box 20, New York, NY 10017

**My QSL from the first time I worked 4U1UN in 2003**

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