

# THE SIGNAL



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

May 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, May 2, 2024 @ 7pm  
Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy  
3424 S. Downum Road  
Springdale, AR

## May Meeting Information

**HAM 101 Workshop, 6pm preceding monthly meeting** – Our HAM 101 Workshop this month features BVRC's Jon Williams – K5DVT. Jon gave an excellent program for our March meeting on APRS, and Jon returns this month for the Workshop with his presentation on "What Kind Of Antenna Do I Need?" The most important component of your station is your antenna. Jon will be on hand to discuss the best options for you in terms of space and location of your antenna. (This will be good!)

**BVRC May meeting, 7pm** – Our BVRC May meeting will be featuring one of our very experienced members in the hobby, James Bennett – KA5DVS. James became a ham in 1978 while in high school. He is a Physicist and has worked in development of novel sensors for industrial and medical applications as well as optical data storage and materials characterization. James also owns Pacific Antennas, makers of many interesting and fun ham kits.

James will be speaking on a very interesting topic that has become a very popular medium in today's tech world, "3D Printing: Fundamentals and Applications to Ham Radio."

Join us for what will be an excellent presentation by James.

*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)

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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)



## BVRC Webmaster Gives Outstanding Program On WinLink

It was another packed house for the Bella Vista area Radio Club's April meeting on Thursday evening, April 4. This month the club welcomed Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L to the podium. Glenn is a past president of BVRC, the custodian of BVRC's N5BVA club call, and webmaster of one of the finest amateur radio websites in the land.



Glenn presented the program "An Introduction To WinLink". WinLink is a network of amateur radio and authorized government stations that provides 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.

Glenn began his program by describing the different message sending methods that are used on WinLink:

**COMMON MESSAGE SERVERS** – This is WinLink’s conventional system, which stores messages (e-mails) on CMS “backbone” servers.

**PEER-TO-PEER** – This mode is used when a WinLink user station wishes to send a message directly to another user, without using a CMS. (A similar analogy would be working someone on VHF/UHF directly without going through a repeater.)



**Glenn – WB5L**

There are many different digital modes that WinLink incorporates: Telnet, HF Pactor, HF WinMor, ARDOP, VARAHF, VARAFM, and many others. Glenn said HF Pactor is fast and reliable but the modem to operate on this system costs around \$1500.00. Consequently, it is not used as much as other modes. Glenn said the more popular modes currently being used are HF WinMor (the “poor man’s HF Pactor”) and VARA.

Glenn listed several big advantages in running WinLink:

- It offers a lot for EmComm (Emergency Communications) in that it offers great flexibility and interoperable ability.
- In essence, it combines ALL the digital modes together in one piece of software.
- It can send standard e-mail from any radio (even an HT if you choose).
- It is time independent and possesses good operation at most power levels.
- It is not limited by station-to-station operation as it uses a network.
- It has message logging and ICS report operation.
- Most importantly, it is a safeguard against cyber attacks if the internet were to go inoperable.

Glenn then provided the meeting attendees with a live demonstration of how WinLink works, how to setup the software on how you want messages sent, which CMS you want to use, and many other operating aspects of the system. THANKS GLENN FOR AN OUTSTANDING PROGRAM!!!



*A big THANKS also goes out to Mike Calvi – KF5RUO on a superb HAM 101 Workshop program that preceded the regular meeting with many newcomers attending!*

*Mike’s program was on the QCX mini-QRP transceiver and the portable antennas he used for his POTA/SOTA operations on a recent trip to the San Francisco area as well as back home at Hobb’s State Park. Thanks Mike!!!*

## From the Desk



## of the President



When the opportunity arises to combine several of one's many interests in one special event, it is indeed fun. When that event can be shared with the company of many others that you enjoy being with, it is especially rewarding.

Such was the case with the recent BVRC camp out at Spadra Campground in Clarksville for the April 8th Total Solar Eclipse.

Enjoying the company of so many BVRC members and their families while camping in an incredibly scenic location while enjoying good food, relaxation, radio operations, and great fellowship made for a very special weekend indeed.

Of course, the highlight of the weekend was the spectacular show nature afforded us all with clear skies and an awe inspiring total solar eclipse featuring a spectacular corona.

Here are a few pictures of a very special weekend.....

73 – Jan, WB5JAN





Sunday morning breakfast burritos with our weekend campers



A special NASA presentation about the Total Solar Eclipse in Russellville



A fun experience for Hams of all ages!  
Glenn – WB5L and Mercy – KJ5EQA



Brandon and Stephanie Bevard,  
KJ5DTB and KJ5DSZ with parents and



Robert and Dana Hill, K5NZV and W5DGH  
ready for the big show



Mercy – KJ5EQA  
and her siblings and mom



Joe – W5AEN and XYL Mary Lou with Glenn and Mercy waiting for the show!



Dana – K15TGY and XYL Connie enjoying the first part of the eclipse.



It's starting to get dark as Jan – WB5JAN and XYL Prudence feel the cooling temperatures.



With the Wolf River Coil Vertical antenna at left, it was a beautiful setting for POTA operations and for relaxing with a magnificent view!

# UPCOMING BVRC LICENSE CLASSES! SIGN-UP TODAY!



Bella Vista area Radio Club is pleased to announce the Spring and Summer 2024 Technician and General amateur radio license classes! **Enrollment is open and ongoing!**

## TECHNICIAN License Class

**CLASS DATES:** Saturday, May 4 and  
Saturday, May 11, 2024

### CLASS LOCATION:

Ark. Law Enforcement Trng. Academy (ALETA)  
3424 S. Downum Road  
Springdale, AR 72762

### CLASS SCHEDULE:

2 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 Technician exam test session will be given at the end of the May 11 class.

**INSTRUCTOR:** BVRC past president and  
Membership Chair  
Tom Northfell – W5XNA

**ENROLLMENT:** 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 ANY QUESTIONS OR  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:  
Contact Tom-W5XNA at:  
[w5xna@arrl.net](mailto:w5xna@arrl.net)**

## GENERAL License Class

*(If you recently passed your Technician exam and wish to upgrade, this class is for you!)*

**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:

Ark. Law Enforcement Trng. 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 past president and  
BVRC webmaster  
Glenn Kilpatrick – WB5L

**ENROLLMENT:** 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 ANY QUESTIONS OR  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:  
Contact Glenn – WB5L at:  
[wb5l@arrl.net](mailto:wb5l@arrl.net)**

***If you have friends or relatives that are not BVRC members, tell them about these classes!***

# BVRC VE REPORT

From Don Cooper – KC7DC

BVRC VE Coordinator

April 13, 2024



## *Congratulations!*

Jeremy Harp – KJ5FXG – Siloam Springs – New Technician!

Bradley Plummer – KO6EEU – Fremont, CA – New Technician!

John Meenen – KJ5FVR – Gravette – New Technician!

Mark Darter – KG5TOR – Centerton – New General!

Shaun Means – KE5LNQ – Lowell, AR – New General!

Duane Walker – WA1MCM – Van Buren, AR  
New Amateur Extra!

Donald Wright – KFØDRZ – Fairview, MO  
NEW Amateur Extra!

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

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



When you're first learning international callsigns, it truly can seem like "alphabet soup" as they are comprised of all types of letter and number formats and combinations. Of course as with anything else, the more you practice hearing and looking up international calls, the more you will be able to mentally and readily associate a foreign amateur's call sign prefix with their country.

However, there is one location on the planet that is still sometimes very difficult to distinguish when you hear it on the air – Antarctica.

This is because Antarctica is not owned, ruled, or swears allegiance to any one governing nation. Politically, Antarctica is governed by the Antarctic Treaty System, or The ATS. The main treaty was opened for signature on December 1, 1959, and officially entered into force on June 23, 1961.

The main points of the ATS include: No military operations or nuclear testing is allowed, no claim of sovereignty of any portion of Antarctica is recognized, and scientific exploration and inquiry is allowed by the participating nations of the Treaty. In addition to establishing the legal framework for the management of Antarctica, the ATS is also

involved in the allocation of amateur radio call signs.

Antarctic call signs are regulated internationally by the ITU as well as nationally by governing bodies within each country who may have nationals operating in Antarctica. Call signs may also be issued by a local Antarctic authority (i.e. base commander), who chooses from a block reserved by their national body for that purpose

The International Telecommunications Union does not assign call letter blocks to Antarctica since there is no single government there which can send delegates to ITU conferences. However, some individual countries reserve Antarctic prefixes or call letters from within their own call letter blocks as per the table on the following page. In some cases the assignment of call letters is made locally at an Antarctic base and the relevant national body is notified. If and when you make contact with an Antarctic station and you are confused as to which representative country station you have contacted, the easiest way is to query that call sign in a reliable database such as QRZ.com. Or, you can use the below reference table to further aid you:

<b><u>PREFIX(ES)</u></b>	<b><u>COUNTRY</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
CE9	Chile	ITU Zones 67, 69-74. CQ Zones 12,13,29,30,32,38,39
DP	Germany	Expeditionary calls, only for outside of Germany in international territories or in space
ED	Spain	
EM	Ukraine	
FT8Y	France	
HFØ	Poland	HFØPOL - Polish Base, South Shetland - King George Island
HL8	S. Korea	
IA, IR, IY	Italy	Usually 2x1 calls (i.e. IR2X)
KC4AAA - KC4AAF	United States	Used for Byrd, McMurdo, and Palmer stations.
KC4USA – KC4USZ	United States	Used for U.S. Naval bases.
LU#Z	Argentina	'#' is any numeral
LZØ	Bulgaria	Also can be used for Bulgarian special event stations
OAØ	Peru	Also can be used for Peruvian club and/or special event stations
R1A	Russia	Usually has a 3-letter suffix (example: R1ABC)
VKØ	Australia	This prefix is also used for Macquarie Island and Heard Island
VP8	United Kingdom	
VU	India	Not distinctive to Antarctica.
ZL5, ZL9	New Zealand	ZL9 is for sub-Antarctic territories; operators must have permission to land before call is issued
ZS7	South Africa	
ZVØ, ZXØ	Brazil	Any call sign starting with ZVØ is Antarctica. For ZXØ, any call sign suffix beginning with any letter except F, S, or T is Antarctica.
3Y	Norway	All Norwegian bases.
3Y	Norway	This prefix could also be used for Peter I Island and/or Bouvet Island.

No matter what Antarctic call sign you come across on the air or which research base you have a contact with, making a QSO with the bottom of the world, the coldest place on earth, is always exciting.



**WELCOME  
NEW BVRC  
MEMBERS!**

**Richard Hill – KM6AIA – Fayetteville**

**Jerry Tweedy – KG5NML – Bella Vista**

**Zack McClain – KJ5FLS – Van Buren**

**Jeremy Harp – KJ5FXG – Siloam Springs**

**Bradley Plummer – KO6EEU – Fremont, CA**

**John Meenen – Gravette – KJ5FVR**

**Malachi Bucao – Springdale**

**Mark Gunderman – Bentonville**

**Kris Henderson – Cave Springs**

**Justin Harrington – Pea Ridge**



# 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)**

# BVRC NEEDS YOU!



# FOR FIELD DAY 2024!

The annual ARRL Field Day occurs always during the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in June. This year it will be June 22-23. Bella Vista area Radio Club will once again be conducting our FD at Metfield Park in Bella Vista. ARRL Field Day has been an annual event since 1933, and remains the most popular event in ham radio. For the past two years, BVRC's Field Day operation has attracted over 100 club members, operators, and visitors. This year will be no exception. All major modes will be in operation, as well as the GOTA (Get On The Air) station. Field Day can be especially rewarding to newcomers to the hobby in that they can learn first hand in how to put a portable station on the air, which is one of the main objectives of the event. They can also learn how to make contacts on the HF bands, how to use computer logging software, and how to troubleshoot problems that may arise. Veteran and newcomer operators alike ALWAYS enjoy Field Day!



And of course, BVRC will have its wonderful Saturday feast the evening of June 22.

Volunteers are needed to make this year's FD another big success. So many of our great members have devoted their talents and abilities in year's past (usually during very HOT weather) to make BVRC Field Day what it is.....and we need you again!

Full information on how to volunteer along with the FD agenda will be in next month's issue of The Signal, and will be meeting topic for the BVRC June meeting!



# SENATORS WICKER & BLUMENTHAL INTRODUCE S.3690 TO ELIMINATE PRIVATE LAND USE RESTRICTIONS ON AMATEUR RADIO

On January 30, 2024, U.S. Senators Roger Wicker (Mississippi) and Richard Blumenthal (Connecticut) introduced S.3690, the Senate companion bill to HR.4006 which was introduced in June, 2023. Both bills reflect ARRL's congressional campaign efforts to eliminate homeowner association land use restrictions that prohibit, restrict, or impair the ability of an amateur radio operator to install and operate amateur station antennas on their residential properties.

Amateur radio operators are repeatedly relied upon to provide essential communication when disaster strikes, but their ability to do so is being impaired by the exponential growth of residential private land use restrictions. Such restrictions hinder the ability to establish home stations that can be used to train and provide emergency communications when needed. When announcing the introduction of S.3690, Senator Wicker said:

*"Because communication during natural disasters is often hindered, we should be making every attempt to give folks more options. Reliable access can make the difference between life and death in an emergency. Our legislation removes roadblocks for amateur radio operators looking to help friends, families, and neighbors."*

In a similar announcement, Senator Blumenthal stated:

*"Our measure will help clarify the rules so ham radio enthusiasts can successfully continue their communications. In the face of emergency or crisis, they help provide vital life-saving information that allows listeners to properly and safely respond, but prohibitive home association rules and confusing approval processes for installing antennas have been an unnecessary impediment. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act resolves these bottlenecks and ensures that radio operators can function successfully."*

ARRL President Rick Roderick – K5UR, and ARRL Government Affairs Committee Chair and Director of the ARRL West Coast Gulf Division John Robert Stratton – N5AUS, both extended their thanks on behalf of ARRL, it's members, and the amateur radio community. They voiced their appreciation for the leadership of Senator Wicker and Senator Blumenthal in their efforts to support and protect the rights of all amateur radio operators.



Many times, after a person acquires their first amateur radio license – the Technician – if you ask them how much time they are spending on the air since acquiring their ticket, the answer varies from “not much” to “zero”. This is not uncommon. Lots of people seem to get a ham radio license and then do very little with it. One reason for this is that they don’t take into account how much time the hobby really can eat up due to the many areas that amateur radio encompasses.

They get their ticket because it seems like a cool thing to do, but then they have to carve-out some time to actually become a ham radio operator. Even if you don’t make any of your own gear, setting up a station takes time and then there is the operating time, of course. Carving time out of busy schedules is a challenge.

Of course, family always comes first. But if you’re a busy person, how do you make time for ham radio? Here are four points that might help you:

**1. Schedule it.** Work on setting aside a specific time during which you’re going to devote to ham radio. Try to not let that time get preempted.

**2. Designate a place in your home for ham radio.** Having to set up your radios or dig out your tools every time you want to operate or build something is not much fun and wastes a lot of time. Having a “shack” and a workspace designated for your projects will let you spend more time on the fun stuff.

**3. Partner up.** Arranging to work with another ham will make it harder to put-off ham radio for some other activity. Besides, it’s a lot of fun to do things with other hams. If you’re a newly licensed ham, find an Elmer. There are plenty around who would be willing to help you.

**4. Create a project plan.** Sometimes, setting-up an amateur radio station is no small feat. Breaking it down into smaller chunks will make it seem more manageable and attractive to you and you’ll get a feeling of accomplishment when you meet your in-between goals.



**This month's featured country:**



Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory and city located at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula to the immediate south of the Spain border, near the exit of the Mediterranean Sea into the Atlantic Ocean (Strait of Gibraltar). It has an area of 2.6 square miles. The landscape is dominated by the Rock of Gibraltar. At the foot of "The Rock" is a densely populated area, appropriately named Gibraltartown, home to roughly 33,000 people, primarily those who call themselves Gibraltarians.



### Location of Gibraltar



Over the centuries, the sovereignty of Gibraltar has changed hands many times historically beginning with the Phoenicians in 950 BC, and continuing with the Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Visigoths, and Nasrids.

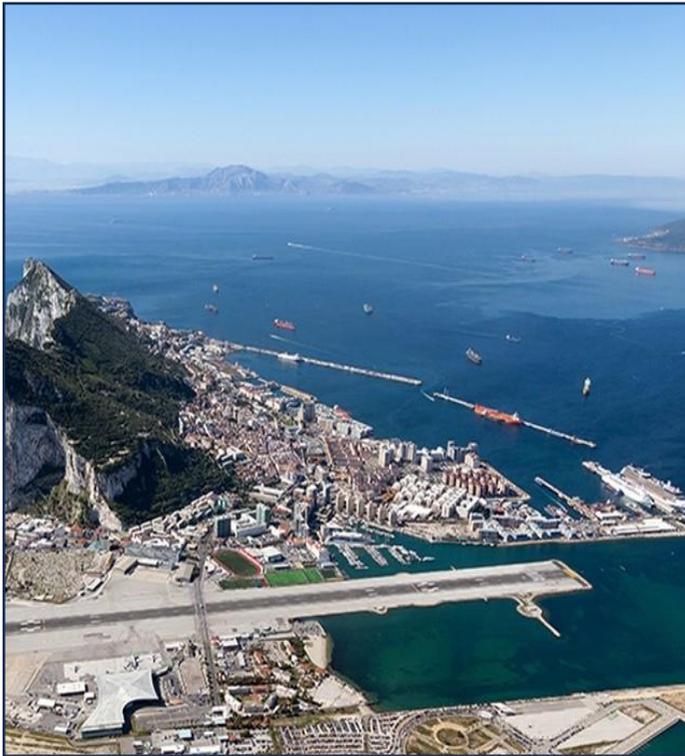
Most recently, the sovereignty of Gibraltar was a point of contention in Anglo-Spanish relations, as Spain asserts a claim to the territory. Gibraltarians overwhelmingly rejected proposals for Spanish sovereignty

in a 1967 referendum, and for shared sovereignty in a 2002 referendum. Nevertheless, Gibraltar maintains close economic and cultural links with Spain, with many Gibraltarians speaking Spanish as well as a local dialect known as Llanito.

Gibraltar's economy is realized through financial services, e-gaming, tourism, and its port. With one of the world's lowest unemployment rates, the largest part of the labor force are resident in Spain or non-Gibraltarians, especially in the private sector. Since Brexit, Gibraltar is not a member of the European Union, but negotiations are under way to have it participate in the Schengen Agreement to facilitate border movements between Gibraltar and Spain. As of March 2023, talks seem deadlocked.



**Europa Point and a handsome example of Islamic architecture, the Ibrahim-al-Ibrahim mosque**



**The Port of Gibraltar**  
(Morocco is seen at top of photo on the south side of the Strait of Gibraltar)

Gibraltar is however, and officially, a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations with King Charles III as sovereign.



**Beach in the northern portion of Gibraltar**



**Street scene - Giblartartown**



**Nighttime activities in the Giblartartown dining and shopping district**

In amateur radio, all British Commonwealth nations' callsigns begin with either a "G" or "M" (Great Britain, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and surrounding islands such as Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Man), a "VE, VK or VP" (Canada, Australia, Caribbean, and Pacific possessions), or "ZF, ZK ZL, or ZS" (African, Pacific, and Caribbean possessions), as well as unique prefixes: C9, 8P, V8, etc. – Gibraltar's prefix is "ZB2".

Gibraltar's amateur radio population is around 100-125 although, of course as with any location, not all of them are active. The ones who are active, however, put Gibraltar on the airwaves fairly often. Gibraltar ranks #217 (out of the 340 DXCC countries) on the Most Wanted List, meaning it can be worked fairly regularly but expect at least a semi-large pileup when you do attempt to work one of the stations there.



**Headquarters of ZB2BU**

Gibraltar has an active radio club, the Gibraltar Amateur Radio Society. The club call is **ZB2BU**. Shortly after the Second World War in April 1946, British Squadron Leader Robert "Bob" Butterworth – G8BI, requested an amateur radio license from the Colonial Secretariat, which granted him the first ever Gibraltar call sign – ZB2A.

After his departure in 1948, arrangements were made to ensure that the call sign would be under the custody of the Chief Signals Office for sole use by the RAF Gibraltar Amateur

Radio Club (RAFARC), based at the RAF 'New Camp'. In 1971, resident civilians constituted the Gibraltar Amateur Radio Club (GARC).

The Gibraltar Amateur Radio Society was fruit of the merger between the members of the RAFARC and GARC on January 13, 1976.

The aims of the Society remain the same to this date, which are: "To foster, promote and safeguard the interests of amateur radio in Gibraltar."

Gibraltar has a great and interesting story concerning amateur radio. As was stated previously, in 1967 Gibraltarians decided by an overwhelming majority to continue being loyal subjects to the British Crown, democratically reaffirming British sovereignty over Gibraltar since 1704. In 1969, HM Queen Elizabeth II, issued Gibraltar with a constitution. Following this democratic exercise, the Francoist Spain decided to close all, terrestrial, marine and air links with mainland Spain.

This unfortunate decision caused much anxiety and detriment to those local families that had family ties in Spain. Members of GARS turned to their stations in aid to support and provide solace to these distraught members of the community, by replacing the cut telephone links for airwave communications until the links were partially restored in 1985. Many of those members continue to be part of GARS.

The club also has an operational 70cm repeater, ZB2BU/R, they call the "Top of the Rock low power repeater" which they built for only £100 (\$125). The repeater is powered by a 30W solar panel. The transmitter is a Baofeng and the receiver is a Motorola GP68, using a Surecom repeater interface with a Chinese duplexer. The battery is a sealed 18Ah type. Their antenna is a colinear 7dbi. So far, the repeater has reached Almeria, Spain, about 140 miles to the north, so it can be accessed from Spain to the north and Morocco to the south.



The ZB2BU/R repeater tower atop the Rock of Gibraltar

For HF, the club runs 100W to a hex beam on a rotator. For their main transceiver they currently use a [now discontinued] Yaesu FT-450D. (Vinson-WV5C and myself each have one of these.....an excellent radio!)



Andy-ZB2JC making a 20-meter QSO at GARS club station ZB2BU

Be watching the spotting websites for "ZB2". If you haven't worked it as yet, with its interesting history and ham club legacy, it will be a handsome addition to your countries list.



### One of my Gibraltar QSLs

**THE SIGNAL** newsletter is published monthly for members of the Bella Vista Radio Club. BVRC disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or 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.