THE SIGNAL

Newsletter of the Bella Vista area Radio Club

Arkansas' Largest Amateur Radio Club

- April Program – ARRL Volunteer Monitor Program
- FEATURE STORY – Springdale Jr. High & Elementary Students Make Amateur Radio Contact With International Space Station
- Using The Ham.Live Net Logging Software
- EXPERIMENTER'S CORNER – A 20-Meter Vertical Antenna
- 2025 Rookie Roundup
- ARRL Files Comments to FCC Input Request
- Don't Retire...Refire!
- A Possible Second Solar Max?
- 2025 Arkansas QSO Party Around the Corner
- How to Calculate Battery Life
- A Simple RF Coax Antenna Choke
- DXCC DEN – San Felix Island

May 2025

Monthly Meetings: 1st 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

(Repeater Nets) *(Contesting & Special Events)*

Repeaters: 147.255 +600 khz offset, pl 162.2

444.100 + 5 MHz offset, pl 162.2

Website: www.bellavistaradioclub.org

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 1, 2025 @ 7pm
Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy
3424 S. Downum Road
Springdale, AR

May Meeting Information

HAM 101 Workshop, 6pm preceding monthly meeting – This month the HAM 101 Workshop, which usually convenes indoors, will be redirected to the front ALETA parking lot for a live HF mobile station demonstration. There will be 3 stations running, all with different antennas and radios to illustrate to attendees the different ways and configurations a mobile station can be setup. Ham radio HF mobile operation can not only be fun, but a break from the norm of operating a fixed home station. Join us for great discussion, observation, – and operation if you like! – on the great subject of mobile operating!

BVRC May meeting, 7pm – This month, BVRC will have a special program especially for our newcomer members. Be sure and join us for "Ask The Elmer". We will be devoting the May meeting to a Q & A session with a very experienced panel of BVRC operators. – Do you have ham radio questions? Antennas and feedlines, radios and equipment, grounding, operating, POTA, mobile installations, shack set-up, DXing, digital modes, logging, contesting… Here's your chance to glean info from the collective mind of BVRC as our panel of Elmer mentors field your questions.

Newcomers – bring your questions!

SEE YOU THEN!

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From The Desk of the President

It's Time to Clean Your Shack and Your Equipment!

Birds are singing, the air smells fresh, and new growth is everywhere. Yes, it's Spring and with a little bit of elbow grease, your shack can transform from this ...

Into something like this.....

Well, maybe not exactly like this, but certainly better than it might look now after a Fall and Winter of layers of partially completed projects, dog-eared instruction manuals and evidence of many a late-night snack strewn about the shack.

What you might really want to consider, beyond straightening up the shack a bit, is cleaning up your ham radio equipment. From the good folks at Waveband Communications comes this guide of the do's and don'ts of how to properly and safely clean your amateur radio gear.

Despite the loads of advice from amateur radio message boards and YouTube university about using questionable products to clean your gear (just use Pledge, just use Simple Green, just use Windex, etc.) On the following page, Waveband Communications recommends a safe method to clean and disinfect your valuable radio gear. I hope this helps you to keep your gear shiny and new!

73! - Jan, WB5JAN

800-806-1076
www.wvbandcoms.com

Waveband Communications
SPECIALIZING IN QUALITY RADIO ACCESSORIES

How to Clean Your Two-Way Radio

1. In a bowl or spray bottle, mix together 1 tsp liquid hand soap (like Dawn) per 1 cup of water.
2. Lightly dampen a microfiber cloth with the detergent water solution. Do not pour or spray the solution directly onto the radio.
3. Gently wipe down any cracks or crevices keeping in mind of battery compartments, connector ports, contacts, or other electronics.
4. After cleaning, take a dry clean cloth and wipe down the radio, paying attention to battery compartments and any place where water might sit. Allow the radio to fully dry before installing the battery and other accessories and before charging the radio.

DO'S & DON'T'S

- Remove battery before cleaning
- Turn your radio off
- Be mindful of the battery housing compartment
- Remove additional accessories before cleaning.
- Use a damp microfiber lint-free cloth
- Ring out the cloth to remove any excess water.

- Do not submerge your radio in water
- Do not clean while your radio is on or in the charger
- Do not spray cleaning solution directly on the radio
- Do not use any abrasive cleaning sprays or bleach. These can damage your radio.
- Do not use a dripping wet cloth.

Disinfecting Instructions

1. Lightly dampen a microfiber cloth with 70%-80% Isopropyl Alcohol or an antibacterial wipe like Clorox Disinfecting Wipes. Do not pour directly on the radio.
2. Gently wipe down your radio with the cloth getting into the cracks and crevices and keeping in mind of battery compartments and other electronics.

NOTE: Do not oversaturate your radio. Only use a damp cloth or wipe. Ring out the cloth or wipe of any excess water before using.

April Program Features ARRL Volunteer Monitor Program Administrator

BVRC members were once again treated to a very special guest speaker for the April 2025 meeting, and once again they packed the house to witness a great program by ARRL Volunteer Monitor Program Administrator Riley Hollingsworth – K4ZDH from Gettysburg, PA. Riley was first licensed in 1961 as KN4ZDH, upgraded to K4ZDH, and has kept his original call sign since that time. For many years Riley served as head of amateur radio enforcement for the FCC, retiring in 2008. In 2019, Riley assumed the position as Administrator for the new ARRL Volunteer Monitor Program.

The ARRL Volunteer Monitor program is a formal agreement between the FCC and ARRL. Volunteers trained and vetted by ARRL monitor the airwaves and collect evidence that can be used both to correct misconduct or recognize exemplary on-air operation. Cases of flagrant violations are referred to the FCC by the ARRL Volunteer Monitor Program for action in accordance with FCC guidelines. The statistics Riley brought to the meeting on the VM Program were impressive.

Currently there are 192 VMs with around 10 stand-by operators. In 2024, these VMs devoted over 19,000 hours in monitoring HF frequencies, and over 25,000 hours in monitoring VHF/UHF frequencies. The FCC welcomed the ARRL VM Program to aid them in surveillance of the ham bands, as the Commission is involved with many other areas of licensing, broadcasting, and regulating.

Riley-K4ZDH addresses BVRC

Riley emphasized to members that the Volunteer Monitor Program is *not* some type of amateur radio "Gestapo". The VMs are there to help, encourage, commend, and when necessary, offer correctional suggestions to – most of the time according to Riley – unaware offenders. In fact, Riley said that repeat offenders occur less than ½ of 1% of the time.

Many times, when a correctional notice is issued, it is due to the erroneous operator being ignorant of the Part 397 FCC rules (know your rules!) due to not being licensed to transmit a particular mode, out of band, etc.

In fact, he stated that the repeat offenders that do exist in addition to the real 'troublemakers' on the bands are not operators new to the hobby. – They are veterans who have developed a "self-entitlement" attitude, engrossed in the mindset that they OWN a particular frequency, that they can deliberately interfere with other operators when they "don't get their way", that they can use vulgar, profane language over the airwaves whenever they choose, and other egregious operating ethics.

Riley basically admonished attending members to "not worry too much if you make an honest mistake", or even if you receive an advisory notice from the VM Program. They are there to help you. – Correct the mistake, move on, and endeavor to not commit the error again.

The VM Program also works with ARRL Labs in attempting to identify and alleviate different types of RFI (Radio Frequency Interference). Riley shared, as many of us are aware, that in decades past the biggest culprit of RFI has been faulty power lines, leaky power transformers, etc. According to ARRL Labs, future interference will likely from solar and related equipment and will outweigh power line intrusion.

A huge thanks to Riley for an excellent virtual program, and we hope he will visit us again soon!

BVRC also experienced history in the making at the April meeting as BVRC's first YL to conduct a club presentation, Kathy Bromley – WQ5T, rendered a splendid HAM 101 Workshop on the Long Island CW Club (LICW).

In January 2023, Kathy became interested in learning and using Morse code, and enrolled in LICW. Since that time, her endeavors have been rewarded with her currently achieving operating at 20 words per minute. Kathy took the April workshop attendees on a tour of the LICW website, while she explained what LICW is, its objectives, and how it has benefitted her. You might want to enroll as well! *THANKS FOR A GREAT WORKSHOP, KATHY!*

Feature Story

ARCUA/BVRC MEMBERS PRODUCE OUTSTANDING PROGRAM ACHIEVING A QSO WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

By Vinson Carter – WV5C

A year of planning and hard work culminated in a direct ISS contact via amateur radio on Monday, March 31st, at 1:05 (CDT). The ISS pass over NW Arkansas lasted approximately 10 minutes, and several students had the opportunity to ask questions of astronaut Nichole Ayers – KJ5GWI aboard the space station as she operated with the official ISS call sign **NA1SS**. Ayers was launched as the pilot of NASA's SpaceX Crew-10 mission on March 14, 2025.

Astronaut Nichole Ayers – KJ5GWI

In April of last year, Springdale Lakeside Junior High student and BVRC member Miles Boomer – KJ5ANC emailed the BVRC leadership about the possibility of getting assistance in developing an ARISS proposal. ARISS stands for Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (https://www.ariss.org/contact-the-iss.html) and is a program that allows students to speak with astronauts using ham radio. Miles is involved in the EAST (Education Accelerated by Service and Technology) program at Lakeside, and wanted to develop a proposal for his class, as he had recently become interested in amateur radio, earning both his technician and general class licenses. The EAST Initiative is a program that offers classes for students that provides an environment that fosters relevant, individualized life-changing experiences through service and technology. Miles thought that developing an ARISS proposal would be an ideal class project. The purpose of ARISS is to help students learn about radio and electronics, and how to communicate clearly over ham radio. Students also learn about space research, satellite communications, and wireless technology.

The club offered to help Miles with this endeavor and both BVRC president Jan Hagan – WB5JAN and Vinson Carter – WV5C helped write letters of support from both BVRC and ARCUA (the Amateur Radio Club of the University of Arkansas). The university club took the lead in helping two Springdale teachers Jamie Stalling at Lakeside Junior High and Josh Worthy at Sonora Elementary to develop the education plan and technical proposal. Also assisting in the development of the technical plan were Murray Harris – W5XH and Bill Durham – KG5ZCI.

Vinson Carter-WV5C and Rhys Wimer-K8LRW adjust the antennas atop Lakeside Jr. High one month before the ISS contact

Vinson headed-up student coordination for asking questions of the astronaut as well as station setup, Murray handled the technical aspects of the radio and satellite tracking components, and Bill constructed the antenna mount and installation of the alt-azimuth antenna rotator needed for this historic event.

This past summer, Josh and Jamie were notified that the proposal was accepted and the work began. The university club removed their satellite antennas from atop the Science and Engineering Building and Bill, Murray, and Vinson helped develop a plan for placing the antennas on top of Lakeside Junior High for the contact in the spring. Bill and Murray were instrumental in preparing the antennas, radios, and the almost 800' of cable needed to make the contact happen.

The VHF/UHF antenna, supplied by the Amateur Radio Club of the UofA, performed flawlessly

Throughout the school year, Vinson has worked with the students at Sonora Elementary and Lakeside Junior High to learn more about amateur radio. Vinson set up a station at Sonora Elementary and the students were able to participate in both the fall and spring ARRL School Club Roundup.

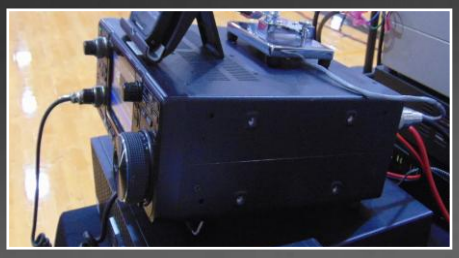
Murray-W5XH (L) and Vinson-WV5C (R) prepare for the big moment – first contact with the ISS

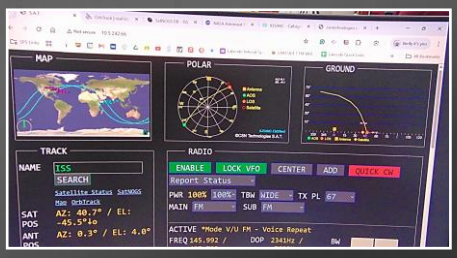
A year of hard work and creating the plan together, resulted in the direct and astonishing contact with the ISS. The ISS pass on this particular orbit lasted only about 10 minutes. During that window, several students took the opportunity to pose questions to astronaut Nichole aboard the space station. In honor of Miles' brainchild resulting in this fabulous event, his call sign – KJ5ANC – was used for the QSO.

Editor's note: A small contingent of the BVRC leadership team joined ARCUA to witness this stellar event (no pun intended, hi hi). All radio amateurs present agreed this was one of their most exciting amateur radio experiences, with Murray-W5XH stating this was the highlight and most exciting operating event of his decades in amateur radio. BVRC heartily congratulates Murray, Vinson, Bill, and Miles, along with Lakeside JHS and Sonora ES coordinators on a job WELLLLLLLL DONE! This was indeed a milestone event for amateur radio in Arkansas!

Please enjoy the following pictorial from this amateur radio extravaganza:

Junior High and Elementary School students take part in asking questions to astronaut Nichole – KJ5GWI





The Lakeside station consisted of an Icom IC-9700, a Yaesu dual rotator controller, and a S.A.T. computerized tracker by CSN Technologies which provided a phenomenal data display on the space station's orbit.

The Lakeside gymnasium bleachers were packed with more students arriving prior to the landmark event.

Lakeside JHS provided an excellent venue, with a quality sound system as well as HD TVs for students to view videos on amateur radio and the space station.

Amateur radio attendees for the ISS event were (L to R): Vinson Carter-WV5C, Don Banta-K5DB, Bill Durham-KG5ZCI, Miles Boomer-KJ5ANC, Murray Harris-W5XH, Tom Northfell-W5XNA, and BVRC President Jan Hagan-WB5JAN.

BVRC VE REPORT
From Don Cooper – KC7DC
BVRC VE Coordinator
April 2025

Congratulations!

Lee Allen – KJ5KXW – Gentry

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***

Welcome New BVRC Members!

Shawn Masters – KJ5KVX
Fayetteville

Lanna Gage – KJ5KSI
Bella Vista

Rex Allen – KL9AK
Siloam Springs

Mike Holmes – KJ5KTD
Bentonville

Andy Holmes – K5PO
Bella Vista

Lee Allen – KJ5KXW
Gentry

Dunnigan McIlwaine – K1DUN
Littleton, CO

BVRC NEEDS YOU!

FOR FIELD DAY 2025 JUNE 28-29!

The biggest ham radio event of the year is just around the corner! Mark your calendar and join us for food, fun, fellowship, operating, & hands-on experience in setting-up portable ham stations. We have the preparations for the four Field Day stations complete, but still need volunteers for set-up, tear-down, food, drinks, snacks, accessories etc. If you would like to help, contact

Tom-W5XNA at:
w5xna@arrl.net

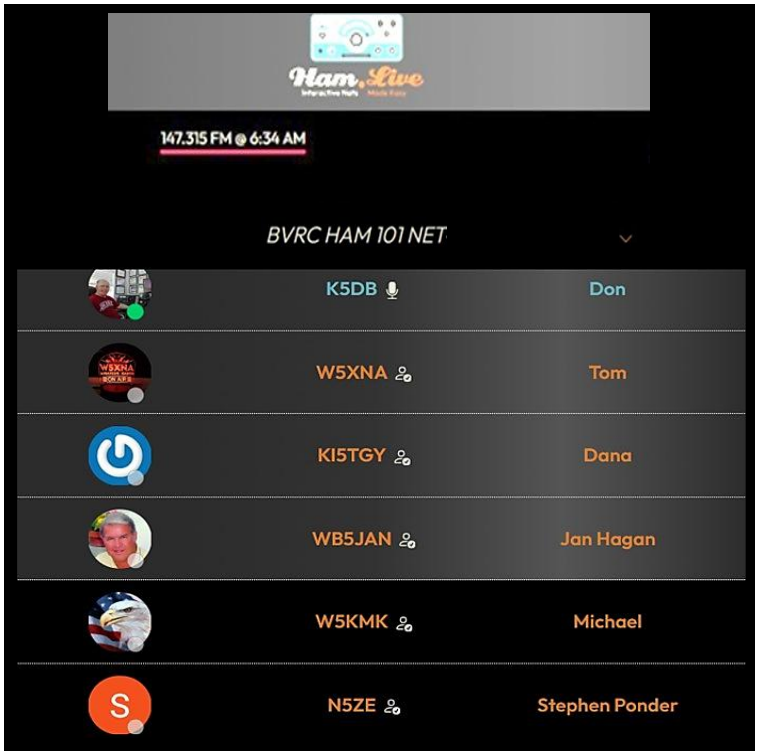
C U THEN!!!

A new feature has now been incorporated into the BVRC Tuesday evening HAM 101 Net.

The Ham.Live website has been in use in conjunction with the net for a little over a month, and has received very positive feedback from those who are now using it. Ham.Live is an interactive website, where all net participants can monitor the net while in progress.

Net members can now follow the Net Control Station and view stations who have checked-in to the net. By hovering the mouse pointer over the station's name, they can view the station's location. When a net member has completed their comments for the net, the Net Control Station shades that member's call sign in grey, thus enabling net members to know when their turn for comments is coming up.

There is also a chat room net members can use that can be very handy. For example, if a net member has to unexpectedly check-out of the net, they can alert the NCS via the chat room they're having to leave, eliminating the need to wait for a break in the net and alert the NCS over the air. This facilitates keeping the net flowing smoothly. Of course, the on-air check-out procedure is still always available if the net member chooses to use that option.



Another great feature is clicking the option to "follow" the net. By using this option, each Tuesday evening when the NCS comes on line on the website, the net member receives an auto e-mail reminder alerting them the net will be starting shortly.

If you are not a regular net attendee, join us for both great on-air participation, as well as using Ham.Live to enhance your net experience!

If you would like an information/instruction sheet on using Ham.Live, send Don an e-mail at arsk5db@gmail.com and he will be happy to send it to you.

This month's topic:

A 20-Meter Vertical Antenna

I built this 20-meter vertical to sit on my shop roof which, as you can see in Figure 1, is metal. Thus, the roof can act as the antenna radials. I had a few other thoughts during the design process. Most important was the ability to change the length of the antenna for a good SWR. Along with the good SWR was the possibility of being able to change the length sufficiently to cover other bands, possibly down to 10 meters. The roof is about 20 feet off the ground and the individual panels are electrically connected because of the manner of construction. Each panel overlaps with its neighbors, and all are fastened with special roofing screws. In addition, the ridge panels are screwed to the side panels.

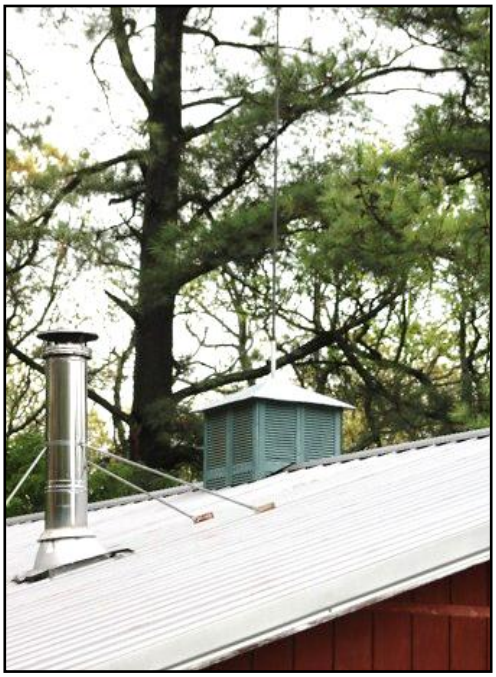


Figure 1

As I hoped, the antenna tuned easily and is now my go-to antenna for POTA, CW, and FT8. As you can see in Figure 2, I worked Reunion Island and a received a QSL card from them. Reunion Island is about halfway around the world, approximately 10,000 miles. I was using less than 100 watts.

Figure 2

I decided to make another so that I could document the construction for you in the newsletter. The antenna is built primarily from one 10 foot piece of ¾" copper pipe and one piece of ½" copper pipe. In this version I did not use any of my fancy machines so that most amateurs could duplicate the construction. A ¼ wave vertical for 20 meters should be about 16.6 feet. I cut the ¾" pipe to 8 feet and the ½" pipe to 7 ft. If the 1/2" pipe fits inside ¾" pipe with about 12" overlap, we have 15 ft for the basic structure. Add a three-foot collapsable antenna on top and the total length is now 18 ft leaving a bit for adjustment.

The construction starts in the middle with a commercial coupler, threaded on one end and slide fit over the ¾" pipe on the other end. This part was modified to allow the ½" pipe to slide through easily. As purchased, the threaded end of the coupler has an inside diameter of a bit over ½".

The ½" pipe has an OD of a bit over 5/8". I drilled out the coupler with a 5/8" drill bit and then filed the rest of the way (Figure 3). The ½" pipe needs to slide easily but not sloppy through the coupler. Be careful with the drilling, copper tends to grab the drill bit, so go slow with minimum pressure. This is best done with a drill press with the coupler held in a vice. Avoid too much squeeze, so the coupler stays round.

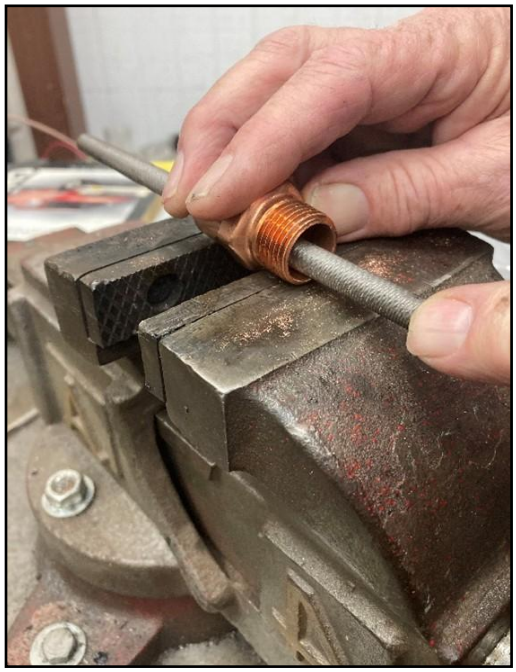


Figure 3

Once the coupler will go over the ½" pipe smoothly, 4 slits approximately 90^0 are cut in the coupler (Figure 4). A hack saw will do the job with little effort. After sawing clean out the hole and again make sure the ½" pipe still fits. The modified coupler can now be soldered on to the ¾" pipe. While things are hot, solder on the coupling on the other end. As you can see in the photos, this coupling is a slide fit to ¾" pipe and threaded for a ¾" flange and requires no modification.

Also, as you can see, the slotted coupler provides a way to lock the 1/2'" pipe in place. There are two ways to do this. On my original design I made a nut by sawing off the threaded end of a valve that I had in the junk box. However, pipe threads are tapered, and not all nuts made this way will close tight enough to hold the ½" pipe. Alternatively, you can use a hose clamp as shown in the photograph. I used this method on the current version.

In the original version, a 3 foot piece of brazing rod (a copper alloy) was soldered to the top (1/2" pipe) to make up the final total length (Figure 5). It is not visible in the photograph (HOA folks). In the current version a 3 foot collapsible antenna was soldered onto the ½" pipe via a 1/4" reducer (Figure 6). Thus, we have a coarse adjustment for changing bands and a fine adjustment to tune a specific frequency in a band of interest. I have to admit that this was not the intent, but the antenna was handy, so I used it.

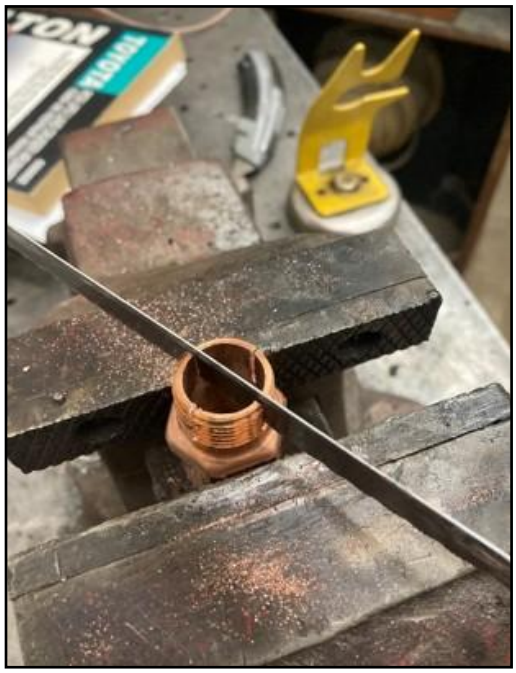


Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Construction of the base of the antenna was simpler and used only commercial parts without modification. A ¾" thread to smooth-fit fitting was soldered on the bottom end of the ¾" pipe as mentioned earlier (Figure 7). A base was made with a plastic utility box and a pipe flange fitting (Figure 8). The box was drilled for a SO239 bulkhead coax connector and 4, 8-32 screws, one of each side of the box. These are for the radials. If you look carefully at Figure 9, you can see that the four screws are connected in a loop with some bare copper wire. The loop terminates at a solder lug on the SO239 connector. Another wire connects one of the flange screws to the center pin of the SO239 connector. Keep in mind that the flange is connected to the vertical portion of the antenna and not ground.

In the original, short wires were attached to the screws and then attached to the roof via sheet metal screw.

Figure 7

Figure 8

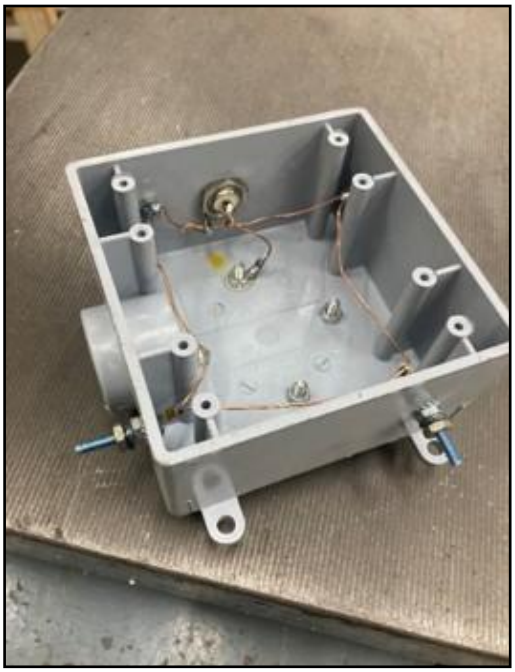
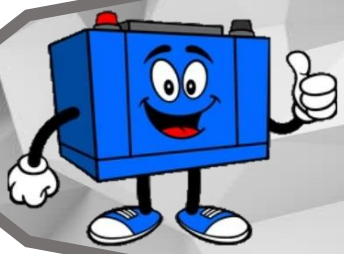


Figure 9

I assembled the antenna on a truck bed just to get a preliminary SWR measurement. The emphasis here is on preliminary. The truck is parked in front of my shop with a very large metal roof which will have some effect on the measurements. The coax to the antenna analyzer is also a bit short. Nevertheless, after one pass of shortening the antenna with the collapsible portion, and it was resonant at 14.18 MHz with an SWR of 1.2, perfectly acceptable for this application.

Next month there will be a follow-up article describing more realistic testing and a car/truck roof mount.



How to Calculate Battery Life

By – Don, K5DB

With the upcoming HAM 101 HF Mobile demonstration in the ALETA parking lot for the May meeting, we thought it apropos to include this article in this month's Signal issue.

When discussing the topic of mobile or portable operation, a question that arises many times is, "If I choose to run the radio off a battery, how will I know how long the battery will last?




This is an excellent and very important question, and the answer isn't that complicated.

All you have to do is remember a couple of easy formulas.....

First, you have to figure out how much current the radio will draw from the battery at a given output power setting. To do this, you need to know how much output power (in watts) you're going to run the radio at, plus the voltage of the circuit. For mobile or portable operations with a battery, this is going to likely be 12 volts. So, if you're going to run the radio output at 50 watts for example, you would use the formula:

$$I = \frac{P}{V}$$

Where "I" is the current in amps and the value you are looking for.
It will be found by dividing the power-"P" by the voltage of the circuit-"V". So.....

$$I = \frac{P}{V} = \frac{50 \text{ watts}}{12 \text{ volts}} = 4.167 \text{ amps}$$

Also, if you're not using an ammeter to get an accurate reading, this formula will work but it's actually a rough estimate. It probably won't hurt to add a couple of amps to the answer to compensate for not having an ammeter and the inefficiency factor of the radio. So.....if we round-off the answer, we have 4 amps plus adding 2 amps for compensation, so the radio is going to be pulling roughly 6 amps when the radio is transmitting at 50 watts output. This calculation will get you in the ballpark.

So we have solved part one of our quest to see how long the battery is going to last. Now to part two.....

We now plug-in the 6 amp battery draw value into what we can call our "Battery Life Calculator" formula:

Battery Life (hours) = Battery Capacity / Battery Draw

Battery Capacity is the amount of current in amps that the battery can deliver to the radio for one hour.

Battery Draw is the amount of current in amps the radio is drawing from the battery.

So, the only other value we need to answer our question is the battery capacity. We get this from the value either printed on the battery itself, or from the specifications for the battery. In this example, we're using a 15 Ah (amp hour) battery (at right). Therefore.....

BATTERY LIFE = 15 / 6 = 2.5 hours.

So, with a 15 Ah battery, a 12 volt circuit, and running the radio at 50 watts, the battery's going to last you about two-and-a-half hours, without recharging it.

Now! – Remember this draw occurs when the radio is *transmitting*, right? Well, you're not going to be transmitting 100% of the time, are you? You're also going to be receiving.....

When the radio is in receive mode (I call it "idling"), the amount of current it pulls from the battery drops *CONSIDERABLY*. On average, most transceivers in receive mode use only an average of around a miniscule .15 amps! Hardly anything.

This means that with a 15 Ah battery, if you were to never transmit and only receive, your battery is going to last you 100 hours without a recharge! (15 / 1.5) So, if you estimate that you're going to be transmitting roughly 50% of the time and receiving 50% of the time, doing so will obviously decrease the amount of current the radio is requiring from the battery and double the amount of time the battery can adequately supply power to the radio. So, in this example, you could expect the battery to supply sufficient power to the radio for 5 hours, give or take. Of course, all this will vary with how much output power you choose to run, whatever your battery's capacity is rated at, and how much you transmit as opposed to receive.

But, this should give you a pretty good idea on battery life when operating when the battery is fully charged at the outset of your operation.

One last item of caution when running off a battery. – If you're running around a 30-year-old or less radio, it should have a low voltage protection circuit which will cause the radio to shut down automatically if you happen to run the radio past the battery's ability to supply enough power to it. If you have a more vintage type radio, research its specifications and determine if it has a low voltage protection circuit or not. If not, do not to allow the battery to completely discharge as this could damage the unit.

2025 Rookie Roundup Experiences Another Fun Year!

16 BVRC Rookie members made their way to 6 Rookie Roundup coaches' radio shacks on Sunday afternoon, April 13, to encounter the fun and excitement of HF operation during this year's 2025 SSB Rookie Roundup.

Signal propagation for this year was sub-par, although the bands were fairly open coast-to-coast during the 6-hour event. Even with the rough at time conditions, the newcomer operators still had an enjoyable time making contacts. The Rookies' QSOs ranged from working many U.S. states and Canadian provinces, as well as a few DX stations in Europe, South America, and the Caribbean thanks to a few small band openings to those locales.

This was the very first time many of the Rookies experienced HF operation, which is quite different from VHF/UHF, and they learned very quickly. They all did a great job in operating and we are very proud of their accomplishments!

There was one drawback at Coach Stephen-N5ZE's QTH, with he and son Brad-KJ5CWR working feverishly to get the center balun repaired on his dipole, but were unable to get it working properly. Stephen advises that problem will be rectified soon and they will be on the air for next year's RR, so watch out!

Here are some photos of this year's awesome rookies operating from the various Rookie Roundup coaches' shacks:

Mercy-KJ5EQA at QTH of Coach Tom-W5XNA. Mercy's dad Levi-KJ5EPZ and Kris-KJ5GIZ also operated on the team

Jerry-KJ5ENJ (center) and Michael-W5KMK (right) at the controls of station N5ZMX, with Coach James (left) looking on

The rookie team at the shack of Coach Dale-W5DSL, left to right: Canaan-KJ5EMJ, Canaan's dad Chris-KE4EIF, and Miles-N5MLO (Check out the grand "599 cake" Dale treated them to... Dale is raising the bar for the rest of the coaches for snacks!)

The rookie team of (left to right) Jacob-KI5YDZ, Jeanne-W5GIJ, and Isabelle-KI5ZXG did a great job of operating at the shack of Coach Don-K5DB

Another great rookie team of Hunter-KI5WUJ, Nick-KFØPBY, and Wayne-AI5WC operated from the shack of Coach Vinson-WV5C.

Congratulations to all of this year's rookies for a job well done!!!

For our other BVRC newcomers who would like to participate with one of our coaches in next year's 2026 SSB Rookie Roundup, you can sign up now! Send an e-mail to Don-K5DB at arsk5db@gmail.com, and he will put you on the list. The date for next year's RR is April 12, 2026.

From ARRL . . . .

ARRL Files Comments Responding to FCC Request for Input

ARRL filed comments with the Federal Communications Commission in response to its request for public input on alleviating unnecessary regulatory burdens by deleting or modifying rules, "In the Matter of Delete, Delete, Delete". Implementing ARRL's suggestions would promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and enhance the development of the next generation of radio amateurs.

In response to ARRL's request, over 200 members submitted suggestions that were reviewed when considering what rules should be deleted or modified. ARRL will continue to engage with members and advocate for the Amateur Radio Service.

In its filing, ARRL asked the FCC to delete or amend the following rules:

Delete the LF and VHF/UHF Symbol (Baud) Rate and Bandwidth Limitations. – ARRL supports the deletion of these restrictions as proposed by the Commission in late 2023. Doing so would enhance amateur experimentation with digital technologies.

Update and Modernize Entry Level Technician Class License Privileges. – ARRL reiterated its earlier proposal for extending additional limited privileges for Technician class operators. Adopting its proposal would provide new licensees an introductory window to HF data and phone communications that are at the core of the amateur radio experience and serve to incentivize the next generation of technical leaders just as Novice CW HF privileges did for earlier generations of operators.

Modernize 80/75 Meter Subband Divisions. – ARRL requested action on an earlier proposal that would make more efficient and intense use of the 80/75 meter band. Changes in technology and modes since band usage was last addressed have resulted in overcrowding in one band segment that would be alleviated by adoption of ARRL's proposal.

Delete and Replace Obsolete Digital Code Limitations. – ARRL also asked the FCC remove provisions that refer to digital codes that today are obsolete and permit radio amateurs to experiment freely with new digital codes, so long as such codes are publicly documented and decodable over the air.

Implement Changes to Third Party Rules Adopted Internationally at WRC-03. – Although the United States fully supported changes to the ITU Radio Regulations in 2003 that removed a treaty requirement for third-party messages, there is no record of this change having been considered and the FCC's rules were never conformed to the new provision. Being the only nation known to continue to require a formal treaty for such purposes has resulted in no new such treaties since the international rules changed more than two decades ago. Thus, ARRL asked the FCC to Implement rules that are consistent with those internationally agreed to align with the rest of the world.

Delete Amplifier Drive Limitation. – ARRL requested that the Commission act favorably on a pending proposal to remove limits HF amplifier gain that add to amateur equipment cost and impede use of new efficient amplifier technology.

Remove Non-current Personal Information in Amateur ULS records. – ARRL requested that the FCC complete a rule making in which it proposed that only current licensee information to be visible in the public (ULS) database. Right now, if an amateur changes their address to a Post Office Box to shield their home address, the previous address remains visible. ARRL advocates for protecting the privacy of radio amateurs.

Delete Obsolete Identification Requirement for Special Call Signs. – Users of special event call signs are required to identify with the FCC-issued responsible call sign at least once each hour. This can be confusing, especially on data and CW modes. ARRL proposed reliance on the web-based database that clearly identifies each special event call sign and authorized period of use.

Delete Obsolete Paper License Replacement Provision. – The FCC no longer mails physical copies of amateur radio licenses, so ARRL suggested deleting the rule that provides for sending paper replacements as obsolete.

The FCC notice generated a lot of interest among radio amateurs, with hundreds of amateurs submitting comments directly to the FCC as well as responding to ARRL's request for suggestions.

The FCC deadline for filing reply comments is April 28, 2025.

It is hoped that the Commission will incorporate worthy suggestions in a future Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) later this year. At that time there will be a new opportunity for public comment on the specific rules that the Commission proposes to delete or modify.

Did You Know?

ARRL members can choose which e-newsletters and notifications you would like to receive by visiting your "My Account" page on the ARRL website. To get there, log in to the ARRL website. Once you're on the "My Account" page, select "E-Newsletters & Notifications" from the "Communication" header in the menu on the left-hand side of the page. From there, you will see an option for "Opt in/Out," where you can make your selections. Be sure to hit the "Save" button at the bottom of the page once you have made your selections. ARRL offers nearly 20 different e-newsletters and notifications, so be sure to double-check which ones you have opted to receive.

BVRC valued member James Bennett – KA5DVS, along with presenting some excellent programs in the past for the club, is also the owner of Pacific Antenna. Pacific Antenna offers many handy and easy to build kits, as well as various other amateur radio products. He has also been gracious enough on many occasions to make some of these kits available for meeting door prizes.


Product Review

Pacific Antenna KD1JV
Tri-Bander CW Transceiver

Reviewed by Stephen Anderson, W1EMI
w1emi@arrl.org

This little CW transceiver is both lightweight and packed with features for the cost. It is easy to build, comes with good-quality components, and would make an excellent QRP rig for the Parks on the Air (POTA)/Summits on the Air (SOTA) enthusiast or anyone looking to get out and do some portable operating on a shoestring budget.

In addition, James has had several of his products reviewed in QST, the most recent in the new May 2025 issue. This new review is on the KD1JV tri-band CW transceiver and it received top marks on many of its operating parameters. Be sure and check it out on page 39.

Congratulations on another great product and review, James!

Don't Retire

. . . .

From Don – K5DB

Our esteemed BVRC President, Jan Hagan – WB5JAN, in his President's Message in last month's Signal issue shared how he recently tried a new area of amateur radio that he never had before – FT8 – and how this impressed on him that he is actually a "Lifelong Learner". His column was so inspiring to me, I decided to augment his comments with this new article.

In his message, Jan was mainly speaking to our older members, but it got me to thinking – can't his column actually point to us all? All of us are, and should always remain, Lifelong Learners! I know a little bit about this-and-that pertaining to different spheres of amateur radio, but even with over 5 decades in the hobby and considering how vast it is, I know nothing! I'm always willing to learn something new, especially hints and kinks to add to my ham memory banks, pursue a project, or enable me to complete a task more easily.

We have ***MANY*** members who are, and continue to be, Lifelong Learners. And you can tell it by the boundless knowledge they possess. Some of our members' particular genius lies in the technical aspect of the hobby. Others are heavily involved with repeater and VHF/UHF operation, as well as WinLink, D-Star, DMR, System Fusion, and many other modes as well as internet platforms (SDR). Then, we have members who have an "Antenna PhD", constantly building and experimenting with all kinds of antennas for a multitude of amateur radio applications. And, of course, we have a bountiful amount of members whose operating prowess is exceptional. (A lot of these people could forget in 15 minutes what would take me a lifetime to learn!)

When it comes to little ol' me, over the decades I've enjoyed gleaning small tidbits of information from these ham prodigies and incorporated them into my favorite aspect of amateur radio – operating and station upkeep. Even after 56 years of being in this hobby, I consider these folks my Elmers!

As Jan alluded to his new experience in the operating realm and admonishing our older veteran members to try new areas and horizons in our hobby, I would like to amplify his comments to our older members (and, if applicable, newer members!): *Don't ever give up on one of the greatest hobbies on the planet.*

Too many times, I have seen ham operators become interested in a new area of the hobby, give it a "test drive", and they really enjoy the experience. They delight in their new adventure. But, after a small passage of time, the "bloom is off the rose" and they lose their enthusiasm in it. Some lose interest as a whole and either go into a temporary hiatus or, unfortunately, forsake our wonderful hobby altogether, never to return again.

My simple retort to Signal readers – new or old – is: Don't let this be you! Don't give up the ship!

Try something pertaining to an area of amateur radio this is unfamiliar, unusual, different, or brand new to you. Explore a new area that you don't know "diddly squat" about, and after learning the parameters of that area, don't leave it....BUILD ON IT.

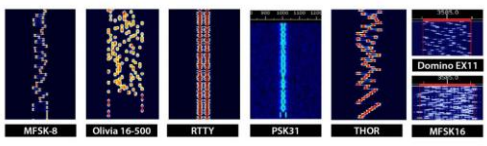
That's what I have done over the years, and it has paid off for me.

Jan used the mode of FT8 as his subject matter of being a Lifelong Learner in his column last month. – Well, he's following my footsteps of six years ago. In 2019, after only using SSB and CW for my operating modes for 50 years, and after hearing about how much fun people were having with the digital modes of JT65, PSK31, and now this new mode of FT8 which was catching-on like wildfire, this 'old timer' couldn't stand the suspense any longer. So, I tried out the [at that time] new modes of FT8 and FT4. I will never forget that day: Paul Dixon-KK5II, Mark Whatley-K5XH, and Scott Anderson-K5SAA came over to my shack, helped me get all the necessary components and software installed and configured that I needed to operate. I didn't know a thing about the mode, but they helped me and watched me make my first FT8 contact.....I discovered it was just as exciting as CW or SSB! I'm glad I took the plunge.

Actually, digital communication has excited me so much, my ham operation on ALL the modes I use has been renewed, refreshed, and has re-exhilarated me.

I would like to make a point and I have told many club members this. – I really enjoy FT8. I immensely enjoy running SSB. But for me, personally, my first and last love is...was...and always will be.....CW.

However, SSB, CW, and FT8 are NOT "the whole world" in amateur radio as far as modes go. If you begin to become bored, there are lots of other avenues you can explore such as JS8Call, DMR, WSPR, Slow Scan TV, working the birds (satellite communication), or even possibly contact NA1SS on the International Space Station.



D-STAR

JS8Call

System Fusion

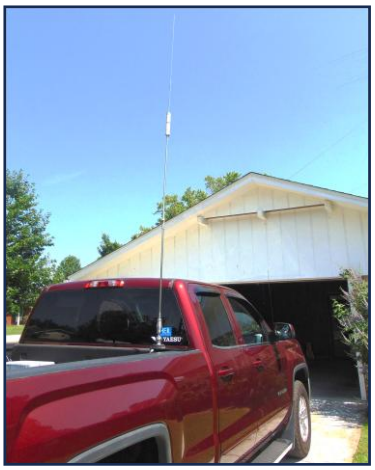
One last comment on the FT8 mode, just for fun: One evening a few weeks ago, 10-meters – mainly a daytime band – was *really* open, lasting until 10 pm local time before the propagation began to fade. To pass a little time, I decided to call "CQ"...I transmitted a CQ message *one time* (shown in yellow in image at right). I was shocked at the response. Holy Toledo, *FOURTEEN* stations answered me. 12 in Japan and 2 in China. I suspect they were probably needing Arkansas for their Worked All States award or something similar. I have encountered many wild radio experiences, but this was a first for me. (Don't tell me new things can't be exciting!)

Rx Frequency

UTC	dB	DT	Freq		Message
013030	Tx		1153	~	CQ K5DB EM26
013045	8	0.2	1959	~	K5DB JH0JLP PM85
013045	-11	0.1	2287	~	K5DB JQ1BJW QM06
013045	0	0.2	2021	~	K5DB JM1OAX QM05
013045	2	-1.0	2701	~	K5DB JH1AGW PM95
013045	-1	0.6	2620	~	K5DB JP2SYS -02
013045	12	0.1	1152	~	K5DB JK1GKG +15
013045	-4	0.3	1775	~	K5DB JA2BCE -05
013045	-15	0.2	2113	~	K5DB JP7BRB QM08
013045	-4	0.1	1142	~	K5DB BH3TES OM65
013045	-9	0.1	1005	~	K5DB JM8DLG QN02
013045	-5	0.0	1197	~	K5DB JH1CTV -07
013045	-20	0.3	2455	~	K5DB BD4KC PM06
013045	-24	0.1	946	~	K5DB 7M2UHF PM95
013045	-14	0.3	2806	~	K5DB JI1SIE PM95

I've been talking about modes, let's talk about operating activities. – Of course, we all know contesting is a very popular ham pastime with thousands of amateurs, but there's a lot more out there that can appeal to you.

You can become a "wallpaper" (awards) chaser. Award pursuits are a FANTASTIC activity on the radio. Aspire to secure your Worked All States, Five Band Worked All States, DXCC (and endorsements), Five Band DXCC, Worked All Continents, Five Band Worked All Continents, Worked All Zones, Five Band Worked All Zones, Worked All Counties (this one's tough), Worked Prefixes, VUCC (for working and confirming a minimum of 100 grid squares on 6-meters and above), Parks On The Air (hunter and activator awards!), Summits On The Air (hunter and activator awards!) state QSO party awards, working the infinite number of Special Event Stations, ARRL Code Proficiency certificate and endorsements, the annual 13 Colonies Special Event, Route 66 On-The-Air Special Event, Twelve Days of Christmas Special Event, and the list is endless.



And don't forget HF mobile operation!

If you'll earnestly commit yourself to pursuing these types of activities, I guarantee your interest in amateur radio won't die, rather it will excel, your knowledge will increase, and your operating technique and ability will skyrocket.

And last, but absolutely not least, *GET INVOLVED WITH BVRC OPERATING ACTIVITIES!*

Our club is constantly planning and implementing operating activities for you! – Rookie Roundup, Special Event Stations, weekly repeater nets, the Sunday afternoon 75-meter Roundtable, and.....of course!.....FIELD DAY!

When I am not involved with a family activity, working around the house, helping other club members with a project, or working on this newsletter, I am on the air with the many "quests" I constantly keep working on, and having a ball doing it. Needless to say, my interest in amateur radio is FARRRR from dead.

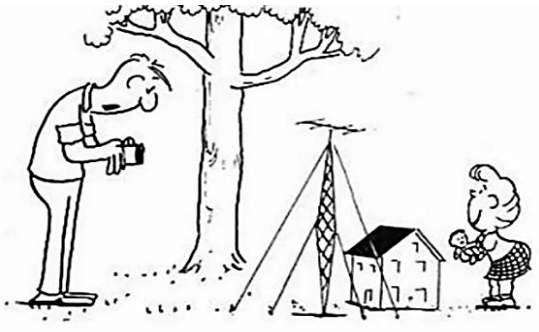
DON'T RETIRE, RE-FIRE!

Pick one (or several!) operating activities you have never tried before, have the fun time of your life, and GO WORK 'EM!

HAM RADIO HUMOR

How does a ham radio operator send a break-up message?

REMORSE CODE

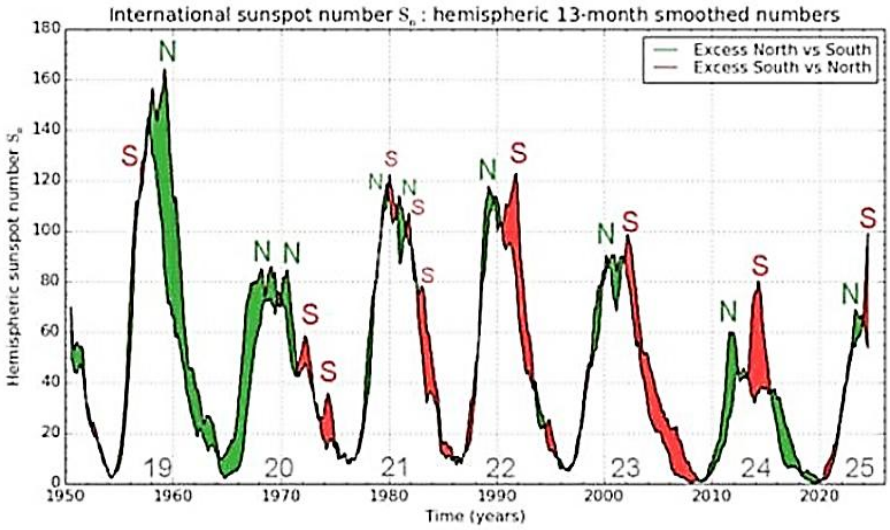


"Move, Cathy. I'm taking a picture for my QSL card."

Solar Max = Is a Second Peak Coming?

From SPACEWEATHER.COM

Last October, NOAA and NASA announced that Solar Max has arrived. Only half the sun got the memo. The majority of solar activity has been happening in just one of the sun's hemispheres – the south. The solar superstorm of May 10, 2024, for instance, was caused by a monster southern sunspot.



It makes you wonder, is the other half of Solar Max still coming? The plot at right, showing the hemispheric sunspot numbers from SILSO (Sunspot Index and Long-term Solar Observations) provides some context.

Here we see all seven solar cycles of the Space Age, punctuated by current Solar Cycle 25 on the far right. The most recent cycles are double peaked, with the northern sunspots (green) and southern sunspots (red) reaching their own solar max – two years apart. This isn't big news. Researchers have long known that the two hemispheres of the sun are slightly out of sync. The north vs. south delay is call the "Gnevyshev gap".

The photo in the title of this article, which is a composite image of last year's sunspots, shows how dominant the southern hemisphere has been.

For forecasters of the solar cycle, this raises an interesting possibility: Maybe the northern peak is still coming. Indeed, there are signs in February 2025 that the pendulum is swinging. This month's sunspots have been more evenly distributed between the two hemispheres, a sign that activity may be shifting north.

On the other hand, the northern peak might have already occurred. Take another look at the first plot. There is a puny northern peak near the beginning of Solar Cycle 25. Perhaps that was it. (Indeed, it would correspond with the north-first, south-second order of recent double peaks.)

This discussion focuses attention on the north-south balance of sunspots. A northern shift in the months ahead could herald a second peak and another year or two of excellent auroras (and good upper band propagation) before Solar Cycle 25 finally comes to an end.

THE 2025 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 17.*

Whether outside of 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 – YOU.

Each year The Noise Blankers Radio Group is the sponsor of 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 leisure. 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.

For more info & 2025 ARQP rules:

www.arkqp.com

A SIMPLE RF COAX ANTENNA CHOKE

if you are using a multi-band wire antenna (dipole, end fed half wave, etc.) chances are to help with stray RF and somewhat improve your antenna's performance, you need some type of choking element in your antenna system. – why? Let's take a look at this very easy – yet very important – item. It's definitely an item that you need to include in your antenna installation, which is also very easy to make. You can purchase pre-made chokes, but if you're on a limited budget, take a look at this. This item is used by thousands of hams, and is applicable not only to wire antennas, but actually for just about any antenna you're going to use – the RF (Radio Frequency) choke.

From the antenna connect point – which would be either the raw 'hot' and 'ground' leads of your coax, or a PL-259 connector (if your antenna is equipped with a SO-239 female connector) – from the end of the coax, measure back about 12-16 inches. From this point, form a loop with the coax that is 8 inches in diameter. Continue winding additional loops until you have 8 loops, and 8 inches diameter inside of the loops. Over the years, this has gained the old adage, "The 8-8 RF Choke".

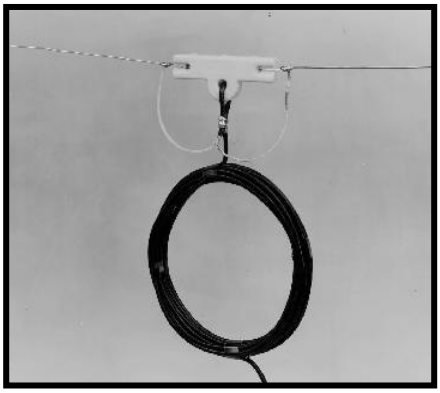
Simple enough? You can then secure the loops with heavy duty plastic ('zip' or cable) ties placed at 12-3-6-and -9 o'clock on the loops. Some hams like to add extra protection from weather by wrapping the ties with heavy-duty electrical tape, and some wrap the entire collection of loops as seen in the photo to the left. The initial 12-16 inch run straight run of coax before you begin your 8" diameter circle of 8 loops is used to (of course) secure both sides of the loop to the antenna in the case of a beam, vertical, dipole with center support, etc.

Then use 2 or 3 more of the heavy-duty plastic ties to mount the looped coax directly to the pole, mast, tower, etc. Then continue supporting the rest of the coax down the structure. When you are finished, your installation should look something like the photo at right. ----- You have just made and installed your first RF antenna choke!

For free-hanging dipoles, a smaller and lighter gauge coax such as RG-8X, would be more advisable than the larger RG-8 to assist the antenna in sustaining the weight of the choke.

(See picture on right, next page.)

Also, for a hanging dipole, the coax length from antenna connection point to the choke need only be 2-3" since no support is present to secure the choke to.



The way the choke works is very simple: A small amount of RF radiates from the shield wire in the coax. The RF emitting from the antenna surrounds the antenna with a very large pattern filled with RF. Some of it is attracted to the coax and can travel down the entire length of the coax run. Also, if there is a slight mismatch enough to cause even just a 1.5:1 SWR, some of that reflected RF comes back down the surface of the coax.

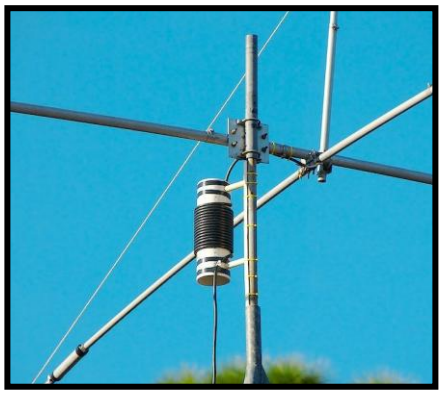
The RF choke creates an electromagnetic field on the choke's surface, and within the donut hole. This field attracts the stray RF and chokes it off before it continues down the coax, and it is dissipated within the electro-magnetic field. Hence the term "choke".

In some ways it almost acts like a ground radial and reflects slightly the RF radiated from the antenna to a more upwards angle sending more of the signal towards the horizon where it belongs, and not into your radio room. But unlike a ground radial, the choke does not tune the antenna to any specific frequency. So, it is good for all frequencies from 160 through 6 meters. Vertical antennas that cover more than one band and do not require ground radials, benefit greatly from an RF Choke. As the antenna is used on different bands and across a wide range of frequencies within those bands, the SWR can vary quite a lot. As the SWR goes up, more stray RF likes to seek out the source of the RF (your radio) by the shortest and quickest route possible (the coax). The RF choke prevents that from happening which helps your SWR a little and keeps RF feedback out of your shack.

Dipoles, end-feds, tubular beams, wire beams, verticals, slopers, and single-band antennas also benefit a lot from RF chokes for all the same reasons. *Every antenna of every design still emits RF, and it can travel along the coax.*

A VERY IMPORTANT NOTE THAT NEEDS TO BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD:

An RF choke will not prevent the reflected RF caused by a high SWR from damaging your radio! *Reflected RF caused by an impedance mismatch and is reflected back to your radio through the center conductor of the coax, can still hurt your equipment. Never assume that an RF choke will cure your high SWR problems. An RF choke* ***only stops the stray RF*** *on the surface of the coax from traveling down its length that causes RF feedback. Removing the stray RF can in many cases help the SWR, but just a little.* ***Only correcting the impedence mismatch*** *of the coax and antenna can fix your SWR problems.*



Now you know how to build and install an RF choke, the easy and simple way.

You can wrap the loops side-by-side around an 8" plastic coffee can, PVC, etc. This doesn't hurt at all, and you may like the aesthetic appeal as in the picture at left. However, doing this doesn't increase the RF choke's choking level at all. It's just a simple RF choke to stop stray RF from traveling down the coax.

If you can count 8 loops, read the number 8 on a ruler or tape measure, and understand how a wire tie works, you'll be fine. **Just remember to add 17-20 feet to your coax purchase for your choke, because each 8-inch loop uses just over 2 feet of coax (about 26 inches).**

This month's featured country: San Felix Island

San Felix Island is a barren, rocky island that lies in the Pacific Ocean about 560 miles off the coast of Chile. It measures around 3 square miles in area. It is uninhabited with the exception of a small garrison of the Chilean navy. The island does have a rugged, bumpy airstrip to service navy personnel. The runway goes the entire length of the small island, so all approaches and departures are over the ocean. It is a part of the Islas Desventuradas group of islands ("Unfortunate Islands"). Due to its isolation, parched landscape, and difficulty of access, there are no civilian settlements there, aside from the navy installation.

San Felix was possibly discovered by Ferdinand Magellan as early as 1521. The first confirmed sighting was by Juan Fernández on November 6, 1574. There are no permanent sources of fresh water. One notable rare plant is the rare Thamnoseris lacerata, which is endemic both San Felix and San Ambrosio Islands. It is very dominant on San Ambrosio.

Location of San Felix Island

The only native vertebrates on the island are a small collection of about 10 different species of birds. Some of the species are endangered.

No signs of prehistoric human activity by Polynesians or Indigenous peoples of the Americas have ever been found on the island, or on the neighboring Juan Fernández Islands. Michael Levinson's 1973 book The Settlement of Polynesia states, "the Juan Fernández Islands and San Felix and San Ambrosio were apparently unoccupied in pre-Columbian times and were not discovered by the Spanish until between 1563 and 1574. There is no evidence available to suggest that they were visited for fishing or other reasons by Amerindians before this."

Due to the island being an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International, access to the island is restricted because it is a breeding site for large numbers of Petrels.

The only native vertebrates on the island are a small collection of about 10 different species of birds. Some of the species are endangered.

No signs of prehistoric human activity by Polynesians or Indigenous peoples of the Americas have ever been found on the island, or on the neighboring Juan Fernández Islands. Michael Levinson's 1973 book The Settlement of Polynesia states, "the Juan Fernández Islands and San Felix and San Ambrosio were apparently unoccupied in pre-Columbian times and were not discovered by the Spanish until between 1563 and 1574. There is no evidence available to suggest that they were visited for fishing or other reasons by Amerindians before this."

Due to the island being an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International, access to the island is restricted because it is a breeding site for large numbers of Petrels.

For DX enthusiasts, if you ever get a chance to work this one, you'd better.....according to my research, and because of the high restriction admittance to the island, the last DXpedition there was in 2002 using the Chilean secondary prefix "XR". Their call was **XRØX**. Fortunately, I was able to work and confirm them during that DXpedition.

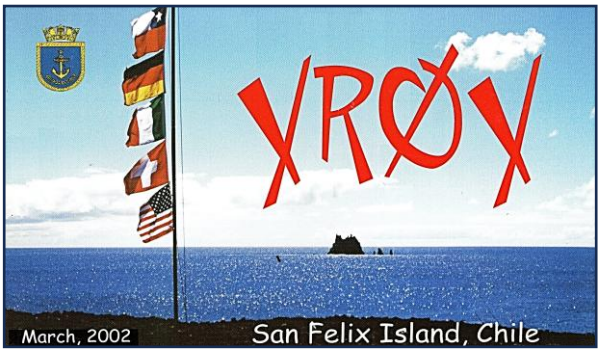
In 2016, there was a story released on the DX websites that a 10-operator team had secured authorization to go and operate there, but that story proved to be a falsehood.

So San Felix, in the amateur radio world, has actually been silent for 23 years. It is no wonder that it currently ranks ***NUMBER 3*** on the ClubLog DXCC Most Wanted List, due to its rarity and the difficulty in obtaining permission to operate there. Only North Korea and Scarborough Reef rank ahead of it on the list. For the latest information and updates on future DXpeditions to San Felix Island, keep monitoring official amateur radio DX outlets, community sources, and announcements.

View from highest point on island

The rare Thamnoseris lacerata plant

One of the operation locations during the 2002 XRØX activation



My QSL from XRØX

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