

THE SIGNAL



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



- November Program – Working the Birds
- BVRC Santa Net 2025
- Community Outreach Team – Spooky Spring & Turkey Trails
- W5JAY New ADXA President
- A Ham Radio Christmas Story
- BVRC General License Class Starting Soon
- Club Station Update
- BVRC Membership Renewal Time
- Everyone Is An Elmer
- New BVRC SSTV Repeater Net
- DXCC Den – Minami Torishima

December 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, Operating, Special Events)

BVRC Twin Linked Repeaters:

Bella Vista: 147.255 +600 khz offset, pl 162.2

Springdale: 444.100 + 5 MHz offset, pl 162.2

Website: www.bellavistaradioclub.org



*The Largest Amateur Radio Club
In Arkansas!*

**Serving members in northwest Arkansas,
southwest Missouri, & northeast Oklahoma**



WEEKLY NETS:

BVRC LEGACY NET

Wednesdays @ 7 pm on the
BVRC Dual Linked Repeaters:

N5BVA/Bella Vista
147.255, +offset, pl 162.2

N5BVA/Springdale
444.100, +5 MHz, pl 162.2

BVRC 3830 ROUNDTABLE

Sunday Afternoons

4 pm during CST
4:30 pm during CDT
3.830 MHz

BVRC HAM 101 NET

Mondays @ 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 SOCIAL JUNCTION NET

Sundays @ 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 SLOW SCAN TV NET

Fridays @ 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



NEXT BVRC MONTHLY MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025 @ 7PM
ARKANSAS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING ACADEMY
3424 S. DOWNUM ROAD
SPRINGDALE, AR

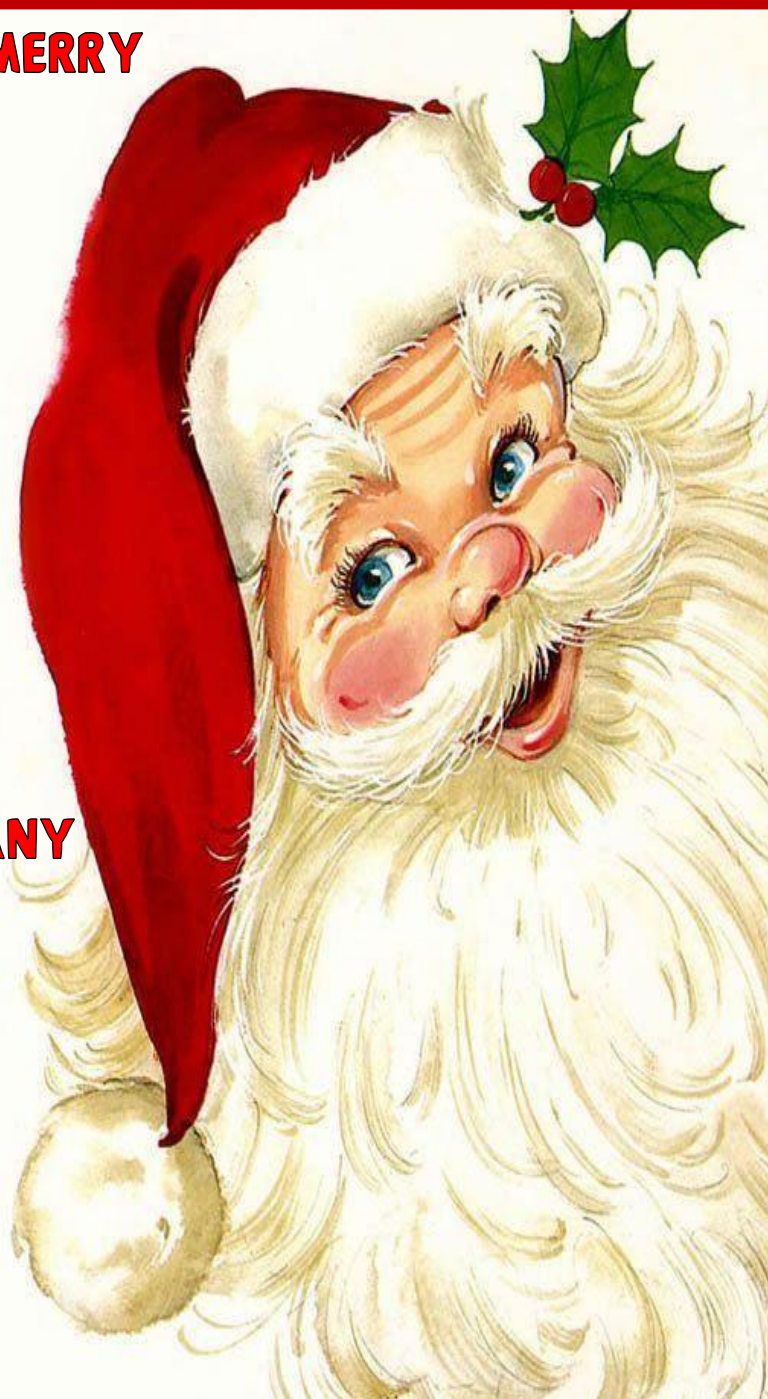
**HO, HO, HO, TO ALL OF YOU MERRY
BVRC MEMBERS!**

**IF YOU SIGNED-UP, BE SURE
AND MARK YOUR CALENDAR
FOR THE 2025 BELLA VISTA
AREA RADIO CLUB'S ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS & AWARDS
BANQUET ON **THURSDAY,
DEC. 4, AT 6 PM.** LOTS OF
FOOD, FUN, & HAM RADIO
FELLOWSHIP, AS WELL AS MANY
GREAT DOOR PRIZES!**

**IF YOU HAVEN'T REGISTERED
YET, CLICK HERE !**

(Registration ends November 26)

See you there and 73!



BOARD MEMBERS



APPOINTED OFFICERS

President

Jan Hagan - WB5JAN

wb5jan@arri.net

Vice President

Joe Hott - W5AEN

joe.hott@gmail.com

Secretary

Dana Hill - W5DGH

dana.hill1979@gmail.com

Treasurer

Marc Whittlesey - WØKYZ

almarc11@yahoo.com

Technical Officer

Tem Moore - N5KWL

temmoore@gmail.com

N5BVA Trustee

Roger Dickey - KJ4QIS

dickeyr@gmail.com

Member At Large & Public Information Officer

Tom Northfell - W5XNA

w5xna@arri.net

Education & Elmer 911 Committee

Chair: Vinson Carter - WV5C

vinsoncarter@gmail.com

Nets Committee

Chair: Dana Widboom - KI5TGY

dcwidboom@gmail.com

Membership Committee

Chair: Tom Northfell - W5XNA

w5xna@arri.net

Social Media & Community Outreach Committee

Chair: Alex Smith - KI5EQK

ki5eqk@gmail.com

W5NX Trustee

Jay Bromley - W5JAY

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Webmaster

Roger Dickey - KJ4QIS

dickeyr@gmail.com

VE Testing Committee

Chair: Don Banta - K5DB

arsk5db@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Don Banta - K5DB

arsk5db@gmail.com



From the Desk of the President



The One Principle of the Radio Amateur's Code to Keep in Mind for the Holidays

As we enter this busy holiday season, it is a good time to review the Radio Amateur's Code of Conduct and one facet of that code in particular.

By way of review, here is a quick reminder of our Radio Amateur Code. The code of conduct is a set of principles for amateur radio operators, emphasizing being **Considerate** of others, **Loyal** to the community, **Progressive** in improving their station and skills, **Friendly** to all, **Balanced** in hobby vs. life duties, and **Patriotic** in service.

Of all these facets of the Radio Amateur's Code, one is particularly worthy of noting during this very busy holiday season:

Balanced – Ensure the hobby does not interfere with your duties to family, job, school, or community.

Many of us are blessed with families that are supportive of our amateur radio hobby that can at times appear to be all consuming in terms of our time, energy and resources. Our hobby is fascinating enough, with so many facets that can lead us in many directions of interest to that point that it is easy for the hobby to be all consuming.

In our Bella Vista Radio Club, we are also so fortunate to have so many engaging and supportive members that our club, for many of us, has the feel of an extended family. We enjoy celebrating our hobby's successes and challenges with each other in a way that helps build a supportive bond among our members.

However, it is important to always remember, especially at this time of the year, to maintain a life balance with our hobby so that our family connections and duties maintain a priority in our lives. After all, it is our supportive families that allow us to enjoy this wonderful amateur radio hobby.

So.....

Happy Holidays to you

AND

your family!

73,

JAN – WB5JAN



NOVEMBER PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS AMATEUR SATELLITE OPERATION



It was another well attended, almost packed house for BVRC's November 2025 meeting. Members were treated to another great program, this month featuring BVRC's Murray Harris-W5XH with his presentation on operating through amateur radio satellites, "Working The Birds".

Murray is BVRC's foremost authority on amateur satellite operation and he did not disappoint. He headed-up the team that made contact with the International Space Station-NA1SS, during a special school assembly last March 31, which was a feature story on the KFSM-TV evening news.

Murray began his presentation with a short history on amateur radio satellites,

starting with OSCAR-1 (Orbiting Satellite Carrying Amateur Radio) which was launched on December 12, 1961. It transmitted the letters "HI" in Morse code on 144 MHz. It re-entered the atmosphere on January 31, 1962 after 300 orbits.

When it comes to the lifespan of an amateur satellite, Murray shared data that shows the failure rate is approximately 40 per cent for various reason of which 12 per cent is due to launch failures. Some satellites only last for a short period of time, where others operate for decades. For example, satellite AO-7 was launched in 1974 and still functions while in sunlight.

Murray then posed the question to the meeting, "Why try satellite operation?"

The answer to that question contains several bona fide points:

- They are accessible
- They are reliable
- They are predictable
- They are diverse
- They are satisfying, and
- They give the operator “bragging rights” in that a small portion of hams operate through satellites

Some other interesting information Murray shared is that most satellites are Cubesats (these satellites measure only 4”x4”x4”), most all of them are in Low Earth Orbit, most use 144 MHz and 440 MHz, most have less than 1 watt of output power, and – amazingly – 5 watts and a decent gain antenna is all you need to work them!



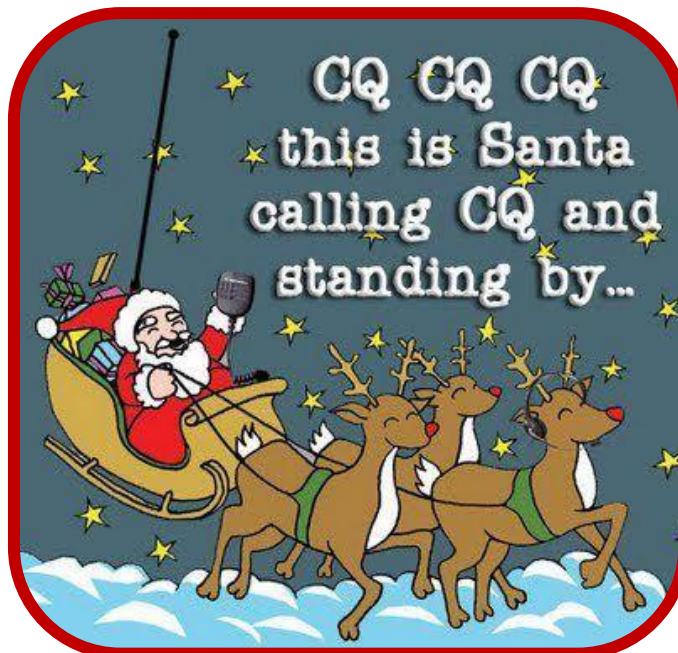
Murray – W5XH

He said there are several areas of the hobby you can accomplish in working amateur satellites such as collecting grid squares and working all the states (although Alaska and Hawaii will be tough). DXCC is possible from some U.S. locations, and logging is usually done electronically but some hams still confirm QSOs with QSL cards.

There are three types of satellites: FM, Linear, and Telemetry.

In regard to how much it would cost as a very basic setup to operate through satellites, a \$25 handheld or a 50w mobile transceiver coupled with a gain antenna which could be homebrew (\$10 and up) or a manufactured antenna (around \$200) will get you on the air with satellites. He also suggested if you have a friend that owns a satellite antenna and would like to give satellite operation a “test drive”, ask to borrow it from them and try it out.

THANKS MURRAY FOR ANOTHER **GREAT** PRESENTATION. WE APPRECIATE YOU!!!!





2025 ARRL FIELD DAY BELLA VISTA RADIO CLUB NATIONAL RUNNER-UP 3A COMMERCIAL DIVISION



States Worked: 50
Canadian Provinces Worked: 10
DX Countries Worked: 4
Total QSOs: 2,103
Participants: 82
Total Points: 8,793



ARRL ARKANSAS SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR J.M. ROWE SPEAKS AT ARES REGION 1 LEADERSHIP MEETING



Representing the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management, certified Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM) instructors John Minard and J.M. Rowe (2nd from right) spoke at the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Region 1 Leadership Meeting last month.

They were invited to discuss their article featured in the July 2025 issue of QST, where they advocated for adopting the AUXCOMM training program as a national standard for Amateur Radio emergency communications.

In Arkansas, ADEM has adopted AUXCOMM as the standard we're working to achieve statewide, strengthening coordination and preparedness across emergency communication partners.

J.M. delivered an outstanding AUXCOMM program for BVRC a couple of years ago, and we hope to have him back.

BVRC 2026 GENERAL LICENSE CLASS STARTS NEXT MONTH... SIGN-UP TODAY!



Bella Vista area Radio Club is pleased to announce the 2026 General amateur radio license class! **Enrollment is open and ongoing!**

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.

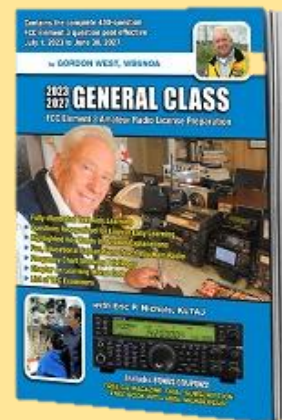
CLASS DATES: Saturday, January 3 and Saturday, January 10, 2026

CLASS LOCATION:

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

CLASS SCHEDULE:

2 classes on 2 Saturdays:
9:00am – 12:00pm, Morning Session
12:00pm – 12:30pm, Lunch Break
12:30pm – 4:30pm, Afternoon Session



COST: The class is free, but you will need the accompanying license manual. (Normally \$32.95)

You can order from: [ARRL](https://www.arrl.org) or [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

(Have your manual in hand no later than one week from the first class.)

TESTING: A special General exam test session will be given at the end of the January 10 class.

INSTRUCTOR: Stephen Ponder – N5ZE

ENROLLMENT: *The enrollment period for this class is now open!*

**TO ENROLL OR
FOR ANY QUESTIONS
Contact Stephen Ponder – N5ZE at:
stponder@gmail.com**

Announcing the BVRC Santa Net!



The Bella Vista Radio Club is pleased to announce our club's next big operating event – The Santa Net! Coming this December – BVRC's N5BVA Santa Net will be on the air!

Yes, BVRC is developing and sponsoring an opportunity for all children in the Bella Vista area Radio Club's footprint to have a real-time QSO with Santa Claus this Christmas season.

The net will run on Friday, December 5, and again the following Friday, December 12.

The Santa Net will be a special net in that there will be no on-air check-ins. Instead, to take part in the net with your young children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc., check-ins for the net will be by registration. All you need do is simply complete the Santa Net registration form on the BVRC website. Persons registering will choose which date and time slot they can be on frequency to check-in to speak to Santa. The NCS will use the registered slots as a net check-in list. *Be sure and be on frequency that evening.* The Net Control Station will call you when it's your turn. This will not only enable your little ones to speak to Santa, it will also introduce them to ham radio! **THE NET WILL USE THE NW ARKANSAS SKYWARN LINKED REPEATER SYSTEM.**

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN, SO SIGN-UP NOW! Click [here](#) to register:

If you need more information, contact the Santa Net Coordinator, Dale-W5DSL at lddale@gmail.com or phone 479-531-3600. **HO! HO! HO! – SEE YOU THEN!**

BVRC VE REPORT
From Don Banta – K5DB
BVRC VE Coordinator
October 2025



Congratulations!

Colby Richardson – Springdale New Technician!

Next month's exam sessions: **(Note-For December, sessions will be on the 3rd Saturday.)**

- **December 20, 10 am – Shiloh Museum, 118 W. Johnson Ave, Springdale**
- **December 20, 2 pm – Bella Vista Public Library, 11 Dickens Place, Bella Vista**

**If you wish to test, you must register for an exam session.
To register and for additional instructions,
go to the TESTING tab on the BVRC website:**

<https://bellavistaradioclub.org/testing/>



The BVRC W5NX Club Station's completion is on the horizon. 80-90% of the station is now in place. All that remains is completing the feedlines and rotator cable runs, programming the rotator control head, and completing the station interconnection jumper cabling.

The completion date is still in question due to the colder weather now entering the picture, but there should be some warm days left in the mix to complete the coax and cable runs.

This is going to be a first-class club station, which will definitely be open to club members to utilize. If you missed the objectives of the station, here is a quick review from BVRC President Jan-WB5JAN from last month's President's column:

- The station will serve as a valuable education and training tool to teach radio operations, procedures and etiquette to our members wanting to learn more about HF station operations. We foresee formal training sessions, classes, and demonstrations using club station equipment.
- The station will serve as a radio shack for use by trained and qualified members with or without a home station who want to sign up to use the club station with the support of Elmer volunteers who will be present to provide stewardship of station operations. Many members have home situations that don't allow for the installation of antenna systems and/or don't have room for a home radio shack. The station will allow access to a fully operational station that is not possible at home.

- The station will serve as a radio shack for use by trained and qualified members with or without a home station who want to sign up to use the club station with the support of Elmer volunteers who will be present to provide stewardship of station operations. Many members have home situations that don't allow for the installation of antenna systems and/or don't have room for a home radio shack. The station will allow access to a fully operational station that is not possible at home.
- The station will provide a home for unique club operations such as Special Event Stations and Club Contest operations. The station will also be a home base for emergency operations to assist with communications as needed in disaster situations should they occur in Northwest Arkansas and surrounding areas.

Much like your radio shack at home, the station will continue to evolve after it begins initial operations. Starting from a station capable of phone, CW, and digital operations with a rotatable beam for the upper HF frequencies, future plans under consideration include making the station remote access capable, allowing trained members to operate the station remotely. Also, under consideration is adding VHF, UHF capabilities to teach net operations for potential emergency communications. Finally, higher watt amplifier operations for trained and qualified members will also be a consideration.



When W5NX's operation begins, it will consist of the following:

- ★ 11 element beam for 20, 17, 15, and 10 meters
- ★ 5 element beam for 6 meters
- ★ Yaesu G-1000DX A rotator
- ★ Icom IC-7600 transceiver
- ★ Green Heron rotator controller
- ★ MFJ Antenna switcher
- ★ Dell 512GB, SSHD computer

Plans are to also implement a Kenwood TS-590 transceiver along with, if and when needed, the club's Yaesu FT-991A which will mostly be used for a standby/backup radio. The station will be equipped to operate CW, SSB, and FT-8.

We look forward to the day (hopefully soon, weather permitting) for the station to make its inaugural QSO. Stay tuned!



EMBROIDERED MEMORIES IS THE OFFICIAL SUPPLIER FOR ALL YOUR CHRISTMAS BVRC GEAR !

John Robinson – W5HB, is not only one of BVRC's valued members, but he is also BVRC's official supplier of BVRC merchandise. John and his XYL, Kim – KD5TVX, own and operate Embroidered Memories© which embroiders and prints products for individuals, businesses, clubs, schools, sports teams, and various organizations all over the world. They also have personalized products that ship every day.

And they really excel in amateur radio accoutrements: Callsign hats and visors, EmComm and Skywarn hats and visors, shirts, callsign etched glass blocks, metal tumblers, coffee mugs, amateur radio patches, **name badges (be sure and order your own BVRC name badge as well as a BVRC friend that doesn't have one!)**, license plates, and many other items.

Embroidered Memories

Providing professional embroidery and printing services for every need

Click on the links below:

- Monogramming
- Monogrammed Hats & Visors
- Baby and Children's Items
- Holiday Items
- Wedding & Anniversary Items
- Business Logos & Uniforms
- Fishing Hats
- Blank Hats
- Patches

About Us

Embroidered Memories was formed in October of 2010 after Kim and John discovered that their custom embroidery and digitizing services were becoming ever increasingly popular.

Embroidered Memories embroiders and prints products for: individuals, businesses, clubs, schools, sports teams, and various organizations all over the world. We ship our personalized products out daily.

Our customers include: Boutiques, Amateur Radio operators and clubs, county fairs, 4-H clubs, construction businesses, oil field businesses, boy

To order your BVRC Christmas presents:

http://www.embroideredmemories.net/em_008.htm

BVRC Community Outreach Team Participates in Spooky Sprint & Turkey Trails Foot Races

The great Bella Vista Radio Club Community Outreach Team showed their prowess and dexterity during two rain-soaked weekends of public service. The team members assisted with outstanding communications for the Spooky Sprint on October 25 and the Turkey Trails on November 1. GREAT JOB!!!!!!!!!!!!

Enjoy the snapshots from their excellent communications backing:



From left to right: Alex Smith-KI5EQK, Caleb Whitsett-KCØYGO, David Gilbert-KB5SEZ, Joe Hott-W5AEN, Mike Calvi-KF5RUO, Chris Johnson-KE4EIF, and foreign exchange student Laia Monzó from Palau-Saverdera, Spain. (Also participating were Nathan Spears-KEØVPI, Austin Moreton-KFØVHR, and Russ Moreton-KFØVHU)







A reminder for everyone wanting to keep their BVRC memberships current for the coming year, the deadline for dues is March 31, 2026. The dues are \$15.00 per year (\$1.25 a month). If you have any immediate licensed family members living with you at your home domicile, you can include them as a Family Membership *at no extra charge*. You can renew your membership using any of these options:

- Personal check or money order to the BVRC Treasurer, Marc – WØKYZ via regular mail, payable to:

Marc Whittlesey
1 Radcliffe Drive
Bella Vista, AR 72714

- Via PayPal by using Marc's e-mail address: almarc11@yahoo.com. After entering \$ amount, in the next section marked *What is this for?*, enter "BVRC membership renewal"
- Pay in person at a BVRC monthly meeting

*Also note: If you are 73 years of age or older you now qualify for BVRC's Lifetime Membership. Contact Marc at the above e-mail address and when you advise him that you have reached your 73rd birthday, your membership in BVRC from that time forward is **FREE**. You will also receive a handsome BVRC Lifetime Member certificate suitable for framing.*

The BVRC membership form and other important information is included on the BVRC website club membership page. To view the page, click [here](#).

Everyone Is An Elmer

by Allen Risler – KE5FAR



It was my pleasure to do two presentations for the October 2nd meeting and the HAM-101 class. It was a great learning experience for me as well.

I am new to the BVRC. My first meeting was in January 2025. I was sitting next to Mike KF5RUO during the POTA presentation. Mike shared part of his POTA experience with me, and I thought together we could make for a good show and tell. Who knew BVRC had a 9-month waiting list for giving presentations? That's another sign of an awesome club with lots of Elmers eager to share, teach and learn.

I shared what I have learned in 5 years with a variety of HF, VHF and UHF antennas with the Ham-101 class. One of the attendees asked me if I could make it available on Google Docs. I told him that I would as soon as I learn how to use Google Docs. The next morning I watched one YouTube video and quickly shared a file successfully with Don K5DB, that I can supply via Google Docs by request. Then I listened to the audio recording of that presentation and realized I breezed over the most important slide without discussing it.

I believe that everyone is an Elmer. Everyone has knowledge and experience in their own areas of interest that they can share with others. I first witnessed 3 such ambassadors when VE Elmers Don-K5DB, Tom-W5XNA and Vinson-WV5C drove up to near Harrison to provide testing to a young Tech going for his General. Don and I put up a Carolina Windom and the club brought a donated HF radio. Talk about going above and beyond expectations of providing personal guidance and assistance, not just to would-be hams but encouraging a young ham to test for his General. We should all strive to be good ambassadors of this hobby. It is core to our belief system just like our "Code of Conduct". It is important to learn from mistakes. Elmers take the next step and share what they have learned.

Everyone is an "Elmer"
We all have knowledge that we can share
and encourage others in this hobby.



- From ARRL, "As licensed hams we are all ambassadors of Amateur Radio and we should always be looking at ways in which we can welcome newly licensed hams and project a positive image that will attract others to ham radio."
- "meaning someone who provides personal guidance and assistance to would-be hams."
- "teacher, mentor, tutor, guide, helper, friend."

ATTENTION BVRC 'HAM HARMONICS' - TRACK SANTA THIS YEAR!!!

BVRC Members – For an added treat to the Christmas season, have your children or grandchildren watch ol' Santa Claus in his magic sleigh deliver presents all over the world on Christmas Eve, as NORAD tracks him.



The NORAD website is presently inoperable, but it will go live on December 1. Then on December 24, it will begin to track Santa all Day on Christmas Eve. The NORAD website is presently inoperable, but it will go live on December 1. Then on December 24, it will begin to track Santa all Day on Christmas Eve. To go to the website, click [HERE](#). HO! HO! HO!



NEW BVRC MEMBERS!



Chris Moyers – K5AHP – Springdale

Detlef Koertge – W5DWK – Fayetteville

Lewis Deen – N5DV – Rogers, AR

David Douglas – W5TN – Dripping Springs, TX

Colby Richardson – Callsign Pending - Springdale

BVRC Member Jay Bromley-W5JAY Elected ADXA President



BVRC member and W5NX callsign trustee, Jay Bromley-W5JAY was elected Arkansas DX Association President at the ADXA annual conference on November 8. Congratulations to Jay, who will do a stellar job in serving ADXA just as he has (and continues) serving BVRC! ADXA is one of the top-notch amateur radio DX organizations in the United States.



ADXA 2026 Officers from left to right: Sec.Treas. Glenn Wolf-N5RN, Vice-President Ed Jones-K5EJ, Director Joel Harrison-W5ZN, President Jay Bromley-W5JAY, and Director Roger Gray-N5QS

EXPERIMENTER'S CORNER



By Dr. Bill Durham – KG5ZCI

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

EXPLORING
CHRISTMAS
CHASING LIGHTS

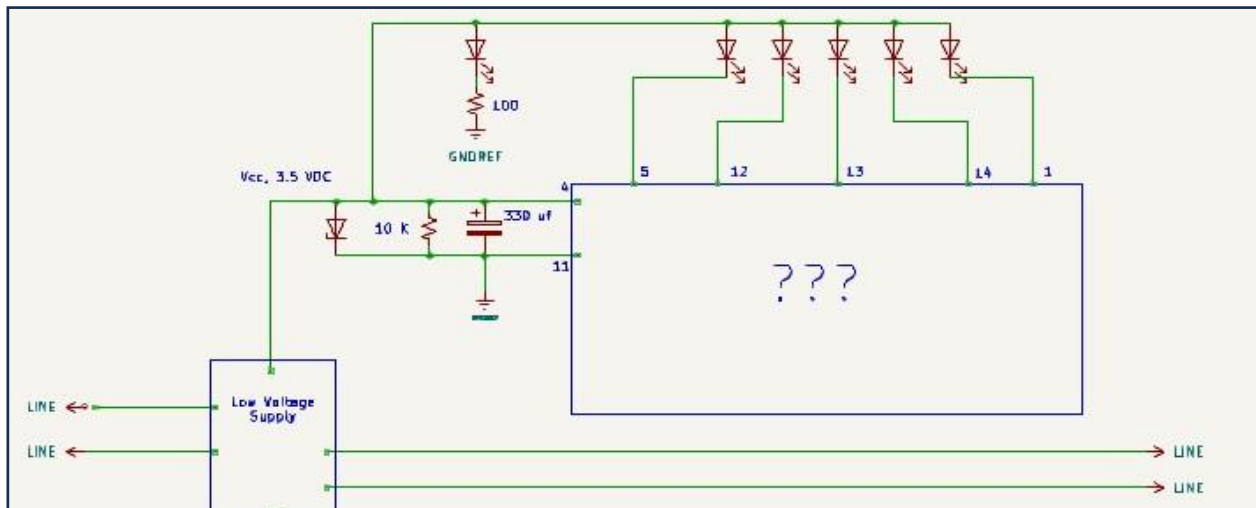
Chasing lights have always fascinated me. They are also an interesting puzzle, given the timing with which they operate. So, in keeping with the season, I decided to try to satisfy my curiosity about how they actually work. \$32 at the local Lowes provided a nice collection of chasing lights in the form of icicles. The person at the cash register asked me if I wanted to purchase a warranty but I told her my intension was to dissect the lights.



The photographs at left show the inside of one icicle and the other, the intact string. As you can see the inside contains a circuit board with 6 LED's, the chasing lights, an integrated circuit and a few resistors and one capacitor. In operation, one of the LED's (topmost) is on always and the others do the chasing, with timing on the order of a second each (more detail later on the timing).



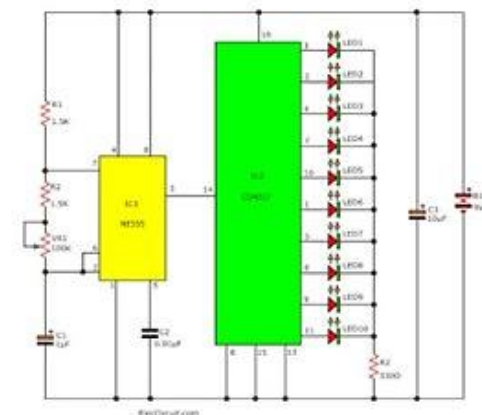
Some basics can be seen in the below schematic diagram. The power supply provides about 3.5 V to each icicle which are connected in series. The power supply is held in a separate plastic container at the beginning of the string (basically a wall-wart). There is a Zener diode in each icicle to maintain the correct voltage. A second pair of wires carries the line voltage to the far end of the string so the strings can be connected together.



I separated one icicle from the string and powered it with my 3 V bench supply. It worked as it did in the string. This indicates that there are no timing pulses on the string. The pulse train found in the icicle is a bit complicated. The actual “on” pulse is about 300 μ sec long. A string of about 13 of these pulses create the chasing by turning successive LED’s “on”. The icicle IC has 3 additional output pins that are pulsed but are not used, perhaps they are used for a different set of lights. These bursts of pulses occur about every 4 seconds. Each time the chasing sequence is the same, top to bottom.

I was disappointed to see that the chip has no markings and I was unable to find any commercial IC’s that claimed to be designed specifically for chasing lights. There is lots of material on the web but nothing like actual chasing Christmas lights. Many retain some vestige of binary counting, with two or more lights on simultaneously. The integrated circuit CD4060 was often featured because it has a built-in clock function. Perhaps, designs based on the CD4017, a decade counter, are closer to the Christmas lights. A typical schematic is shown below:

LED Chaser circuit using 555 and 4017



As you can see there are some similarities in the circuit if you ignore the orientation difference. In both examples, the chip is able to address each light separately. In the icicles the LED’s go on when the chip brings the LED connection to ground or “low” in IC jargon. In the CD4017 circuit, the LED’s light when the address line goes high. In the world of digital electronics this might be viewed as “6 of one or a half dozen of another”. It is just a matter of design convenience.

The major difference is the clock signal. The CD4017 is a decade counter, the clock pulses step through the output lines and the corresponding LED’s one at a time, sequentially (exactly as needed for chasing). The clock pulses are provided by a second IC, a 555 timer. A

The icicle circuit has no obvious clock but operates as if it did. I thought maybe the 330 μ F capacitor may be functioning in this capacity but doubling the value produced no change in the timing. In the circuit, this capacitor looks just like a filter capacitor for removing noise.

So, I am left with a quandary. Perhaps further information will come to light or the light bulb in my head will come on. Merry Christmas!



Hey, BVRC members!
Don't miss the annual
Bella Vista Radio Club
Christmas and Awards Banquet at
the ALETA building Thursday
evening, December 4 at 6 pm!
Great food, fellowship, door prizes,
and great ham radio fun.....
See you there! HO HO HO!
Register on the BVRC website by
November 26:
Click **HERE** to register!

ANOTHER NEW REPEATER NET COMES TO BVRC:



THE BVRC SLOW SCAN TV NET!!!

Every Friday evening on the BVRC Twin Repeater Link System, 7pm (6:45 pre-net)

The new BVRC SSTV Net provides a unique opportunity for our members to explore the visual side of amateur radio through Slow Scan Television, combining local communication with hands-on technical learning.

The Net is dedicated to advancing interest and participation in Slow-Scan Television within our amateur radio community. The main objective of the net is to create an environment that is both accessible and engaging—where licensed operators can learn, experiment, and exchange visual signals in a spirit of discovery and cooperation.

Through structured nets, technical discussion, and hands-on practice, we aspire to demonstrate the value of image-based communication on VHF/UHF frequencies while promoting sound operating procedures and an appreciation for experimentation. By connecting local hams through shared exploration, the SSTV Net seeks to strengthen our skills, build fellowship, and showcase how traditional radio and modern digital techniques continue to evolve side by side. *See you (literally!) on the net!!!*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT BRANDON-W5BNL AT:

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A Ham Radio Christmas Story

By Bob-WØZPE, Brainerd (MN) Area Amateur Radio Club

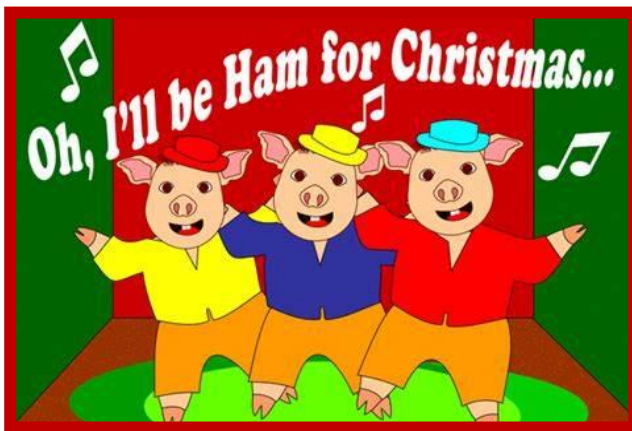
His name was Mickey Hicks and his call sign was WO6T. Mickey had an alter ego named Santa Clause who also had a call sign, W6S. Every year for 37 years, Santa was on the air reaching out to the children of the world from the 20th of December until Christmas Eve calling CQ, CQ, CQ, HO, HO, HO, this is Whiskers Six Santa inviting all children into my workshop at the North Pole.

Santa was always spotted on DX clusters worldwide with the call W6S and his web page encouraged Dad or Mom to drop him a request via e-mail detailing what the kids were asking Santa to drop beneath their Christmas tree. Also, Mickey rigged a CCTV in his shack so the youngsters could see Santa in his white beard and red costume operating from his shack at the North Pole. When you listened to the kids talking with Santa from dad's shack, it was immediately evident that Santa Clause was someone to believe in.

It was a magical time for both the kids and for radio operators worldwide. In the real world, Mickey's shack was in a high-rise building in downtown Bakersfield, California in the penthouse no less. I used to hear Mickey from time to time in the pileups working DX. He was good – so good that he was on the DXCC Honor Roll. I worked the call WO6T many times through the years until Mickey became a silent key at the age of 79.

The call W6S has now been reassigned each year as a special event station for the annual Route 66 celebration. Santa is alive and well and Mickey Hicks made thousands of children so happy...so long Santa (Mickey Hicks) Clause I know your station is still broadcasting from heaven and the world is a better place for you having been here.

WO6T/SK.



THINGS I LIKE ALMOST AS MUCH AS HAM RADIO

1. Looking at my ham radio equipment
2. Talking about my ham radio
3. Watching television programs about ham radio
4. Websites about ham radio
- 5. Bacon**





This month's featured country: Minami-Torishima

Primary Call Sign Prefix: JD1

Minami-Torishima is an isolated Japanese coral atoll in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, located some 1,148 miles southeast of Tokyo. The closest island to Minami-Torishima is East Island in the Mariana Islands, which is 631 miles to the west-southwest. It is the easternmost territory belonging to Japan, and the only Japanese territory on the Pacific Plate, past the Japan Trench. Although small (370 acres), it is of strategic importance as it enables Japan to claim a 125,040-square-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone in the surrounding waters.

Minami-Torishima is very remote. There is no other land for over 631 miles in any direction. The island is triangular in shape, and has a saucer-like profile, with a raised outer rim of between 16 and 30 feet above sea level. The central area of the island is 3 feet below sea level.

The first discovery and mention of an island in this area was made by a Spanish galleon ship captain, Andrés de Arriola, in 1694.



Location of Minami-Torishima



Research and Communications Building



Barracks

It was charted in a few Spanish maps, but its exact location was left unrecorded until further sightings in the 19th century.

During more modern times, after the start of World War II, the Japanese garrison stationed on the island consisted of the 742-man Minami-Torishima Guard Unit, under the command of Rear Admiral Masata Matsubara, and the 2,005-man 12th Independent Mixed Regiment of the Imperial Japanese Army, under the command of Colonel Yoshiichi Sakata. The United States Navy bombed it repeatedly in 1942 and in 1943, but never attempted to capture it. The Treaty of San Francisco transferred the island to American control in 1952. The island was returned to Japanese control in 1968, but the Americans retained control of the airstrip and LORAN-C station.

The island's station was transferred from the U.S. Coast Guard to the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) on September 30, 1993 and was closed on December 1, 2009.

The island is currently used for weather observation and has a radio station, but little else. The runway of Minami-Torishima is only 4,300 feet long and cannot handle large aircraft.

The island is off limits to civilians except for Japan Meteorological Agency staff, although reporters, documentary makers, and scientific researchers can sometimes get an entry permit. No commercial boat tours or flights visit the island, and civilians are currently not allowed access to Minami-Torishima for tours or sightseeing, due to its use by the JSDF as an observation station.

With that being said and when it comes to amateur radio, about the only time you can find it on the air is when an amateur radio licensed reporter, documentary maker, or scientific researcher can sometimes get an entry permit, take their own radio gear, and activate it. They usually join a research team to the island, sometimes being assigned jobs to perform while there, and operate during their off time. This does occur occasionally, which makes the island a semi-rare entity to work and confirm. It currently is #33 on Club Log's Most Wanted List. Previous activations have occurred in October 2020, March 2021, October 2021, June and December 2023, and November-March 2024, with each lasting approximately three months.

Minami-Torishima and its "twin" – Ogasawara – have both been assigned the callsign prefix of **JD1**, so you have to depend on the DX information outlets and spotting websites to know which is which when spotted. Whereas Ogasawara contains a civilian population of around 2,600 people, some of which are local ham operators, it is not as rare as restricted Minami-Torishima. (Ogasawara ranks #130 on the Most Wanted List.)

After many years of waiting and watching, I was finally able to work "Take" – JG8NQX/JD1 in May of 2023. I was only able to work him once on 15-meters FT8, but that did garner me an ATNO (All Time New One).

I'm hoping another person gains permission to operate from the island again in the near future.... I need Minami-Torishima on a bunch of other bands! In the meantime, watch the DX outlets and spotting websites for the next time you can work Minami-Torishima.....perhaps for an ATNO!



Approach to Minami-Torishima



Minami-Torishima Monument

My Minami-Torishima QSL card



As we near the Christmas season and the conclusion of 2025, we would like to keep with tradition as we have each year of this newsletter and conclude this issue of The Signal with the following excerpt from the 1947 motion picture "The Bishop's Wife" (modified for amateur radio):

The Empty Stocking

Tonight, I want to tell you the story of an empty stocking:

Once upon a midnight clear, there was a child's cry. A blazing star hung over a stable, and wise men came with birthday gifts. We haven't forgotten that night down through the centuries. We celebrate it with stars on Christmas trees, with the sound of bells, with carols, and with gifts.....but especially with gifts. You give me a new set of headphones; I give you a new dual band HT. Aunt Martha has always wanted an I-tablet and Uncle Henry can do with a new IC-7300. We forget no one, adult or child.

And all the stockings are filled. ----- All that is.except one.

And we have even forgotten to hang it up. The stocking for the child born in a manger. It's His birthday we're celebrating, you know. Let us never forget that.

And let us ask ourselves what He would wish for most. Then, let each of us put in their share - lovingkindness, warm hearts, and a stretched-out hand of tolerance. All the shining gifts that make peace on earth.

***HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY HANUKKAH,
AND A BLESSED AND PROSPEROUS 2026.***

Don-K5DB, editor

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