



The GroundWire

A Jingle From Jerry

It is that time of the year again for SWDCARC's support of the Head For The Hills Bike Rally, which will be Saturday, 7 May 2011. There are four routes again this year: 10 mile, 20 mile, 40 mile and a 60 mile. The ride begins and ends at Northwest corner of Uptown Village. This year the Rotary Club has relocated Rest Stop #1 East on Shiloh road to N. Mockingbird Lane to get away from the busy/dangerous intersection at Shiloh and N. Walnut Grove. Rest Stop #4 has been moved to intersection of Norrell and Hwy 875, so the riders don't have to go through the busy intersection of Hwy 157 and Hwy 875 down near Venice. The riders will turn off of Hwy 157 on Marion to Norrell to reach Rest Stop #4. All of the rest stop sponsors are different from last year except for Rest Stop #5 who still has Expressions Chiropractic & Rehab. Rest Stop Sponsors are (1A) Cedar Hill Chamber of Commerce; (1) Best Buy; (2) Linebarger, Goggan, Blair & Sampson, LLP; (3) Cedar Hill ISD Education Foundation and (4) Lions Club. Indications are that there will be more riders this year than in past years.

Mike Harang, K5MMH, and I, KB6OJE, are heading up the SWDCARC position for this event. As I'm writing this, we will be needing at least 27 radio operators to provide the support the Rotary Club is asking for. This is an increase of 4 from last year as the bicycle repair mechanics have agreed to have radio operators in their trucks this year. Currently we have 23 volunteers that have agreed to support this great function. This is a very good opportunity for inexperienced radio operators to get in some actual experience with an experienced operator there to guide and direct you and an opportunity to provide some community service.

Enough about the Head For The Hills Bike Rally and a little about me. I got interested in amateur radio through my brother, Jack, K6JAK previously WA6IBI, when he and his ex-wife were about to leave in their 50' sail boat for an indefinite cruise down the West coast through Panama Canal and up the East coast. Being at sea, the best means of communication then was amateur radio. I got my Novice license, with 5 wpm code, in 1976 in Duncanville, TX and was assigned the call sign of WB5VPG. My job with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service kept me busy and not able to use my license. In 1986 when it came time to renew my license, I was working in Oakland, CA and the FCC assigned me a "6" call sign. It was the FCC practice at that time to assign a new call sign for the call area of your address when renewing your license. This practice has subsequently been changed and you keep your call sign when renewing your license, as I did when I renewed in 1996 and 2006, in Texas. I retired from AAFES in 1995 and learned that Rick, KJ5UY, was teaching a Tech class at the church near my home and I signed up. I passed the Tech exam and became a Tech Plus, which gave me voice some privileges. I studied for the General exam and passed it a couple of months later. Since then I've been badgered by club members to get my Extra license and so far have not been able to pass the practice exams. Still have hopes of being able to upgrade to Extra soon.

73s

Jerry, KB6OJE

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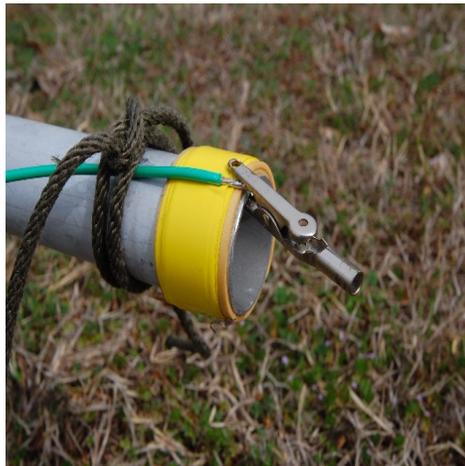


A Ham Radio DXpedition Home Run



Seeing news of a new DXpedition gets my attention. When I read about the activation of Revillagigedo Archipelago (IOTA NA-030) between 03MAR to 20MAR 2011, I did some investigation. The assigned call sign would be 4A4A, and the operating location would be on Socorro Island. The operators would be mostly from Spain, with some from Mexico as well. This is a Mexican possession in the Pacific Ocean about 600 km west of the mainland. Check out the expedition's web pages at: <http://revillagigado2011.com/> for more info about the location of the island and the expedition. Because activations to some DX entities are few and far between, sometimes years or decades apart, I decided to try and contact this one on every band I have available. For my current antenna situation, 10 through 20 meters is handled by my Force12 Sigma 40XK vertical dipole (manual band switching), while 30 and 40 meters are via individual mono band ground mounted verticals. I have nothing in the air for 80 or 160 meters. Beginning on 03Mar, I started watching the higher bands for activity. My first contact with 4A4A was on 04MAR @ 0103Z on 30 meters – CW of course. The pileups were huge, but the DX operators were doing a good job of managing the crowds by calling to different continents at any one time, and working split frequencies at all times. They spread out the pack at times by 6 -7 KHz. As I checked off contacting 4A4A on 30, 17, 40, 15, 20, 12, and finally 10 meters on 10MAR @ 1929Z, I realized that I lacked only 80 and 160 meters to complete a 9 band Ham Radio “home run”.

Pondering this for a while, I came to the conclusion that I could extend the 40m vertical with a long wire to form an inverted L antenna. So, out in the yard I went with a piece of 12 gauge THHN wire, an alligator clip, and some rope. After several minutes, the modification was complete. The long wire was tied to the top of the vertical (about 32 feet tall) and alligator clipped to the tube. See below close up of the high tech method utilized.



At the end of the long wire, a small diameter rope was used to support the wire in a precise manner and direction. Much care and thought was used in this portion of the modification. Actually, a nearby guy for the 30m vertical was the logical choice to tie the support rope to. See below photo of the finished modification. If you look closely, you can see the wire trailing off to the SW (toward the left of the photo).



Continued ... A Ham Radio DXpedition Home Run



On a whim, I decided to check the SWR of my new skyhook with a MFJ antenna analyzer. Check out the fine match on both the 80m and 160m CW portion of these bands.

80M



160M



Inside the shack, I let my Elecraft KAT100 Automatic Antenna Tuner handle the match to the 80m and 160m antenna. Inside the ATU are 16 latching relays that toggle to cut in and out the different toroid's to find the best match. When the relays operate, it is a bit noisy. Pressing the "Tune" button on my K2 to start the process, I will typically hear one of two relays toggle, and the process takes about 1-2 seconds. When tuning on the 80m "L" antenna, all of the relays were clattering, and took 5-8 seconds before stopping. The SWR indicated at the ATU are in the neighborhood of 4:1. Tuning on the 160M band was much worse.

I had never made a 160M QSO before, so this was an experiment for sure. Some things are strictly a matter of timing. My 160M QSO with 4A4A was timing at its best. I received a work call-out on 10March at midnight. In my office/shack, I worked with my technician until he needed to reload the phone system. The reload would take about 25 minutes to complete. I told him I would call him back in 30 minutes. I swung around and fired up the K2 and started to search the 160m band for the DXpedition. I heard 'em loud and clear on 1824.000 calling for any station, QSX up about 2 KHz. Setting the K2 for split between 1824.000 RCV and 1826.05 XMIT, I waited for the DX to call the familiar 4A4A TU after working the previous station. I sent my call and waited. I heard nothing for 4-5 seconds and was about to send my call again, but then heard "MMH?" Bingo, I turned the CW speed down a little and sent my call again. This time I heard "K5MMH 579" from the DX. I sent him back a "579 TU" and logged my first 160M QSO to a DXpedition on a very, very, marginal antenna and only barefoot 100w output.

Now only 80M was remaining. I waited until Friday 11MAR 2100 hours CST to try this one. The pile ups were loud and many

Continued ... A Ham Radio DXpedition Home Run



stations calling the DX during the earlier evening hours. I would have to wait a while for this one. Right before turning into bed, I gave it one more attempt. I heard the DX calling for EU stations only, but heard very few replies. I waited. Fifteen minutes later, I heard the DX calling CQ with no continent mentioned. Three calls later, 4A4A on 80M was in the log.

I checked the 4A4A web site's on-line log, and grinned ear to ear at seeing this:

Total QSOs: **50.064** - Unique Call Signs: **14.366** - DXCC: **140** - CQ ZONES: **34**

First QSO 03-03-2011 - 22:53 | Last QSO 13-03-2011 - 04:13

Find QSOs

9 QSOs found for **K5MMH**

	6	10	12	15	17	20	30	40	80	160
CW		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SSB										
RTTY										

The moral(s) of this story are:

Persistence and Patience pay off, AND, it doesn't have to be Pretty and Precise to work'em

73

K5MMH

Mike

BEN'S BIT



On September 8, 2001, yes three days before 911, I tested for my Technician license. Several of the present day club members were there as VE's. The class I had just finished was conducted by my Elmer, he encouraged me to upgrade as soon as possible, I did, and I now hold an Extra Class license. I was encouraged by my Elmer to get on the air as soon as possible. I went to his house the following Sunday after getting my call sign and he set me up with a HT and a Mag-mount. I was scared to death to get on the air for the first few times. I assisted my Elmer in several of his classes, and then tried it on my own, and have been conducting classes one to two times a year, and assisting others where I can. I even certified as a VE. I enjoyed meeting all the club members and participating in the activities.

I even volunteered to be a Net Control Operator.

Here it is 2011 nine (9) years later, and many of the club members that was present when I joined are still there.

Now why do I tell you all of this, because my Elmer is asking for members to be a Net Control Operator for our Monday night net. When I first was Net Control, I was again scared to death, but I did it and the club members and others were kind to me, I now enjoy the assignment.

The club needs NET CONTROL OPERATORS; Rick/KJ5UY has taken upon himself the responsibility to fill in as Net Manager. Would you contact my Elmer and advise him you will be NCO on the net next Monday night, or by phone or email.

BEN/K5NEB

P.S. As Net Controller, you will be able to check out your equipment and increase you operating skill level should you be needed in an emergency.

DUNCANVILLE POLICE HONOR LIEUTENANT WITH COMMENDATION

The Duncanville Police Department recently honored Lieutenant Wayne Schier with The Police Commendation Bar for his participation on the Southwest Regional Communications Center (SWRCC) Regional Radio Committee. Lt. Wayne Schier, KE4SGS, is a member of SWDCARC.

Lt. Schier was tasked with helping implement a new, joint trunked radio system that would serve the Cedar Hill, DeSoto and Duncanville Police Departments. Lt. Schier was assigned to work on the project in January 2008 but due to major problems with the new system, the project has taken over two years complete.

Lt. Schier has overseen the installation of radios into squad cars, the reprogramming of radios, and the inventorying of all old radio equipment. Notably, Lt. Schier even traveled to Kentucky to help select another radio system to replace the faulty one.

Duncanville Assistant Police Chief Marian Brown praised Lt. Schier's efforts saying his work was "outstanding and deserving of more recognition." "Lt. Schier's dedication to the radio project has been unmatched. His technical expertise is recognized and respected by his peers on the committee, the staff at Southwest Regional and the radio vendors servicing the project," added Assistant Chief Brown.

Financial Report ... April 2011



April-11	Income	Expense	Balance	Petty Cash
General Fund				
Beginning Balance 4/1/11			\$1,151.32	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2011	\$42.50			
Transfer From Matl. Property				
Transfer Petty Cash income				
TOTAL INCOME	\$42.50			
EXPENSES				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$0.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$42.50	\$0.00		
Ending Balance 4/30/2011			\$1,193.82	
Special Events Fund				
Beginning Balance 4/1/11			\$95.14	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Trans from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME	\$0.00			
EXPENSES				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$0.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Ending Balance 4/30/2011			\$95.14	
Material Property Fund				
Beginning Balance 4/1/11			\$2,578.18	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2011	\$42.50			
Transfer from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME	\$42.50			
EXPENSES				
Telephone Pymt 08APR		\$37.86		
Transfer to General Fund				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$37.86		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$42.50	\$37.86		
Ending Balance 4/30/2011			\$2,582.82	
April Balance	\$85.00	\$37.86	\$3,871.78	

2011 Board Members

President

Scott Crappa (KE5NLK)

Vice-President

Tom Poindexter (KE5GKK)

Treasurer

Mike Harang (K5MMH)

Secretary

Jerry Keltner (KB6OJE)

Directors

Rick Ellis (KJ5UY)

Paul Dryer (KD5IVP)

Lester Wong (K5ITO)

Committee Positions

Repeater Trustee

Johnny Roberson (KJ5LB)

Newsletter Editor

Bill Ellis (N5TXN)

Web Master

Russ Thompson (KX5G)

MN²

Monday Night Net

Net Time 8:00PM

147.060(+) Primary

444.500(+) Alternate

Minutes of Board Meeting ... April 5, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Scott Crappa, KE5MLK at 6:30 pm.

Invocation was given by Paul Dryer, KD5IVP.

Executive Board members present: Scott, KE5NLK; Jerry, KB6OJE; Rick, KJ5UY; Paul, KD5IVP; Lester, K5ITO. Club members present: Bill, N5TXN and Johnny, KJ5LB.

Minutes: Motion to approved by Rick Ellis, KJ5UY Motion 2nd by Lester Wong, K5ITO

Motion passed.

Motion to approve Treasure Report: was made by Rick Ellis, KJ5UY and 2nd Lester Wong, K5ITO.

Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Repeater: Have not resolved anything with the repeater owner.

VE Session: Ben Barber, K5NEB, taught a class of 14 and 14 took the Tech exam with 10 passing. One of which also took the General exam and passed with flying colors.

EOC: Paul Dryer, KD5IVP, attended a Pandemic Flu demonstration in DeSoto, which is happy with the radio equipment. Stay on your toes and listen for bad weather may be arriving at any time.

Johnny Roberson, KJ5LB, received documentation from Cedar Hill EOC authorizing the use of the Cedar Hill EOC for Field day. Larry McFarland, KY5S, with Fire Chief.

Membership: No new members.

Net: Wanted Net Control operators. Currently only have 3 and need more. Contact Rick Ellis, KJ5UY, if interested.

Web: Currently looking into changing servers. Domain name needs to be renewed by July.

Groundwire: It is working fine and is on the web.

OLD BUSINESS

Jerusalem Market Place at the Windsor Park Baptist Church will be April 21, 22 & 23 this year. Following members have volunteered to help with Security and Parking: Johnny, KJ5LB; Lester, K5ITO; Bill, N5TXN; Jerry, KB6OJE.

Head For The Hills Bike Rally will be May 7 and we still need more radio volunteers.

Field Day, Johnny, KJ5LB, is getting with Cedar Hill Fire Chief about getting article stuffed in the Cedar Hill water bills.

NEW BUSINESS

Windsor Park Baptist Church Royal Ambassadors will be in a camp August 1 to August 3 and would like a radio demonstration to the youth and an opportunity to get on the air. Be thinking about volunteering for this activity to help out the church where we meet.

PROGRAM: DeSoto CERT

Motion to Adjourn was made by Rick, KJ5UY.

General Membership Meeting ... April 19, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Scott, KE5NLK at 6:30 pm on 19 April 2011.

Invocation was given by Rick, KJ5UY.

Executive Board Members Present: Scott, KE5NLK; Jerry, KB6OJE; Rick, KJ5UY; Paul, KD5IVP; Lester, K5ITO

Recognized Guests: Robert Spencer

Motion Made to accept the Minutes as in the GroundWire was made by Paul, KD5IVP, and 2nd by Rick, KJ5UY.

Motion was made to accept the Treasure Report as in the GroundWire was made by Jerry, KB6OJE, and 2nd by Johnny, KJ5LB.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Repeater: 440 is on the air again, PA was replaced and it was realigned.

VE Session: On 31 March Tech exams were given to 14 in a class and had 10 pass the Tech Exam and one went on to pass the General Exam.

EOC: Paul, KD5IVP, says nothing to report. Johnny, KJ5LB, reports the EOC in Cedar Hill has been approved for our use for Field Day. The Fire Chief of Cedar Hill to get 3 flyers provided by David, N5UV, in the Cedar Hill water bills and newspaper. Scott, KE5NLK, reports that the Dallas County Health and Human Services, Medical Reserve Corp has 6 new Tech operators.

Membership: 1 application was turned in at the meeting by Gene Eubanks, KD5UHG and applications for complimentary membership for the remaining of this year are being sent to the 10 who passed their exams on 31 March.

Net: Having 8-10 check-ins each Monday night. There are still just 4 net control operators and would like to have more. The weekly net is a good place to keep up with what is going on.

Web: Floyd, KC5QBC, is posting and keeping the web updated while Russ, KX5G, is out of action.

Groundwire: It is available on the web.

OLD BUSINESS

Jerusalem Marketplace will be presented by the Windsor Park Baptist Church on 21, 22, & 23 April 2011 each evening at the church. SWDCARC could use some more help directing traffic for parking and watching the parked vehicles. For more info on the program go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXPwTPT-h_0

Cedar Hill Head for the Hills Bike Rally is, scheduled for Saturday, 7 May 2011, SWDCARC is providing the radio communications for this event again this year. A requirement for 4 additional radio operators has been laid on us to cover the 4 bicycle mechanic vehicles. We are still in need of additional volunteers. Contact Mike, K5MMH, or Jerry, KB6OJE, if you are able to help.

Field Day: Ben, K5NEB, suggested that we consolidate an order for Field Day Shirts to save on the postage. He says postage for a single shirt is almost equal to the cost of the shirt. If interested in a Field Day Shirt or Cap, contact Ben, K5NEB at k5neb@sbcglobal.net. ARRL suggest clubs get their orders in by May 1 to insure delivery before Field Day.

NEW BUSINESS

Royal Ambassadors youth group will be at camp 1-3 August 2011 and would like for SWDCARC to set up an amateur radio and demonstrate to the youth and let them get on the air. Volunteers need for this activity. Contact Floyd, KC5QBC if able to do it.

PROGRAM: Gordy VanSteenberg with Best Southwest Regional Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) presented an interesting program on C.E.R.T. C.E.R.T. teams, under the direction of local emergency responders, help provide critical support by giving immediate assistance to victims, providing damage assessment information, and organizing other volunteers at a disaster site. Volunteers trained in C.E.R.T. also offer a potential workforce for performing duties such as shelter support, crowd control, and evacuation. The role of a C.E.R.T. volunteer is to help others until trained emergency personnel arrive. The next C.E.R.T. training class is September 10 and 17 at the DeSoto Fire Training Center. If interested in the training, you should contact Gordy VanSteenberg at 972-230-4815 or Don Dewberry, K5DEW, at 972-223-8396.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Paul, KD5IVP at 7:30 pm.