



# The Groundwire

## 5Gulf Tells All

ISSUE 2013-05



So, I am sitting here minding my own business when an email comes from Mr. President: “Russ, can you do the *Groundwire* front page article next month. Gee who did I tick off to get this “privilege”? Just kidding Mike, don’t mind at all. Problem is, he didn’t tell me what to write about, so under the guise of “monkey see, monkey do” I’ll talk about my getting into this wonderful hobby.

I guess most of us have roots in the world of CB. My roots are very shallow. This was before the great boondoggle stereotyped by “Convoy” movie. I was 14. Some of my friends were getting base stations with legal call signs. They were talking between different licensed stations only on channels 10 through 14, as the others were reserved for people using the same license. Real names were used. It was all legitimate.

I wanted to get involved. But there was one problem. Dad would have none of it. My dad was an old radio repairman. He served in WW II as a shipboard radio technician. When out of the service dad stayed in the field working on the boat radios for the fisherman in South Jersey. He told me that if I wanted to get into radioing, to forget about talking two miles and get a ham license and talk around the world. We lived in Oklahoma City, and the FAA training center, where Dad was in instructor, had an active ham club that taught. Dad signed my step brother and me up and we started classes. Three weeks later Dad got offered a job in Fort Worth at the Air Route Traffic Control Center which was just west of Amon Carter (now Centerport) airport. That ended my formal class training in Amateur Radio.

Now most hams I know are not bashful. Nor am I. We settled into Euless and I went on the prowl for an Elmer. I saw a big antenna, got off my bike, knocked on the door, “Is someone here a ham?” The lady told me that her husband was, he wasn’t home, but come back tomorrow. I did and met one of the nicest men in the world, Jessie Prince, WA5JFO. Jeff took this 14 year old youngster under his wing, and for the next several months I was over there afternoons getting tutored in radioing. Dad’s transfer was in the first quarter of 71, when school let out that summer, Jessie leant me his morse code learning records (33 1/3 no less), we moved the hifi into my bedroom, and I learned the code. August 20, 1971, FCC issued WN5FGB, and the rest is history. I can tell other stories, but I need something for the next time I get called on. My step brother

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never got a license. Dad took his test a few months after me, made several CW contacts but didn't really have the interest to keep it up. When his Novice ran out, that ended his Ham Radio days.

Most of the buds I knew took the same route I took, Love amateur radio, be active, find a lovely woman, get married, and spend the evenings in the ham shack – NOT! I am not going to give up the friendship of a marriage for a radio. My radioing was limited to about 1.5 hours a day – drive time radio, all on 2 meter FM. As we all know, romance leads to dirty diapers, and then there is really no time for hamming. I kept the license, the rig in the car, on only when alone. Now I am single, the daughter is old enough to take care of me, and I am back on HF again having a blast.

Did I ever get a CB? Matter of fact I did. After getting my advanced ticket I bought a used 23 channel from a friend. I used it all the time commuting back and forth to college in Corpus and the Metromess. There were not as many repeaters on in the late 70s, so much of the road between here and Corpus was either not covered or on a repeater pair I didn't have crystals for. Once, just outside Brownwood, my Pinto blew a radiator hose. I turned on 146.52, nada. I put out a call on channel 19 and some nice man helped me get parts and install the radiator hose. That trip from Abilene to San Antonio took me through some 2 meter deserts. Not as bad now days, most of I-35 is covered south of here, and even most of the way to OKC. Although I don't remember any specific conversations, I do remember IDing on the wrong mic more than once. No, I didn't put my CB call sign on ham radio, but I am sure several CBers scratched their head, "what type of handle is 'WB5NKI – oops'?"

73 es Good DX!

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US Postal Service Introduces Global Forever Stamp.



In addition to an increase in postal rates in January 2013, the US Postal Service introduced a new [Global Forever First-Class Mail International stamp](#). Priced at \$1.10 each and offered in a pane of 20, the *new* stamp offers a single price for any First-Class Mail International 1-ounce letter to any country in the world, as well as 2-ounce letters to Canada. The stamp is available online, at post offices in the US or by calling 1-800-782-6724.

73

Mike  
K5MMH

# What are all those weird sounds? CQ SSTV!

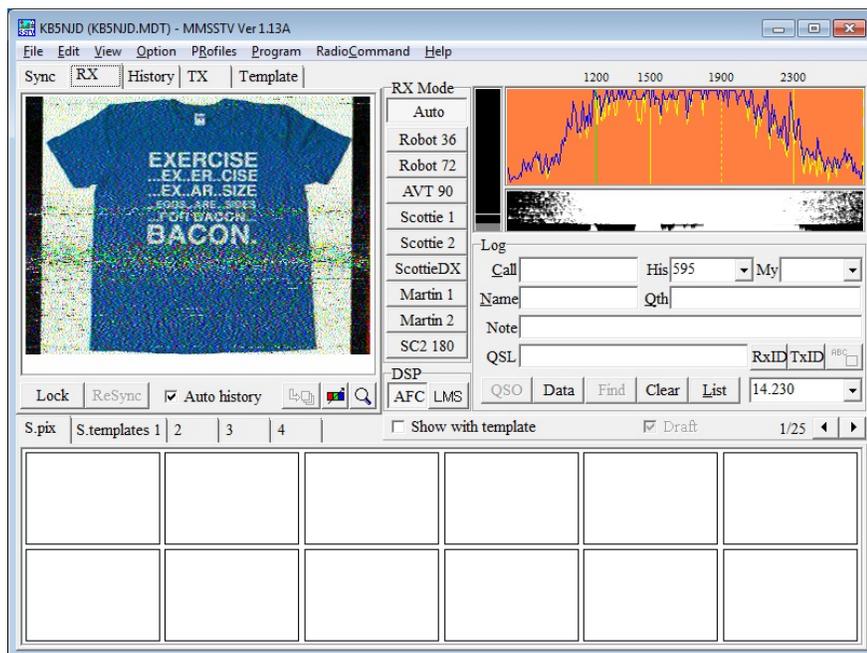


A few months ago, TXN Bill asked me to write an article on slow scan television, also known as SSTV. As it has been years since I have ventured into that corner of the hobby I started doing some research on the state of the art.

SSTV used to be done with lots of bulky equipment and fairly low resolution CCTV cameras whose outputs were routed to modulators and then on to the mic input of an HF rig. It was an expensive undertaking and much of the equipment had to be homebrewed. With the integration of the PC into the ham shack, almost every digital mode, including SSTV, came into the reach of the common ham.

What's kinda neat about this mode is that if you are setup for digital modes, you can simply setup shop on one of the watering hole frequencies and monitor. The software will decode the signals and place them into an archive for you to see at your convenience. At the time of writing, even on a weekday, there are number of individuals sending pictures back and forth on 14.230 MHz.

The software that I happen to be using is called MMSSTV written by JE3HHT, who is also the author of other digital software like MMTTY, which is a really good program for AFSK-based RTTY. You can download the software at <http://hamssoft.ca/pages/mmsstv.php>. Simple connections from the line out or speaker out to the mic input of the PC, using level settings similar to what you would use for other digital modes seems to work well. I made no changed to any audio settings when running the program for the first time on receive.



**MMSSTV with a recently received image. Note the noise on the image.**

My advice would be to simply setup the software and put your HF rig on 14.230 MHz and let it run in auto RX mode (default) in the evenings and weekends. Be sure to turn off the AGC as doing so seems to help the picture quality. **A word of caution:** You will occasionally get an inappropriate picture being sent or received. Other countries have different standards of what is or is not indecent so don't be surprised by racy images. South American countries are probably the worst about this, although Germany and Italy will push the limits from time to time.



CQ from WW4AS. Again, not the noise, particularly when the call sign was being sent. This should be a cautionary tale against using fancy graphics as it only makes reading more difficult!

Transmitting is a little more complicated and my recommendation is to simply experiment. I think the levels are similar to what you would want with AFSK-based RTTY, that is, full deflection of the ALC but don't quote me on that. Audio cables into the radio can be a little more complicated unless you have a radio that has an auxiliary audio input. Such inputs are typically in parallel with the mic connector on the front of the radio. This in itself presents a problem and while I am blessed with this auxiliary input on both of my main HF rigs, you have to remember to mute the mic plugged into the main mic connector! In my case, I use a desk mike with an on/off switch on the audio line. The problem is that when I turn the mic off, it effectively grounds the audio line and thus takes the auxiliary audio input offline as well. You might ask, "why not just disconnect the mic on the front of the radio?" You can do that but what I find with a lot of these SSTV guys is that they tend to talk a lot between their image transmissions. Your best bet is to invest in a mic switch, like those offered by MFJ that allow you to switch multiple inputs. In that case, you could switch a mic or an line out/speaker output from a PC to the rigs audio input. Check with MFJ for these switches and I won't detail them further here since the standard mic connector is no longer standard, it appears.

MMSSTV also has facilities in place to design a template and import images that may reside on your PC or that may have been taken with your camera. This includes adding text to pictures. Additionally MMSSTV has the capability to function as logging software and manage pictures that have been received.

Installation is straightforward and the current version has corrected a problem with the installation path that prevented ini files from being updated due to a permissions problem. It is best to take the default installation location or install in the root of the drive. Do not install into Program files.

Hopefully this will give you a little information to get you started in a fascinating but obscure and often overlooked area of this great hobby.

73 and come find me in the noise!

John KB5NJD/WG2XIQ

## Name That Station!!



Send your guess to [n5txn.be@gmail.com](mailto:n5txn.be@gmail.com).  
Winner will be revealed next month.



March's station photo belongs to KB5NLD, Dr. John Langridge  
Scott Crappa, KE5NLK had the winning guess.



Here is the station for May. Name that station??

Send me a picture of your station and be a part of the fun. It can be your fixed station, portable or mobile. Send in all three if you are so lucky to have all three.

73,BILL / N5TXN

## Financial Report ... April 2013



<b>April-13</b>	Income	Expense	Balance	Petty Cash
<b>General Fund</b>				
Beginning Balance 4/1/2013			\$2,479.61	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2013	\$12.50			
ARRL Renewal Income-2013				
EXXONMOBILE Donation	\$250.00			
Transfer From Matl. Property				
Transfer Petty Cash income				
TOTAL INCOME	\$262.50			
EXPENSES				
R1CU statement fee		\$3.00		
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$3.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$262.50	\$3.00		
Ending Balance 4/30/2013			\$2,739.11	
<b>Special Events Fund</b>				
Beginning Balance 4/1/2013			\$140.14	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Trans from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME	\$0.00			
EXPENSES				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$0.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Ending Balance 4/30/2013			\$140.14	
<b>Material Property Fund</b>				
Beginning Balance 4/1/2013			\$1,702.09	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2013	\$12.50			
EXXONMOBILE Donation	\$250.00			
Transfer from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME	\$262.50			
EXPENSES				
Telephone 3 Apr		42.07		
Transfer to General Fund				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$42.07		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$262.50	\$42.07		
Ending Balance 4/30/2013			\$1,922.52	
<b>April Balance</b>	\$525.00	\$45.07	\$4,801.77	

### 2013 Board Members

#### President

Mike Harang (K5MMH)

#### Vice-President

Bill Ellis (N5TXN)

#### Treasurer

Jerry Keltner (KB6OJE)

#### Secretary

Pat Roberson (KB5YPP)

#### Directors

Paul Dryer (KD5IVP)

Rick Ellis (KJ5UY)

Lester Wong (K5ITO)

### Committee Positions

#### Repeater Trustee

Johnny Roberson (KJ5LB)

#### Repeater Committee Chair

Mike Harang (K5MMH)

#### Newsletter Editor

Bill Ellis (N5TXN)

#### Web Master

Bruce Holt (KG1BAH)

# MN<sup>2</sup>

### Monday Night Net

**Net Time 8:00PM**

**147.060(+ ) Primary**

**444.500(+ ) Alternate**

## Minutes of Board Meeting ... April 2, 2013



The meeting was called to order by Mike (K5MMH) at 6:30 pm.  
Invocation was given by Paul (KD5IVP).

### **Executive Board members present:**

#### Officers

Mike Harang(K5MMH)  
Bill Ellis (N5TXN)  
Pat Roberson(K5YPP)  
Jerry Keltner (KB6OJE)

#### Directors

Lester Wong (K5ITO)  
Paul Dryer (KD5IVP)  
Rick Ellis (KJ5UY)

**Guests:** Johnny (KJ5LB), Wayne Schier (KE4SGS)

**Minutes:** Motion to approve as printed in the *Groundwire* by Rick (KJ5UY); Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Paul (KD5IVP). Motion approved.

**Treasurer's Report** Motion to approve as printed in the *Groundwire* by Bill(N5TXN): Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Les (K5ITO). Motion approved.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Repeater:** Intermittent problems persist. Dialog with manufacturer on issues. Batteries ordered for motherboard. Changes being made to methods to bring up repeater.

**VE Session:** None.

**EOC:** Nothing to report.

**Membership:** One applicant received – Tim Skidmore (KF5TTQ), Lancaster. Motion to accept by Rick (KJ5UY), second by Jerry (KB6OJE). Approved.

**Net:** Rick (KJ5UY) reports that we had 7-8 check-ins. There is a need for more volunteers to serve as Net Control, as there are currently only 3 who are doing this service. Wayne (KE4SGS) volunteered. Contact Rick (KJ5UY), Ben (K5NEB), or Russ (KX5G) if you can help.

**Web:** Looking ok. Rick (KJ5UY) requested creating a “silent key” page.

**Groundwire:** On the web.

### OLD BUSINESS

Texas State Parks on the Air – April 06 and 07. See [www.tspota.com](http://www.tspota.com) for details.

Head For the Hills Bike Rally – May 11 - Contact Jerry (KB6OJE) or Scott (KE5NLK) to volunteer. About 20 HAM operators are needed.

Ham-Com – June 07, and 08. SWDCARC has one table available for members to sell their equipment. Gather up the unused items you want to get rid of. Admission is \$8.00 per HAM, \$6.00 family member.

Financial audit will be done by wife of Scott (KE5NLK).

Jerusalem Market Place – Excellent job done by volunteers Jerry (KB6OJE), Jimmy (KB5WIO), Mike (K5MMH), Stephanie (KF5KIW), Lester (K5ITO), Pat W. (KF5AZL), Harold (KF5LDG), Gene (N5PKZ), and Bill (N5TXN).

### NEW BUSINESS

1. 80m Fox Hunt – April 6, 0830 after breakfast at Acapulco's
2. Field Day – June 22 and 23 – Chairperson is Bill Ellis (N5TXN). Mike (K5MMH) will assist. After a brief discussion, the site on Camp Wisdom Road was selected for this year. Motion by Paul (KD5IVP), second by Rick (KJ5UY). Approved. More information will be available soon.
3. GroundWire Front Page article – need articles – Mike (K5MMH) will appoint for April.
4. Program for April – John (KB5NJD)

Other Business: Wayne (KE4SGS) reported that the wife of “silent key” Charles Martin has radio gear and electronics to offer to the SWDCARC members. Johnny (KJ5LB) will visit and arrange to pick up items.

**ADJOURN: Motion** Paul (KD5IVP), second Rick (KJ5UY) at 7:25 pm.

## General Membership Meeting ... May 16, 2013



The meeting was called to order by Bill (N5TXN) at 6:30 PM.

Invocation was given by Floyd (KC5QBC)

**Executive Board members present :**

**Officers**

Mike Harang (K5MMH) – Out of town

Bill Ellis (N5TXN)

Pat Roberson (KB5YPP)

Jerry Keltner (KB6OJE) - Out of town

**Directors**

Lester Wong (K5ITO)

Paul Dryer (KD5IVP) - Conflict

Rick Ellis (KJ5UY)

**Guests:** Michael (KA5CFS), Tim Skidmore (KF5TTQ) new member, Ben Adkins

**Minutes:** Motion: Rick (KJ5UY) 2<sup>nd</sup> : Johnny (KJ5LB). Approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Motion : Johnny (KJ5LB) 2<sup>nd</sup> : Jimmy (KB5WIO). Approved

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Repeater:** Floyd (KC5QBC) is working on the backup; backup has been to factory for refurbish, has parts, no estimated time of completion. The 2meter and 440 are currently ID'ing

**VE Session:** none

**EOC:** We are not using the Cedar Hill EOC for Field Day this year, but they have offered the use of a generator which would facilitate the 3A station category.

**Membership:** Tim Skidmore (KF5TTQ) new and present tonight.

**Net:** **More members are needed to take turns acting as Net Control on Monday nights.**

**Web:** Is up but does not have current *Groundwire*. Email for Russ (KX5G) needs correcting.

**Groundwire:** All submissions for the *Groundwire* need to be in **MS Word** format. Russ (KX5G) will be doing the front page this time.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Head For The Hills Bike Rally – May 11 - A total of at least 27 radio operators are needed. Two operators are needed at all stations and 4 at Net Control. A sign up sheet was passed around. A private repeater is available if problems occur with the SWDCARC repeater.

2. Ham-Com – June 07 and 08 - Rick (KJ5UY) and John (KB5NJD) will go out on Friday. Everyone bring your stuff to sell and take turns monitoring the club table.

3. Financial Audit – In progress, will be completed in May

4. Field Day – **Location will be Pioneer Bible Translators, 7255 W. Camp Wisdom Rd.** Chairperson is Bill Ellis (N5TXN), preparations are under way. We may be operating as a 3AC or 3A station using call W5WB. The dates are June 22 and 23. Lester (K5ITO) has volunteered to bring the meat for the Saturday dinner. Side dishes and desserts are needed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ham gear, pieces and parts, and electronics are available from the estate of Charles Martin. Donations are accepted and will benefit the SWDCARC. Contact Johnny (KJ5LB) if interested, or attend Ham Com to browse the items.

**ADJOURN:** **Motion** by Rick (KJ5UY), Second by Jimmy (KB5WIO).