

AIRWAVES



UHF Repeater Taken Off the Air

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Friday, November 8th – Greenville, TX.

The Majors Field Amateur Radio Club had anticipated that the Old Control Tower may be going away some day. The club's concern centered around the location of its UHF repeater, WD5GSL on 444.625MHz (-) PL 151.4Hz, which is located inside of this Old Control Tower. These concerns came to the forefront when several club members received a notice from Ben Parker – WB5HSL, who works in the Facilities Group and heard of the pending project to tear down the Old Control Tower. The project that the Facilities Group was requesting bids on would entail roof repair of the entire

102 Hanger and include removing the old control tower structure that currently remains over bay area 10.

Realizing that time was of the essence before work begins, an effort immediately got started to coordinate a work party to take down and store the UHF repeater equipment. Plans to coordinate a work party the next day, Saturday, were being made. However, Victor Paul – WB0TEV and Mark Rice – KK5MR both had some extra time on their hands by Friday afternoon. The two of them met to survey the equipment and to see what they could do to start the work.

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No Meetings until Next Year

Special points of interest:

- Next Club Meeting is Thursday, January 30, 2014 at 11:45am
- November and December meetings fall on a holiday, so they were cancelled.
- UHF Repeater is off-line – looking for a new home.

As you all know, the Majors Field Amateur Radio Club normally holds its meetings on the LAST Thursday of each calendar month. However, with the holidays approaching, there seems to be a conflict, as the LAST Thursday in November is Thanksgiving and the LAST Thursday in December is in the middle of the Holiday Break.

To address this, the members agreed to cancel the November and December meetings.

This leaves quite a big gap in the months between club meetings. So, in order to keep the momentum up a bit, we will try to schedule some lunch-time get-togethers to be announced by email a week before, in order

to have general club discussions. These won't be official club meetings, by any stretch, but we will try to have some information to share as well as keeping up with the hobby.

So, please be looking in your email in-box for any possible announcements that may come along from the club. And, we will see you all NEXT YEAR on **Thursday, January 30, 2014** at 11:45am in the Rainbow Conference Room.



Local Ham Heads to Africa for a DXpedition

"Victor saw this as an opportunity to experience two items on his "bucket list"; visit Africa as well as participate in a DXpedition and experience the other side of the pile-up."

Local boy answers the call to DXpedition to The Kingdom of Swaziland! Victor Paul - WB0TEV, a passionate DXer and Contester who has achieved DXCC in the mid 1990s, joins the multinational DXpedition to the tiny African nation.

The Kingdom of Swaziland, also known by locals as Umbuso-waseSwatini is a very small country that is surrounded by the country of South Africa and Mozambique. With a land mass of only 17,364 square kilometers and a population of around 1.2 Million, you would not expect too many amateur radio operators to exist. Approximately only about 100 operators have licenses in this country. So, it is this kind of climate that makes this country so enticing for a DXpedition.



Having experience in establishing other African DXpeditions, Charles "Frosty" Frost - K5LBU threw his efforts into this Multinational trip for 2013. His experience is amplified by many years living in different countries of Africa with his wife. Frosty

and Roger Jones - ZS6RJ from South Africa, teamed up to perform the scouting detail some time before the event, in order to secure the site and facilities and finalize the plans. Many of the team members also participated in a 2012 DXpedition to Lesotho as 7P8D

Announcements started to go out for operators around August of 2013. Along with some of the announcements, a survey was begun in order to get a feel for what DXers were looking for, with regards to bands and modes. As a result, a team was starting to form with the expertise and equipment that would send this plan into motion in November. Victor saw this as an opportunity to experience two items on his "bucket list"; visit Africa as well as participate in a DXpedition and experience the other side of the pile-up. In fact, Victor was hoping to go on an African DXpedition for several years. So, after surveying his resources of excess PTO, he contacted Frosty and Roger who invited him to join and he bought a ticket.

Victor is planning to depart for his trip to Africa in less than a week from now. The team will assemble in Johannesburg, South Africa and then drive to Pigg's Peak, Swaziland. Along the way, they may see Kruger National Park, if time allows. Victor

will be heavily operating RTTY as well as some Phone. The operations that Frosty and Roger setup are boiler plate operations that have been done before, so there are not too many "unknowns" involved. The cost is only \$225/day and covers everything except transportation. He is hoping that the whole package with airfare will be less than \$5000 and possibly less than \$4000.

Victor had the opportunity to address the Majors Field Amateur Radio Club at their October meeting to tell about his plans for this event. It was great to see the excitement and anticipation of working the other side of the pile-up.

If you want to get in on the action, check out the web site for bands and modes at swazidx.org. They plan to start as 3DA0ET on Saturday, November 16th and run through Wednesday, November 27th for a week and a half. They will operate CW, RTTY and SSB. This expedition will have a full-time RTTY operator. Victor plans to operate SSB and RTTY, so you never know who you will get until you get on the air!

By Michael Ketchum - K5MDK.

UHF Repeater Taken Off the Air – continued from page 1

Mark offered to bring some large duffle bags that could be used to carry the equipment parts down the stairs. Victor had put in his 40 hours and was available to take a look in the late afternoon.

Mark arrived on the scene first, by climbing the stairs all the way up to the top. He had to use a flashlight, as the stairway was dark and the lights did not work. To complicate matters worse, there were pieces of air ducting and material hanging low over parts of the stairway that made the climb a bit difficult at times. When he got to the tower structure, he heard someone key up the repeater and the voice came out loud and clear. It was Victor announcing that the repeater would soon be going off the air. With that, Mark pulled out his cell phone and called Victor. The two coordinated powering down the repeater and Mark began the work, as Victor was on his way up the stairs.

The work, overall, went pretty fast. Mark noticed that the coax used was of high military grade quality. Other than all of the bird feces

that was caked on top, the repeater equipment looked okay, not affected by the moisture or weather. The antenna also looked fairly good, with no visible signs of corrosion. The units were brought down in the duffle bags and placed onto a golf cart that Mark was able to secure. The equipment was brought to the second floor closet of the Fire Station, where the other club HF equipment is located, for safe keeping.

A word of “thanks” goes out to both Mark Rice – KK5MR and Victor Paul – WB0TEV, for their efforts to secure the UHF repeater. No work detail was needed the following day.

Now, we need to start the effort to locate a new home for the UHF repeater. An email was sent to facilities to request a spot. Meanwhile, Mark and Victor were last seen spying out the new paint hanger as a possible home for the repeater.

“A word of “thanks” goes out to both Mark Rice – KK5MR and Victor Paul – WB0TEV, for their efforts to secure the UHF repeater.”

By Michael Ketchum – K5MDK.

Calendar

NOVEMBER

16 ~ 27 3DA0ET DXpedition to the Kingdom of Swaziland
See article on page 1 for more information about this event.

28 Meals On Wheels Support
Dave Patrick – W7DAV is organizing the Meals On Wheels Support public service event near downtown Dallas at the Visiting Nurses Association kitchen. This is on Thanksgiving day morning. Please contact Dave at w7dav@verizon.net for more information.

28 Thanksgiving Day Holiday

DECEMBER

8 Dallas Marathon
If you want to reserve your position from 2012, sign up on our Marathon Yahoo Group page and email Bob Jones, W5BJ at w5bj+arri.net. You can also use the web sign up form. As this event grows we will most definitely need more communicators. At minimum you need to be a Communications Resource Function S. Best to be a CRF-B. Marathon information can be found at https://www.dallasmarathon.com/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=marathon_cpc

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Club Station

Club Station: TBD

VHF Repeater: WD5GSL/R
147.160 MHz (+) PL 100.0 Hz
Friday Morning Talk-In Net

UHF Repeater: WD5GSL/R **(CURRENTLY OFF AIR)**
444.625 MHz (-) PL 151.4 Hz

MAJORS FIELD AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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