

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



Volume 6 Issue 4

April 2018

Inside this issue

- [Meeting Minutes](#)
- [President's Letter](#)
- [FCC to Deregulate Amateur Radio by 2020](#)
- [Local ham radio club decides to go dancing](#)
- [V31CQ/KK7JS Trip to Belize](#)
- [MFARC Members QRV from Belize \(V31\)](#)
- [Calendar](#)

Meeting Minutes

Majors Field ARC Meeting Minutes 3/8/2018

- Meeting was called to order at 11:50
- Digital repeater has internet access ready. Work crew is needed to complete installation – is being planned.
- Discussed list of local club hamfests, meetings, and activities.
- Meeting over at 12:05
- Program: Recent trip to V31 by Victor Paul, Michael Ketchum, and Scott Davis.

Written by Secretary Scott Davis – KK7JS

President's Letter

Spring has sprung?

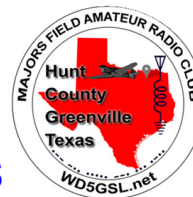
Well, really it has. Look at all the green. And storms. However, as cold as it is some mornings you might wonder. Therefore, I have still been wrapped up in some inside projects. I finished hooking up the 240V supply to the shack and I have actually run the big ol' Henry amp a couple of times. I also brought up an old Tempo One that probably hasn't been used in 20 years. Good news is it receives fine. Bad news is no transmit power. Another project. Speaking of: It is time to start working those new projects dreamed up (or acquired) over the winter. Let us hear about what you are working on. On the Club front, we have a testing session next month and a Field Day the month after that. Jon – [WB5KSD](#), Michael – [K5MDK](#), and I performed a site survey for the new 440MHz repeater upgrade, and we are almost ready to cut over to the new digital multi-mode repeater.

Meetings

Meetings are the 2nd Thursday of every month in the [Kitty Hawk C.R.](#) We need some quality programs! It's just a 15 to 30 minute chat about your latest project or some information you'd like to share. I say again, someone, anyone, we're dying here! To sweeten the deal, we will add one extra ticket for the end of year prizes for each program you present at the monthly meetings. If no one comes up with anything better, Michael – [K5MDK](#) has a talk on ham radio over cell phone, and/or I will bring some pictures back from [Belton HamExpo](#).

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



A word about joining and membership renewal: It's still not too late to be counted! However, our first quarter report is due really soon. With your membership and support, we can continue with projects such as 2-Meter repeater technology refresh, acquisition of a new HF radio for the club, or any other projects we'd like to try.

ARRL Action

We are only a few members away from being able to gain listing as an [ARRL affiliated club](#). If you have ever considered [ARRL membership](#), now is a good time to join your League. Be sure to update your membership status with Scott – [KK7JS](#) and Michael – K5MDK to show ARRL membership.

E-Club:					
	YES:	No:	%Yes:		
	26	1	96.3%		

ARRL:			
	YES:	No:	%Yes:
	13	14	48.1%

Lic Class:					
	None:	Tech:	Gen:	Ext/Adv:	%Hams:
	1	7	5	14	96.3%

Paid:			
	YES:	No:	%Yes:
	27	27	50.0%

ARRL affiliation will give us a stronger voice with the League when it comes to policy that affects all of ham radio. Better policy will give the League more input with the FCC and with legislative matters.

Repeaters

Our internet access for the new 440 repeater has been tested and is good to go. It's live and ready. I know we are anxious to get this done. I assume our Club Trustee Jon – WB5KSD will schedule a work-day to move in with the new hardware and go live with the digital functions.

License Classes

David Rogers – [KG5KPU](#) has set the date for a Technician class and test session for the State Guard. May 19 and 20, Saturday and Sunday with review session all day Saturday starting at 8 AM, and wrapping up the review and testing on Sunday starting at 8 AM. We expect there will be a lot more attendance at this session than we are used to seeing, and David will need our support to help him do this.

Field Day

June 23 and 24. Probably set up on June 22 (Friday). Only TWO more meetings to make plans between this meeting and Field Day.

See you at the meeting Thursday. Bring a friend, and feel free to bring your lunch.

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



73,
Larry
[K5XB](#)
MFARC President

Written by President Larry Smith – K5XB

FCC to Deregulate Amateur Radio by 2020

Washington, DC, April 1, 2018

In a bold move the Federal Communications Commission has decided to deregulate the Amateur Radio Service. This comes at a time when budget cuts within the Commission are forcing its Enforcement Bureau to shut down by 1 January 2020.

A spokesperson for the Commission stated that since Amateur Radio operators are supposed to be self-policing that this new move "should not pose a problem". And that it would also "solve the whole issue of restructuring".

This news has come as quite a shock to many in the Amateur Radio community, striking up many heated debates. "Basically we're being told that we're on our own as of 1 January, 2020", said a high-level League staff member.

In the interim between 2018 and 2020, Amateur Radio operators are expected to act just as they do now. "Nothing's changed yet, and all the rules and regulations are still in effect," said a spokesperson for the Commission.

All of this is set to change however, starting in 2020. On 1 January 2020 Amateur Radio in the United States will cease to exist as an official radio service. At that time, it will be up to the operators to make up their own rules and regulations and to enforce them.

To clarify one other issue, "call signs that have not already been issued will all be available on the 'honor system'," said another Commission spokesperson. The band-plans and power limitations are expected to stay the same.

Look for more information on this late-breaking news story as it becomes available.

Revised from an anonymous article from eHam.net 4/1/2004

Local ham radio club decides to go dancing

In a bold move, one amateur radio club in North East Texas has decided to give up talking about the weather, dipoles and radios on their nets. It would seem they have more interest in dancing and the latest dancing stars. "It just started one day, we were having our weekly net and someone asked if **Dancing With the Stars** was on yet. Suddenly, we all cleared from the net to go watch it on TV", said ND8NCE, the net control for the club's weekly net. Once the common interest was discovered and there was no shame in expressing their desired interest in this art form, ham operators came out of nowhere to join.

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



Integrating their hobby into the dance arts was a challenge. They started with a FOXHUNT-TROT event that began with wild popularity. Participants were supposed to dance the foxtrot to their iPods while attempting to locate the fox. However, nobody ever got around to finding the hidden transmitter. Next, they tried a WALTZING Field Day, where hams dance to QSOs being made. This actually started to ketch on pretty good. The Press had a field day covering the event in the newspaper. Finally, the club started a new square dance event where the music is played over the PA system while the caller shouted calls via ham radio. Dancers wore HTs in order to receive the call instructions. This found favor with most of the members, however there was a problem with HT's getting knocked off as dancers performed the "swing your partner" call. It was annoying to get into a set and the caller pausing to ID. There was also the issue of background music being transmitted over the air.

Look for more dancing in Ham Radio's future, as this new popular trend sweeps across the nation.

Sadly Written by Vice President Michael Ketchum – K5MDK

V31CQ/KK7JS Trip to Belize

Victor Paul ([WB0TEV/V31VP](#)) and I ([KK7JS/V31CQ](#)) travelled down to Belize for the [CQWW WPX RTTY](#)



contest the second weekend of February. Trip was an easy one – short flight to Houston and then about 2 ½ hours to Belize City. We were met by the proprietor of the [Maya Hill Lodge](#), Monika, who took us on a 45-minute drive to reach the place where we stayed. After a dinner at a local restaurant called "[Soldier Blue](#)" (excellent food!) I was able to make my way over to the shack and break in my V31CQ callsign. My first QSO was with [NA5C](#) on 80m CW. I went over to 40m CW and almost instantly had a good

pileup going into the U.S. The next morning on 20m it took only a few minutes to have a good pileup going, this time into Europe.

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIRWAVES



During the RTTY contest, for the most part, it was easy to have a steady pileup going. We did have one strange bit of propagation on Saturday night/Sunday morning. After all of EU was in daylight, on 40m I was *still* hearing and working stations there. I thought I was going to get to bed after 0100 local time but ended up staying until 0330 local when finally I couldn't stay awake.

After the contest, I had one more full day of operating on Monday and a brief period on Tuesday morning before leaving for the airport and home. In total, I made about 800+ QSOs. I had QSL cards printed to answer the dozens of requests I've received, including a few direct ones.

I'm hoping to return for another visit sometime in the fall. I had a lot of fun, and really want to do it again!



Written by Secretary Scott Davis – V31CQ/KK7JS

MFARC Members QRV from Belize (V31)

After being part of a 12 man DXpedition to Swaziland (3DA0ET) in 2013 and being part of a RTTY contest crew at PJ6A on Saba (PJ6A) in 2015, I confess to have succumbed to the DX bug and I started looking for places to go where I could "be the DX" without breaking the budget.

In 2016 the internet led me to a newly opened rental shack in central Belize, [Maya Hill Lodge](#), run by a German couple, Andre Scholz ([DL1AS/V31DL](#)) and his XYL Monika. The rates were affordable and I found that Belize is one of the easier countries in which to get a license.

Unlike many countries where you typically can only operate portable (i.e. with the country's prefix / your US call such as TG9/WB0TEV if I were to go to Guatemala) or pay big bucks to get a unique local call sign, the Belize PUC ([Public Utilities Commission](#)) makes it easy. After contacting them by email I found that all I needed to do was send them a scan of my passport and US Amateur Radio license, along with an international money order (available from the US post office) for \$20 USD. You can also renew for up to 10 years at a time for \$15 USD per year. Furthermore, you can choose your own 2 letter suffix if it's not already taken. Not surprisingly, I got [V31VP](#).

After a of couple email exchanges with their licensing officer Ms. Sharolyn Dougal, I mailed off the \$20 money order to the PUC and about 6 weeks later I got a big manila envelope in the mail with my Belize

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



Amateur Radio certificate (suitable for framing) and a laminated wallet card. All V31 licenses are set to expire on Dec 31. After getting my first license in 2016, I sent them \$75 to renew for 5 years and am now good thru the end of 2021.



My first trip was in October 2016. The shack is well appointed with an [IC-7300](#) as the main transceiver (there are others as well), an [Expert Amps 1.3 KW](#) solid-state amp and lots of other goodies. For that first trip, Andre only had some low dipoles and a multiband Windom but I still made tons of QSOs and had a blast.

When I went back the second time in Feb 2017, Andre had just finished putting up a 63-foot tower with a [Cushcraft A3S tribander](#) and I really racked up the QSOs in the [CQ WPX RTTY](#) contest.

(He has plans for a 2nd tower sometime in late 2018). Flights to Belize are affordable on [Southwest Airlines](#) (I typically spend less than \$400 round trip) and I was hooked.

Fast forward to 2018 and [MFARC](#) members Scott Davis ([KK7JS](#)) and Mike Ketchum ([K5MDK](#)) got their Belize licenses as [V31CQ](#) and [V31MK](#) respectively.

Feb 8-12 Scott and I went down to the Maya Hill Lodge and did a Multi-Op Single Transmitter entry in the CQ WPX RTTY contest and had a blast racking up over 1800 RTTY QSO's. We did alternating ~ 4-hour long shifts, but we didn't try to be on the radio the full 48 hours (even contesting can cease being fun if you're sleep deprived). Nonetheless, one night when Scott had been planning on going QRT around midnight he still stayed on the radio until almost 3 AM amazed that Europe was still coming through on 40m even though they had been in daylight for a 2-3 hours.



Based on the scores posted to the 3830 score rumors website our entry looks to be in the top 5 in the world for the M/S class and possibly #2 in North America. Outside the contest Scott put his enviable CW skills to use and made a number of CW QSO's as V31CQ (great call!). Scott indicates that he plans on returning perhaps for a CW contest sometime. Alas, all good things must end and as is typical of my trips down there, after flying down Thursday, we flew back home Monday, getting into Dallas around 11 pm and back to Greenville 30 minutes past midnight Tuesday morning. We both came to work late that day.

Three weeks after the start of the first trip, it was time for Mike Ketchum (K5MDK/V31MK) to accompany me down for the ARRL SSB International DX contest.

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



We flew down on Southwest flying first from Dallas Love Field (11am departure) to Houston (noon arrival). After about a 2-hour layover at Houston Hobby, we boarded for our 2-1/2 flight down to [Philip Goldson International Airport](#), just north of Belize City. We arrived at about 4:45 pm, cleared Customs and Immigration and were met curbside by Monika. We arrived at Maya Hill just as the sun was setting around 6:30 pm. Joined then by Andre we all went out to eat at a funky little Belizean restaurant down the road called Soldier Blue.

Shortly before 9pm Mike and I were back at Maya Hill and up in the ham shack with Mike ready to break in his new V31MK call. 40m SSB was the place to be and his first QSO was with W2XU at 0254Z. 7-QSOs later a familiar voice boomed into our headsets as Scott KK7JS called in from beautiful Greenville Texas. Over the next hour or so, Mike worked a number of stateside hams as well as several Europeans including YO7MPD (Romania), SP3CMX & SP9RXP (Poland), DJ9KG (Germany), UT5MB (Ukraine), F5OHM (France), IODJV & IK1GEY (Italy), OK1FKM (Czech Republic), HA2VR (Hungary), and RV6BED (Russia).



It was good to give out V31 to some DX since for the ARRL SSB DX Contest that weekend, we would only be working the lower 48 US States, DC and Canada, while they would be looking solely for DX. From

our spot in Belize the strategy would be to point the beam north and blast away! But first, some antenna work was in order.

Prior to this trip, the only antennas for 80m were a dipole and multi-band Windom. They loaded up okay but were less than 30 feet off the ground putting very little radiation at the low angles needed for anything but very close in communications. Being so low and in close proximity to the ham shack, 80m signals would often disrupt the USB connection between my logging computer and the shack gear. I'd suggested to Andre that we put up an 80m inverted Vee hung off the top of his tower and cable it into the 8 position remote switch up by the tower's crow's nest platform.



WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



Accordingly, Friday morning, Andre, Mike and I went to work. An 80m dipole was constructed and



loaded into my backpack. After strapping on a safety harness, I then become the tower monkey climbing up to the tower crow's nest.

Mike and Andre served as ground crew.

The new 80m inverted Vee proved its worth later that night allowing us to scoop up some 46 US State and Canadian province multipliers.

For DX stations like us, the multipliers in the ARRL SSB DX Contest are each of the lower 48 States and the District of Columbia plus and the 14 Canadian Provinces and Territories, on each of the non-WARC bands from 160-10 meters. The contest runs from 0000Z Saturday (6pm CST Friday night) until 2400Z Sunday (6 pm CST Saturday night). Operating under my V31VP call sign Mike and I ran in shifts ~3 hours long.

The pileups were just enormous! Hardly any search and pouncing was done. We could RUN for hours on end and did so. We occupied one 20m frequency for almost 6 hours straight working well over 200 QSO's/hr. At times the rate meter on the N1MM+ logging program topped out at over 310 QSO's/hr and there was one 60 second period where Mike managed to squeeze in 7-QSO's. Most of the QSOs were made on 40m at night and 20m in the daylight, but we had a nice long run on 15m as well on Sunday afternoon.



We stayed on 80m long enough to scoop up some 46 multipliers, but spent most of the night time hours on 40m where the QSO rate was better. 10m was pretty much a bust. Listening on 10m the only stations we could hear were from deep South America, but couldn't hear any of the W/VE stations they were working. In an attempt to get at least SOME multipliers on 10m, during a couple 15-minute periods on the Sunday afternoon 15m run I announced that I would be on 28.301 at a specific time to try and drive some 10m business our way. That worked to get a couple dozen stations in the log on 10m but it was pretty much spotlight propagation into California and Arizona. A few other states made it into

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



out log, but their signals were barely above the noise. I did make one 160m QSO when during an 80m run W9RE asked to move me to 160m. Using the low Windom antenna, I was just able to make the QSO, but the RF from it disrupted the USB connection from the laptop to the radio, necessitating a time out to get things working again. Needless to say, we opted against any further 160m attempts.

Although the contest lasted 48-hours, we only operated about 32-hours, with both of us assuming horizontal polarization in the wee small hours of the morning. We also took off most of Sunday morning and early afternoon to go to church in the nearby Mennonite community of Spanish Lookout. After church the four of us were joined for lunch at a neat open air roadside restaurant by a retired Belizean couple who are friends of Andre and Monika plus Monika's mother Hertha (a very spry 82 year old) who had flown in from Germany the day before.



We were back on the radio mid Sunday afternoon for the big push to the closing bell. When the dust settled we had over 4200 QSOs in the log (4174 after excluding the dupes). We worked all 49 of the US mults on 20m, 40m & 15m and came close on 80m. The only mults we never worked at all were the Canadian provinces of Labrador (VO2) and the Northern Territories (VE8). We even managed to work the almost uninhabited Canadian Arctic Territory of Nunavut when VY0ERC (at 80° North Latitude) called in from Ellesmere Island on 20m in the last hour of the contest.

Based on the scores posted on the ARRL website, it looks like we managed to snag the #5 score overall in the Multi-Operator/Single Transmitter category, and #4 in North America.

Alas, all good things must come to an end. As on several of my past visits, on Monday, on the way to the airport, we stopped and visited the **St. Martin de Porres Roman Catholic School** just down the road from the Maya Hill Lodge. It's a rather humble school (bare concrete floors, no AC) with limited

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



resources, but they do a good job of educating Belize's next generation with what they have.



Often guests from Maya Hill make small contributions to the school.

Three weeks after the trip with Mike I went back for the [CQ WPX SSB](#) contest, operating solo. I only managed a little under 27 hours of BIC (Butt In Chair) time, same as the year before, but a better operating strategy yielded a 25% score increase over 2017. In the WPX contest, multipliers are prefixes and are not by band, so there is really no incentive to get on low rate bands like 160m and 10m. The QSO breakdown by band was:

- 160m: 0
- 80m: 287
- 40m: 768
- 20m: 1457
- 15m: 314
- 10m: 65
- **Total: 2891**

WEIRD WAVES

April Fools Edition of the AIR WAVES



If we weren't scrapping the bottom of the barrel in the 11 year sunspot cycle, the 10m and 15m numbers would be a lot higher with less reliance on 20m.

In the day following the contest, I did a bunch of RTTY on 20m focusing on Japan during the propagation window that runs from about 2200Z to 0200Z.

Alas, that will be the last trip to Belize for a few months. Most of the main DX contests are scheduled near the spring and fall equinoxes when worldwide HF propagation tends to be at its best.

Contesters often post their scores on a website called 3830scores.com. The name comes from the fact that "back in the day" folks would often gather on 3830 kHz after the contest to share their tentative scores and try and get an idea on how they did as well as swap stories about their experiences in the contest. If you want to read the more detailed write ups for V31VP in each of these three recent contests, you can follow these links:

CQ WPX RTTY Contest:

<http://www.3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=pKaOz9icmigcp>

ARRL International DX Contest (SSB)

<http://www.3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=tbaDzuicvcip>

CQ WPX SSB Contest

<http://www.3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=pKaOz9icmigcp>

Written by Victor Paul – V31VP/WB0TEV

Calendar

- April 12 MFARC Meeting at 11:45am at B136-A Kitty Hawk Conference Room.
- April 7 Belton HamEXPO, Belton, TX www.TARC.org/hamexpo
- April 7 Texas State Parks on the Air <http://www.tspota.org/rules>
- April 15 ARRL Rookie Roundup - Phone
- April 19 SVARA Meeting at 7:00pm at Hunt Regional Hospital.
- April 28 **NEW** Mentorfest Convention in Garland, TX www.arrlntx.org/mentorfest
- May 5 10-10 International Spring CW Contest <http://www.ten-ten.org>
- May 5 Indiana QSO Party
- May 5 Delaware QSO Party
- May 12 SKCC Weekend Sprintathon CW <http://www.skccgroup.com>
- May 12 Arkansas QSO Party
- May 12 50 MHz Spring Sprint <http://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints>

WEIRD WAVES



April Fools Edition of the AIRWAVES

- May 19-20 Element 2A License Class and VE session at Texas State Guard Amory, Greenville.
Contact David Rogers –KG5KPU for more info.
- May 23 SKCC Sprint CW <http://www.skccgroup.com>
- May 26 CW WW WPX Contest CW <http://www.cqwp.com>
- June 23-24 FIELD DAY

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

- Daily DFW Early Traffic Net (NTS) at 6:30pm 146.88 – PL 110.9Hz
- Daily DFW Late Traffic Net (NTS) at 8:30pm 146.72 – PL 110.9Hz
- Daily DFW CW Traffic Net (NTS) at 7:00pm and at 10pm on 3541 KHz <http://www.k6jt.com>
- Thurs SVARA Net Every Thursday night at 7:00pm on the K5GVL/R 146.780 MHz (+) PL 114.8Hz
Meets every Thursday night except on SVARA meetings 3rd Thursday of each month.

Officers

- President:** Larry Smith – K5XB
president@wd5gsl.net
(254) 644-6465 cell
- Vice President:** Michael Ketchum – K5MDK
vice-president@wd5gsl.net
(972) 408-6573 cell
- Secretary:** Scott Davis – KK7JS
secretary@wd5gsl.net
- Treasurer:** John Nelson Jr. – N0DFW
treasurer@wd5gsl.net
(903) 454-0911 cell
- VE/Class Team Leader:** Jae Stutzman – K5JAE
classes@wd5gsl.net
- Club Trustee:** Jonathan Brown – WB5KSD
trustee@wd5gsl.net

Club Repeaters

- Club Station:** TBD
- VHF Repeater:** WD5GSL/R
147.160 MHz (+) PL 100.0 Hz
- UHF Repeater:** WD5GSL/R
444.625 MHz (+) PL 151.4 Hz

AirWaves is a production of the Majors Field Amateur Radio Club

We're on the Web! Find us at: <http://wd5gsl.net>

Your article submissions are welcomed. Please submit to editor@wd5gsl.net.