



# The Communicator

May 6, 2021

President: Larry Callahan, [KF6JQQ](#)

1st Vice President: Joe Hart, [WD6FPE](#)

2nd Vice President: Dustin Carpenter,

[KC0ACW](#)

Secretary: Scott Royer, [KM6RLD](#)

Treasurer: John Stumm, [KG6ZBN](#)

### Directors:

Rob Vella, [KK9ROB](#)

Glen Del Tour, [WB8DTJ](#)

Larry Miller, [KM6OQI](#)

### *KCCVARC Repeater Frequencies*

145.150	minus	100.0	Breckenridge Mt.	
146.910	minus	100.0	Grapevine Pk.	
224,060	minus	100.0	Breckenridge Mt.	
443.900	plus	100.0	Low level North of Town	
52.780	minus	82.5	Grapevine Pk.	Off the Air - Storm Damage

## **New Board Director**

Please welcome our new board member, Rob Vella, KK9ROB. Rob is originally from Bakersfield but has spent time travelling back and forth between Seattle and Bakersfield.

Rob was first licensed in May of 2020. He chose a vanity call with ROB as the suffix but the only one available was with a 9 call.

He said he had heard about amateur radio and he obtained his license. He is currently a technician but has plans to upgrade in the near future. HF has caught his eye.

Rob can be found on 2 meters, generally using the internet to access some of the Los Angeles repeaters. Make sure to look for Rob and welcome him to the club.



Pictured here are Rod Feil, Arly's son, and neighbor, Brian Rosales, KI6LBE. The brake on the antenna has malfunctioned and Arly had the job of holding the antenna in position while Rod and Brian completed the work.

At the top of the mast sets a Diamond 90X, VHF/UHF antenna, about 40 feet above the ground. Arly was able to make clear contacts on 2 meters, simplex, and was full quieting. He also reports making a contact with Australia on 20 meters with the beam. His signal report was 5X8.

The beam is a tribander, Hi Gain 5DX, with 10, 15 and 20 meters capability. There is also an inverted V hanging off the side of the mast and is up in the air, instead of resting on the air conditioning unit.

Wishing Arly lots of new contacts on HF!

---

## **N6INT Up In the Air**

Arly, N6INT, has finally raised his antennas up to the top of his mast, after waiting patiently during last summer's lock down due to the virus.

## April Gathering

April 16, 2021 marked the first gathering of the club since the on-set of the pandemic and the restrictions set in place, restricting meetings.



There were about 20 members that hunkered under the shelter. Larry Callahan, the club president presided. Although this was not an “official” meeting, it did provide an opportunity for members to visit.



John Stumm set up a demonstration of the portability of HF equipment, setting up an HF station using a push pole 40 feet in the air with

a long wire antenna. John said he was pleasantly surprised with a British Columbia station responded to his CQ.

Due to the success of the April gathering, the board has set May 22, 2021 as the next opportunity to get together. The start time is 1400 and look for the group at Jastro Park.

The board is requesting that you bring chairs and tables in case others are using the shade cover.

---

## From the ARRL

There have been some members who have expressed an interest in becoming more active using CW. ARRL offers code practice periodically on several bands

The frequencies where the transmissions can be found are: 1.8025, 3.5815, 7.0475, 14.0475, 18.0975, 21.0675, 28.0675, 50.350, and 147.555 MHz.

**Slow Code** = practice sent at 5, 7-1/2, 10, 13 and 15 words per minute (wpm).

**Fast Code** = practice sent at 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 13 and 10 wpm.

Check ARRL’s web site for dates and times. Remember that the code practice is automated and does not reflect the individual styles of actual CW operators.

Straight Key Century Club is another source for practice. SKCC provides a number of frequencies where interested Amateurs can make contacts with other operators. The speeds vary and operators are more than willing to slow down to accommodate the

novice. The contact consists of name, signal report and SKCC number, if you have one.

The frequencies where SKCC operators can be found are: 7.120, 14.050 and 14.114 MhZ. For those looking for slower code, check out 7.114 MhZ.

## **St. Vincent Island Impacted By Volcano. *From ARRL.COM***



Donald de Riggs, J88CD, on the Caribbean island of St. Vincent, says that on April 13, the 42nd anniversary of the 1979 eruption of the La Soufriere volcano, island residents were awakened to another column of volcanic ash creating a thick blanket, obscuring part of the eastern sky as the volcano continues to erupt violently.

“Almost all residents in the Red Zone have been evacuated, save for a few diehards who will not move, for reasons unknown,” he said. Since the effusive eruption began last December, local hams have been in a state of readiness via 2-meter networks and regional networks via HF.

A 24-hour regional HF network and vigil has been active since the violent eruptions began 4 days ago, to provide communication support should telephone service be disrupted by the volcanic hazard. This includes a twice-daily link-up on HF with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency ([CDEMA](#)).

There is also a 2-meter gateway via EchoLink on the J88AZ node. The other active VHF repeater is the main resource for domestic communications. The Grenada repeater, which is linked to St. Lucia and Barbados, is also accessible by hams in Tobago, Trinidad, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Frequencies being used for disaster-related communications may include 3.815, 7.188, or 7.162 MHz.

The La Soufrière volcano on St. Vincent began a series of explosive eruptions on April 9, sending clouds of hot ash some 20,000 feet into the air, blanketing much of the island in ash and causing water and power outages. The volcano is “a constant threat,” according to CDEMA. — *Thanks to* [The Daily DX](#)

---

## **Review of Digital Modes**

**By Pete Higginbotham W6SV**

The following is Part 3 of a multipart article submitted by Pete, W6SV, reviewing digital modes, becoming more and more popular. Thanks, Pete.

I have a WiresX node. This means I can connect to a chat room without a repeater by connecting my laptop to my Yaesu radio. My laptop acts as a repeater. I use my radio microphone; I receive the voice back over my radio speaker.

To get to a chat room or meeting spot I push the same buttons. The rooms show up on my computer display instead of the radio display but everything else is the same. Using a node

gives flexibility. You do not have to depend on someone else's repeater being available.

It also requires that you register with Yaesu and get a number, which is connected to your HAM call sign. The registration process is simple - go to your products web site and follow directions. You do not HAVE to register. You only register if you want to be a node. Ted's repeater for example, is a registered node for Yaesu.

The old man in the digital world is Motorola and this is how I was introduced decades ago. Obviously, things have changed a lot over the years and Motorola's digital scheme has been dubbed DMR or "Digital Mobile Radio".

In my squad car it was transparent to me, since all of the radios were set up by County Communications. You just have the radio in your vehicle and it is programmed and set up by a professional. Some guy sits behind a computer driven piece of equipment that can set up as many as 50 devices at once.

DMR has come to HAM radio via this commercial background. It is not really intended for HAM radio, so it acts a bit differently. DMR is becoming more popular but be prepared for a LOT more configuration.

For DMR you do have to register and get a digital identification. You can register for DMR at [www.radioid.net](http://www.radioid.net). A DMR radio comes as blank as a sheet of paper. Everything has to be "programmed". This process is not programming in the true sense, merely setting up.

You configure this radio from the ground up and it can get complicated. It is easy to make mistakes. DMR also works a bit differently.

The other systems use narrow band to save band width. Standard HAM frequencies are 25 kilohertz wide. Digital signals are narrow banded, or 12.5 kilohertz wide. They use up only half of the space.

DMR uses two sides in that half space, slot one and slot two. Think about it as an old vinyl record. Your record player could only play one side of the record at a time. But what if there was a second needle on the bottom of the record and a switch could choose between the top or bottom needle? Same space but twice the potential music.

DMR uses these two slots at the same time, rapidly switching between the slots, allowing two simultaneous conversations in that 12.5-kilohertz space. Instead of CTCSS DMR uses color codes, color code 1-? All of your radio frequencies and color codes must match up.

I do not recommend starting with DMR but a great contact for help is Ron, K6RET in North Bakersfield. He was a commercial radio man and can help you a lot if you run into problems. Find Motorola radios at: [www.motorolasolutions.com/en\\_us/products/mototrbo-story.html](http://www.motorolasolutions.com/en_us/products/mototrbo-story.html) There are lots of other brands available, Google "DMR HAM radio".

You will hear the term "Hot Spot" in digital radio. These are little boxes containing a mini-computer called a Raspberry-Pi, a sound board and a memory chip with software loaded. The software is called "Pi-Star" and was developed in the U.K. by a fellow HAM.

All of this is contained in a box about the size of a pack of cigarettes with a short external antenna. These devices change your radio signal into a digital signal and present that

signal to the internet. They are an internet access point. They require configuration and will work with many different digital radio modes (brands) dependent on configuration.

They can also be configured to use your cell phone internet connection. If you have a signal you connect via Wi-Fi to your cell phone internet connection, also called a “Hot Spot” just to confuse things. These are often used in a car to go “digi-mobile” or at home if you cannot access a repeater.

That is my synopsis of Digital radio. If you do get involved, you will find many YOUNGER operators on this mode. This is the mode HAMS have wanted to get younger people interested in HAM radio. It combines computers and radio. The younger HAMS take to it like water.

Whether you try it or not I hope you have learned enough to go explore on your own. The internet is full of information. It is an interesting study if nothing else. I find it fun and a great addition to our very diverse hobby. Try it, you may just like it.

73 de W6SV!

---

## Looking for Stuff!



Hey! Bet you didn't know that you have an editorial staff for *The Communicator*, did ya! Currently it is a staff of one. But we have members out there that might have a topic or two that could be of interest to the membership.

So if you, like Pete, have an article you would like to submit or photos from past or current events please let me know and we can set them up for publishing. This is your newsletter. It should reflect the interests of the members.

---

**73!**

**-BT-**