

FeedPoint

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ST JOHN VALLEY
AMATEUR RADIO
ASSOCIATION

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Watch for the Tesla coil to see where you can contribute to the newsletter!

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SJVARA Monthly Newsletter

The purpose of this publication is to keep you updated on club events and news as well as everything new in ham radio. It includes thoughts and ideas from our club meetings and events as well as new tech and news in the amateur radio community.

If your not already subscribed,
email sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: newsletter



Photo of the Month

Cleaning the panels at 640 circa winter 2018.

To submit a photo, email it to sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: photo of the month



Monthly Meeting Review

As the pandemic shows no sign of slowing and public gatherings are still discouraged, all club events are on hold. Please bear with us as we push through these uncertain times.

Don't forget to say hello to these new hams if you hear them on the air!

Name	Call Sign
Patrick Aldrich	KC1NHH
Brian Goff	KC1NHJ
Stacy Shaw	KC1NHK
Barrett Drost	KC1NHM
John Gibson	KC1NHN
Wade MacFarland	KC1NHI
Lucy Devoe	KC1NHL

What's New With Amateur Radio



Are you depressed because Dayton was cancelled? Have you ever dreamt of attending Dayton but you're just too far away? When Eric Guth (4Z1UG) heard Dayton was canceled he began working on the first and largest ham radio virtual convention ever attempted. The event will go live August 7th at 2100 EST and will begin with a keynote address by Dr. Scott Wright, K0MD. Other activities are planned for the evening but official 'event hall' times are Saturday and Sunday, 1100 to 2100 EST. This will run live both days then will be available on demand for 30 days following the conclusion of the expo.

One of the biggest names in Amateur and Commercial radio, Icom, is the Platinum sponsor for this event and without them it would not be possible. Gold sponsors include; Flex Radio, RT Systems, DX Engineering, RFinder, Elecraft, GigaParts and RigExpert. This is also an ARRL Sanctioned Event.

Tickets for attendees are FREE but there is a catch, kind of. This event is paid for by dealers and vendors at the event and costs "about the same as renting the Pepsi Center in Denver for two days." When you sign up for your FREE tickets, please, please consider 'opting in' to allow the vendors to contact you after the show to follow up with any questions you may have had or any other information on products or demonstrations. This event is after all, like the real Dayton Hamvention, a place for vendors and consumers to connect and exchange products for some good ol' [Canuckistan Kopecks](#)®. As a bonus to 'opting in' you'll be eligible to enter for door and raffle prizes.

ARRL Sanctioned Hamfest



The main attraction to this event, and what sets it apart, is the 'expo' style interface they will be using to make this all happen. The event will be accessible to the public via any current web

browser on any platform. Attendees will be able to access the 'hall' from the 'parking lot' and walk the isles as if they were there in person. All exhibitors and vendors will be in the same place just like they would if it was happening in real life. Each vendor will have a 'booth' including a range of features such as video demonstrations and a fully interactive text, voice and video chat to allow every attendee to see and ask questions about all of the products that interest them. You'll also be able to converse with other attendees if you so choose. Some webinars and speeches will be held with Zoom so it is recommended that you install Zoom prior to attending. A live support team will even be available to help with the expo platform. You'll be on your own to figure out Zoom or use their support system.

There will be five separate virtual rooms each hosting seminars by fellow hams on topics such as SOTA (summits on the air), How To Solder, EME (earth-moon-earth), 100 watt 6 Meter Amplifier Project, Boat Anchor Equipment and Restoration, and The History Of Heath just to name a few. At the time of writing there are over 40 speakers signed up for this event, see this list of topics and speakers to see what seminars you'll want to check out. ([Speakers](#))

I hope you all can attend this groundbreaking event and help make it a success. For those of you that attend every year, this is a chance to still see friendly faces and continue traditions in these uncertain times. For those of you who have not yet, or never will have a chance to attend Dayton, now is that time. With the ham community's participation we can make this an even bigger and better event than Dayton 2019. Get your tickets now for QSO Today's Virtual Ham Expo 2020! The more people pre-register the better the chance of more vendors and sponsors getting on board. I believe Eric is on to something great here and it should not be overlooked. 73, kb1zpp.

Our Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsors



<https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/> for a complete breakdown on this event.

<https://qsotoday.vfairs.com/en/registration> to sign up for your FREE tickets!

<https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/exhibitors.html> for an in-depth view on how the system will look and work.

<https://lhspodcast.info/2020/06/lhs-episode-354-qso-today-ham-expo-deep-dive/> for a podcast by Linux In The Ham Shack, where they 'deep dive' with Eric about the upcoming event.

<https://www.qsotoday.com/> for Eric's podcast, "An interview podcast between the movers and shakers of Amateur Radio."



Club / Member Projects

We hit another road block with 715 last weekend. When I (kb1zpp) went up to put the gear back in the refrigerator I discovered it had developed a water leak and had become extremely musty and moldy. I would like to make a small shack with a metal roof (I have the metal here) to replace the fridge. It was only meant to be temporary and the three years in the elements have done their damage. If anyone knows where we could find some wood or a ready built shack (old ice fishing shack?) we can hopefully finish this project and be good for a year or two.



Most of you know I (kw1a) obtained a used, but in good shape go box. The purpose of this box is to be used for activities and activations by anyone in the club. At this point I've solicited some donations to fill it. I slapped in a 2 meter radio and obtained a power supply for it. I'm currently looking for a small HF radio and portable antenna.

This box when finished will be ready to go at a moments notice! It

would have everything needed to have an operational HF and VHF station in one box. All we will need to do is grab the box, an operator, and then plug and play! No need to plan ahead and scramble for equipment days or weeks before CAN-AM, Field day, or Jota.

The box came with shelving and a really cool lighting and power distribution panel. It's a sturdy shockproof box that is heavy, but at least we know the equipment is safe. It's got openings in the front and back of the box making adjustments after setup easy. The shelves have holes to bolt everything down so the gear is secure no matter how the box is transported.

The box will be stored at my QTH if anyone would like to use it, just give me a call or message. Check out the pics and let me know if you would like to add anything to the box or would like to know more. Derrick Ouellette, KW1A.



To submit your project send an email to sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: projects

Reader Submission



My station is a simple, modest station but with that being said it's fully functional, fun to operate, and I make plenty of contacts near and far.

On a daily basis at my station I have a radio on scan for the ham repeaters and frequencies around my area, another on public safety, and a third tied to a new fusion node to try and cover the gap in the valley. I also frequently have a DMR handheld listening to activity on the DMR system in New England.

On the nice calm quiet evenings and weekends when I'm not too busy (seems to be all too often, but this is life hihi) I like to turn on my HF rig running barefoot, 100 watts. A home made modified G5RV style antenna gets the signal out. Most of the time I have no

troubles with this simple setup, and am able to talk to anyone I can hear. When it comes to contests though, I'd like to have an amp and a beam to get through the wasp nests, but I'm not really into contesting anyway hihi. Besides I've made contact with Australia on 5 watts with the same setup!

On 100 watts and the diy G5RV I've made contacts to all the continents including the Antarctic, a USCG ship, a pilot on a plane, and lots of more fun contacts!

I love talking to people all over the country that know someone from the area or have been here before. I've even talked to a station in Europe who was a sled dog musher, and was asked if I knew what the Can-Am was. I was so excited to tell him I'm involved with the event and was even more excited when he told me he came here to Fort Kent and ran one of the races before! The world is truly a small place!

In closing I'd like to encourage all those with a tech to study and upgrade their license to general. Get on the air and enjoy what our hobby has in your own way. Whatever or however you enjoy ham radio just GOTA!

-KW1A



If you would like to submit something, email it to sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: reader submission

What are you working on? Let us know what projects your starting as summer heats up!

This section relies on you!

Do you have a new invention or idea you want to share?

Did you buy a new piece of gear you want to review, or just brag about?

Have a funny story or personal experience?

If you would like to put together a short write up about it, send it in!



Upcoming Events

I was unable to hold the last DMR class in person, but with the help of Zoom we were able to make some progress with a few things. We were able to make some headway with a hotspot running Pi-Star and confirm it was in fact, functioning as it should. We were also able to get another ham up and running on DMR. We were able to screen share via Zoom, get a codeplug put together, and get him on the air with a dual band TYT UV380. If you missed it last time keep your eyes on your email, we'll be doing it again, this time in person. If the network holds up we will stream via Zoom simultaneously. Plans as of the time of writing are the beginning of September. The exact time is TBA but it will be held at the Northern Door Inn, in Fort Kent, ME. If you have any questions about DMR gear check our May issue of Feedpoint for recommendations on HT's as well as hot spots. If you have questions about the DMR class email me at coolman1987us@gmail.com



To submit an event, email the description, date, and other pertinent info to sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: projects

Don't forget the QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo!

August 8 and 9

Check out the site below to get your FREE tickets and find out more!

www.qsotodayhamexpo.com

Quick Tips

There's nothing new about network analyzers, they've been around since the sixties. They allow technicians to analyze a number of things such as transmission, reflection, and impedance characteristics as well as amplitude and phase measurements of waveforms. Usually entry level test equipment of this nature cost upwards of \$60,000. This obviously puts it out of the budget of most hams.

Enter the NanoVNA, this nifty little handheld device puts most of the power of a commercial VNA in your pocket. Although its nowhere near as accurate as a commercial bench top unit its more than accurate enough for antenna or feedline testing. It performs all the functions of an antenna analyzer and more. I got the 2.8 inch model which has a 2.8" touch screen display but they also make a 4.2 inch version as well. On the stock firmware it can sweep from 10Khz to 900Mhz. If you choose to upgrade to the experimental firmware you can push that all the way up to 1.5Ghz! I've been using mine for about a week as of writing this and after comparing it to "ham grade" SWR and impedance meters, it is for all intents and purposes more than accurate enough for ham use.

So far ive only used it as an antenna analyzer but it will do so much more. Among other things it can measure impedance, capacitance, resistance, analyze antenna SWR, and reflection coefficients. It can even measure coax length or find a fault point by using the Time Domain Reflectometer functionality.

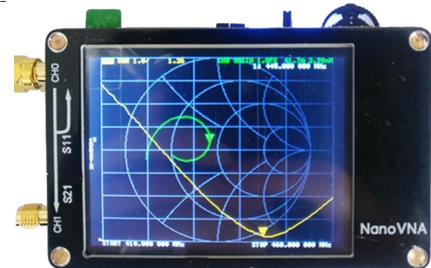
All things considered, if only using as it an antenna analyzer, I would dare say its just as accurate as anything MFJ has to offer. It also costs a fraction of the price of an MFJ analyzer at around \$50 for the 2.8" model and around \$100 for the 4.2" model. If your browsing Amazon for one of these try and get the most recent version, whatever that may be when you read this. One thing to remember this is NOT a lab grade VNA and should not be held to those standards, but for 50 bucks its one hell of a toy. -kb1zpp

[Check out Josh, ki6naz, review and test a couple antennas here](#)

[Check out Joe's video for a more in depth beginners guide to the NanoVNA](#)

[Check out the HexAndFlex site here for a more in depth description on what it can do](#)

[Check out keysight's website here to see what a VNA is and where they came from.](#)



If you would like to submit your tips or tricks, email them to sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: just the tip

Send Us Your
Tips & Tricks
Hacks & Mods



Swap / Buy / Sell

Swap

Buy
Sell

We need gear to fill this section! If you have anything to sell or give away, are looking for something to buy, or just looking to see what's out there let us know!

The SJVARA is looking for donations for their club event trailer and "go box"
Any gear you would like to donate or let us borrow would be greatly appreciated.



This is the club's new station!
Lets fill these shelves with equipment!



ISO
Free
Trade



To get your gear listed or to list what your in search of email sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: swap buy sell

Random Stuff

You'll find anything unrelated or off topic here.



This convertible ottoman is a clever use of space and could possibly be DIY'ed in another shape to fit almost any home. It could even have a use in the ham shack.

Check out the link below for more info!
<https://www.awesomeinventions.com/rising-coffee-table-desk/>



If you would like to submit your random stuff, email it to sjvarafk@gmail.com Attn: uh, that's random



A Few Words From KB6NU

Tech Classes Move Online

I've been teaching ham classes for more than a dozen years now. My specialty has been the one-day Tech class. In this type of class, you review all of the questions in the question pool with the students over the course of six to eight hours, and then immediately give them the test before they can forget anything.

I would hold these classes three or four times a year and regularly have 20 – 30 students in each class. The pandemic, of course, has put the kibosh on these classes. The last one I taught was in January.

Frankly, I was wondering if I'd ever teach one again. A little over a month ago, however, I was approached by a fellow in Portland, Oregon about teaching an online class for some folks that he'd corralled there. After giving it some thought, I said yes.

So, now, in place of face-to-face classes, I'm teaching online Tech classes. There are plusses and minuses to this approach, one negative is that I miss the face-to-face interaction with the students. On the plus side, teaching online allows me to offer classes more frequently. My first was in June. Last week, I completed the second class, and in August, I will teach a third class.

I have had to make some changes to the format. Making people sit in front of a computer for six hours or more seemed like cruel and unusual punishment. So, instead of a one-day class, the online class consists of four, two-hour sessions, spanning two weeks:

Session 1

Electrical Principles

Electronic Components and Circuit Diagrams

Session 2

Radio Wave Characteristics

Antennas and Feed Lines

Session 3

Amateur Radio Signals

Electrical Safety

Amateur Radio Practices and Station Setup

Sessions 4

Station Equipment

Operating Procedures

Rules and Regulations

This seems to be working out pretty well. I'm using Zoom, and most people have been able to attend without too much hassle. To simulate the whiteboard that I use extensively in the face-to-face class, I'm using the Autodesk Sketchbook program (<https://www.sketchbook.com/>) and sharing my screen with the Zoom meeting attendees. To write on the "whiteboard," I'm using a Gaomon M10K2018 drawing tablet.

Sketchbook allows me to build up a document in layers, and the result is kind of a hybrid PowerPoint presentation and whiteboard. I can make layers appear when I start discussing a particular topic and then write over them. For example, when I go over the questions that use Ohm's Law to calculate current in a circuit, I display the later with " $E = I \times R$ " and on a second layer, show how to calculate the answers to the questions

To take the test, students have to sign up for an online test session. Fortunately, several VE groups are offering online, remote testing. To sign up for one of these sessions, all students have to do is go to <https://hamstudy.org/sessions>. For the first two classes, the W5YI VEC scheduled a special test session.

I foresee teaching these classes monthly until the demand wanes. The next class will start on Monday, August 3. To register for the class, go to <https://www.kb6nu.com/product/next-online-tech-class/>. To find out when these classes will take place in the future, potential students can sign up for my mailing list by going to <https://landing.mailerlite.com/webforms/landing/m6l6t4>.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not teaching ham radio classes, he likes to operate CW on the HF bands, go for long walks around Ann Arbor, MI, and volunteer for Rotary Club service projects.

Check out Dan's website for [study guides](#), (Tech guide is free!) ham shack gear recommendations, and a daily blog.

www.kb6nu.com



Info / Links

Fort Kent Repeater - 146.640- 100hz

Eagle Lake Repeater - 146.715- 100hz

Echolink Node - Not working

Facebook - www.facebook.com/sjvara

Website - www.sjvara.com

[Google Drive](#)

Exam Study Guides - www.kb6nu.com/study-guides

Flash Cards and Practice Exams - www.hamstudy.org

Online Meeting App - In Progress - Soon to be Zoom

Affiliates

Aroostook Amateur Radio Association

www.k1fs.org

Maine Amateur Radio Foundation

www.mar.foundation

Amateur Radio Relay League

www.arrl.org

Can Am Crown

www.can-am-crown.net

Membership
Payment Links



Snail Mail

SJVARA

Attn: Carl Pelletier

22 Municipal Drive

Fort Kent, ME 04743

The **SJVARA** is a membership of hams with the similar interest of promoting radio knowledge as well as advancing the general interest and welfare of amateur radio in the community. Monthly meetings are held in Fort Kent but membership spans the entire valley and more.

Check out the club [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page for other info or events.

Mailing Address

SJVARA

Attn: Travis Devoe
3191 Aroostook Rd
Eagle Lake, ME 04739



Why Become An Amateur Radio Operator?

“Ham” radio is a fun, exciting hobby that allows you to talk to the world using different technologies and modes of transmission. It’s also a great way to meet people in your area with the same hobbies or interests, and exchange information and experiences.

Officer Contact List

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Treasurer	Carl Pelletier	cjpmail211@gmail.com	N1EVO

