

# SOCORRO AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

SARA NEWS

[WWW.SOCORROARA.ORG](http://WWW.SOCORROARA.ORG)

FEB. & MAR. 2018



## MEETINGS

The minutes for meetings are at [www.socorroara.org/sara/minutes](http://www.socorroara.org/sara/minutes).

The agenda for meetings is located at:

[www.socorroara.org/sara/agenda/agenda.pdf](http://www.socorroara.org/sara/agenda/agenda.pdf)

The March meeting will be held on March 14 at the County Emergency Management Conference Room at 198 Neel Avenue in Socorro.

## CLUB OFFICERS

President: James Boswell KA5SIW  
Vice President: Brad Smith KD5JNI  
Secretary: Bear Albrecht W5VZB  
Treasurer: Luis Aguilar WB5JMD  
Past President: Jim Lommen KC7QY  
ARES DEC /Director: Al Braun AC5BX  
Newsletter Editor: Anneliese Bowman AD6UY

## SARA REPEATER

SARA supports a VHF repeater located on Socorro Peak immediately west of Socorro. The repeater is "open". The autopatch is currently inoperative.

146.68 (-)  
100 or 123 Hz required  
123 Hz on output

SARA also supports a UHF D-STAR module 'B' operating at 444.500 MHz + 5.000  
Registration instructions are at [www.socorroara.org/sara/repeaters/D\\_STAR\\_Gateway.pdf](http://www.socorroara.org/sara/repeaters/D_STAR_Gateway.pdf)

## COMING EVENTS

### LAB NIGHT MARCH 28

At 7 pm in the County Annex – Bring the Galileo SBC that you got at TechFest if you went, come anyway if you missed it.

### MESILLA VALLEY RADIO CLUB BEAN FEED

05/05/2018  
Las Cruces, NM  
Mesilla Valley Radio Club  
MVRC Club House 6609 Jefferson Las Cruces  
NM  
<http://www.n5bl.org/beanfeed/beanfeed.htm>

## **THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **JAMES BOSWELL, KA5SIW**

A Handi-Talkie is one of the first radios most hams purchase. Now with the Chinese brands there is a real smorgasbord of choices in the marketplace. I am not going to get into a big discussion about what brands are best, I'll just write about my experience. I have had very good luck with the Wouxun KG-UV3D-2. I also like the Icom IC-V80. The Icom IC-V80 is mil rated shock proof and splash proof. Both of these radios can easily be programmed on the fly without a computer and cables. After you start using your HT, what accessories will you need?

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to realize that one of the first accessories you will need is an extra battery. When you buy a new one write the date on the inside of the battery. In most instances these batteries will only last about 3 years, so check the date of your batteries before you start your next big adventure. Something to consider: buy a dry-cell battery pack. With one of these dry-cell packs you can carry a package of alkaline batteries and you are all set for an emergency when no power is available.

The antenna that comes with most HT are built cheaply, so buy a longer, better antenna from a company like Comet. It is a small investment to gain tangible performance. I would also buy the proper adapter to connect a BNC cable to your HT. If you have to trouble-shoot any transmitter problems it is nice to be able to obtain accurate transmitter power measurements. At some point in time, you may wish to connect your HT to a small amplifier. I prefer HTs with the BNC type antenna connector because it is much more robust and BNC cables are easy to come by.

Another good accessory is a speaker-mic. With a speaker-mic you don't have to hold the radio in your hand. A speaker-mic works great when you are riding a bike or driving a car. Some speaker-mics can be set-up to use VOX and leave your hands are free.

Also, with some cities having laws against using a cell phone while driving, I carry a FCC license card in my billfold, just to prove I am a licensed amateur radio operator. I also carry my Skywarn card to prove I am a weather spotter, should the question arise.

In time most handi-talkies will need a bit of maintenance. A quick wipe-down with a damp cloth will remove most dust and dirt. Use a cotton Q-tip and isopropyl alcohol to clean the antenna connector on the radio and antenna. Never use anything abrasive like a pencil eraser to clean RF connectors.

A word of caution: never buy a used Handi-Talkie! Working in the electronics industry for over 40 years, I have seen the punishment HT's are subjected to. It is just too easy for someone to sell a damaged HT and pass it off as working properly. With the new prices on the Chinese HT's the market value of a used HT is pretty low and not worth the risk.

### **REAL OR FAKE?**

Any time you buy components from someone other than the manufacturer or a reliable vendor you take the risk of getting something other than what you want. How do you tell real from fake? These links may help.

<https://hackaday.com/2018/01/15/is-that-part-a-counterfeit-here-are-a-few-pointers/>

<http://www.aeri.com/counterfeit-electronic-component-detection/>

## **ANTENNAS SYSTEMS**

### **JAMES BOSWELL KA5SIW**

Start a discussion on antennas systems and you will hear all sorts of old wives' tales and hear-say. Antennas systems are one of the most misunderstood topics in amateur radio. Fact is, you can have a \$1000 transceiver and connect it to a poor antenna and your signal may not sound any better than a \$200 clunker rig with a good antenna. Here are my generalizations about antennas.

1. Any antenna shorter than  $\frac{1}{4}$  wavelength will not have gain.
2. Any antenna shorter than  $\frac{1}{4}$  wavelength will have compressed bandwidth.
3. For proper efficiency the antenna must be resonate. Use your antenna tuner to tune different sections of the band on a particular antenna.
4. Your antenna system is a series of compromises

- limited by space and cost. What works great for one operator might be totally wrong for another ham.
5. With time, antennas and coax will be degraded out in the weather. Check your station's reflected power every 3 months. If possible chart these readings.
  6. Enjoy the simple task of building and tuning an antenna.
  7. Height is your antenna's friend; make every effort to get your antenna as high as possible.
  8. Remember every antenna can come crashing down. Make sure the antenna will land on your property, clear of electrical lines.
  9. A home-made antenna can work just as well as a store-bought antenna.
  10. Remember the old ham rule: spend 60% of your station budget on the radio and 40% of your station budget on the antenna system.
  11. Read, Read, Read, don't be afraid to experiment.
  12. Go to the tailgate sales, don't hesitate to dig through a junk box to find an old set of traps or balun.
  13. Be sure and put a drip loop in your coax where it enters the building.
  14. Use coax seal to keep water from entering the coax.
  15. Buy good coax, the cheap stuff is not worth the cost difference.
  16. An old aluminum antenna can be cleaned up to look like new with Scotch Brite pads and Dawn dish washing soap.
  17. To properly solder a PL-259 connector you need a 300 watt soldering gun.
  18. Keep your 450 ohm ladder-line away from metal roofs.
  19. Put a lightning arrester at the base of the tower and where the coax enters the station.
  20. Keep your ground connections clean. Use Pentrox or Ox-guard to prevent corrosion.
  21. Use copper strap or braid for your ground connections.
  22. Remember to water your ground rods every month.

## "GOOD ON QRZ" STICKERS

CHARLIE NM5CL

VCARA PAST PRESIDENT

QRZ is now producing "Good On QRZ" stickers. These stickers are available to anyone who sends a #10 business sized, self addressed, stamped envelope to the QRZ address below. Your first sticker is free and if you would like additional stickers please send \$1.00 for each additional sticker. The stickers are 3.5" x 4" in size. #10 Business envelopes with self sealing flaps are preferred.

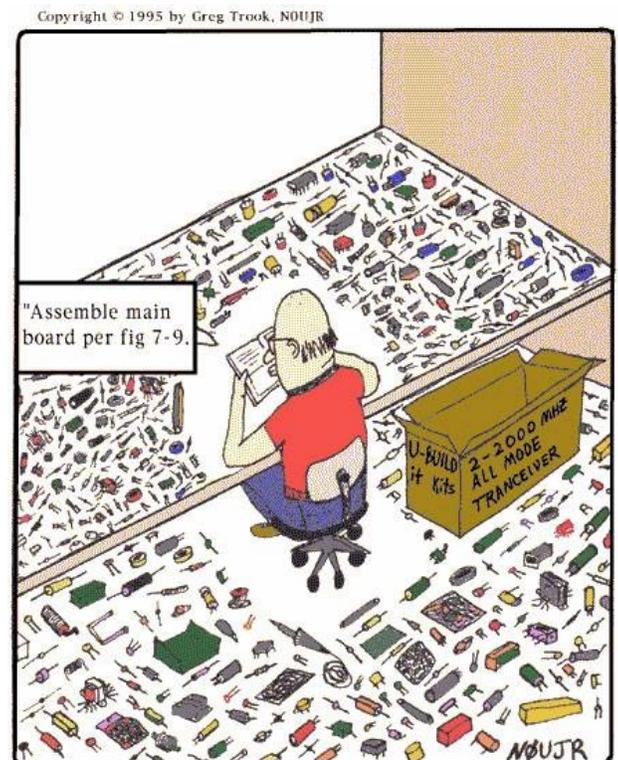
QRZ Stickers

24 W. Camelback #A488

Phoenix, AZ 85013

Once you have received your sticker, QRZ would love to see the creative places you use it. They have opened a brand new forum called "QRZ Stickers Around The World" where you can post pictures of your "Good On QRZ" sticker in interesting and exciting locations, such as places you travel or even the inside of your shack. The forum is located at the URL below.

<http://forums.qrz.com/forumdisplay.php?100-QRZ-Stickers-Around-the-World>



Kit fun.