



# MARC Beacon

Volume 9, Issue 5

The Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

MAY 2020

## President's Message

Hello fellow radio operators! It's that time of the year to start operating your air conditioning units. Make sure you drink plenty of fluids. All physical meetings have been canceled until further notice. I still plan on participating in this year's field day, 27-28 June, whether it's at home alone or at the Yucca Mesa Community Center with the club.

The "Cawfee Tawk" net every morning at 1000-1100 is a lot of fun. Please tune in every morning to chew the rag with us.

When we are allowed to have a physical meeting, we will have a friendly do it yourself (DIY)/homemade 2-meter antenna competition. So far the rules are as follows:

1. It must contain an SO-239 connector in order for a standard coaxial cable to connect to it using a PL-239 connector.
2. All other parts of the antenna must be locally available to anyone in the high desert. For example, all parts can be purchased at Walmart or The Home Depot.
3. The antenna must fit in a standard car so you can bring it to the meeting for testing and analysis.
4. The antenna must be tuned for the Yucca Valley Repeater Radio Frequency (RF). Receive frequency = 146.790 MHz, Transmit frequency = 146.190 MHz.
5. The antenna must be able to send and receive a voice message on the Yucca Valley repeater.
6. Each antenna will be tested for its:
  - a. Standing Wave Ratio (SWR). An antenna analyzer will be used to test the antenna's SWR. An SWR of 1.0:1 with an impedance/resistance (R) of 50 ohms and 0 Reactance (X) at 146.190 MHz would be a perfect antenna.
  - b. Reflected Power. The reverse or reflected power will be measured with a radio set to the Yucca Valley repeater at 50 watts output with an inline watt meter on the antenna coaxial cable. Zero reflected power would be a perfect antenna.

So put on your creative engineering hat and make a 2-meter antenna. I can't wait to see what you come up with.

Take care everyone and enjoy each day. I look forward to hearing you on the 10am morning "Cawfee Tawk" net, and the 7pm Tuesday evening weekly net.

**Rob Cloutier**  
**WO4ROB**

Joshua tree

Club President

(760)401-6666

rob\_cloutier@hotmail.com



### Linked Repeaters

#### **Yucca Valley, W6BA**

146.790 MHz (- shift = 146.190 MHz) 136.5 Hz PL/CTCSS

#### **Twentynine Palms, W6BA**

147.060 MHz (+ shift = 147.660 MHz) 136.5 Hz PL/CTCSS

#### **Landers, WB6CDF**

447.580 MHz (- shift = 442.580 MHz) 173.8 Hz PL/CTCSS

### Nets

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)  
Mon @ 1915  
Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club (MARC)  
Tue @ 1900

### Social Media,

**Club web page:** <http://www.w6ba.net>

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/MorongobasinAmateurRadioClub>

### Club Meeting **CANCELLED**

**Every 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 PM. At the church of the Nazarene in Yucca Valley at 56248 Buena Vista dr**



**TOM MEDLIN W5KUB WEEKLY WEBCAST 100% HAM RELATED. TUESDAY NIGHTS AT 8PM**  
<http://tmedlin.com/> OR <http://w5kub.com>



**HAMNATION IS A WEEKLY HAM RADIO RELATED TV SHOW WITH FAMOUS HOSTS SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW LIKE, GORDON WEST, BOB HEIL AND OTHERS. WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6PM**  
<https://twit.tv/shows/ham-nation>



The weather station on Paxton Hill at the W6BA repeater site is working great. It will show accurate wind speed and direction measurements for the top of the mountain .

<https://www.wunderground.com/personal-weather-station/dashboard?ID=KCAYUCCA57>  
 Glenn N6GIW

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I also have A weather station by the high school in Yucca Valley N6GKB. Showing the temps and wind speeds in the center of Town.  
[https://www.wunderground.com/dashboard/pws/KCAYUCCA35?cm\\_ven=localwx\\_pwsdash](https://www.wunderground.com/dashboard/pws/KCAYUCCA35?cm_ven=localwx_pwsdash)  
 Keith N6GKB

## ANDY FREES NS6V



Sad news. **Andy Frees NS6V** passed away April 25 at his home in Yucca Valley. He was discovered Saturday morning during a wellness visit by authorities. Andy's nephew Steve from Phoenix Arizona gave me the details over the phone. (Rob)

Steve will contact Rob WO4ROB with any more details. **Andy** will probably be buried at the Riverside National Cemetery. If you have any photos of Andy then please email them to Rob or Keith. Thank you.

**Andy was a Navy veteran** he served on the **USS KITTY HAWK CV-63**. He wore his hat proudly every time we had dinner at IHOP.

**Andy** was a great friend and my person time was with **Andy** helping me get my General class license, Me being the biggest procrastinator I would have never got it if he had not pushed me and helped me . Plus our many trips to meet at IHOP to have lunch or dinner together, his favorite diner spot ! He also helped others like Sam WB6SEW and Cathy KK6QLZ get their General class upgrades. We will always remember you with every HF contact we make!

## ANDY OUR CLUB PRESIDENT AT THE TIME.





## ANDY AT FIELD DAY 2018



One Saturday afternoon on February 8, this year, Andy and I were playing with slow scan TV on 2m simplex from his house to ours. He was as sharp as ever and always willing to teach.

- (1) The first one below was of him when he graduated Navy boot camp in the 1960's.
- (2) The second one below was when he was just a toddler with his mother, sister and grandmother around the mid 1940's.

In memory of Andy Frees, NS6V-sk  
73 Andy, Fred, WO6C and Nicki, KO6C



## THE HAM SHACK

### THIS MONTH'S FEATURED SHACK IS ROGER SHERWIN's – KF6BIG

"It's just my favorite little Cubby Hole here in Joshua Tree. I have my Yaesu 'FT-70DR' HT, my 'Kenwood TM-G707' and my 'Gastron SSS-25M' power supply. Completing my little space is my Computer and my Braille Audio Reader."



As I haven't had any pictures taken in years, our daughter was visiting last week and wanted a picture, hence, this picture.

'73'  
Roger KF6BIG

*Thank you, Roger, for your addition to the newsletter and sharing Your HAM shack with us. Like I have said large or small "YOUR" shack is a great shack because its yours and if you took the time to put it together than its something to be proud of.*

Keith N6GKB

### Frequency list

I am in the middle of putting together a frequency list for southern California area repeaters, that are **Confirmed** in operation. If anyone has a favorite repeater or other ones you would like to see in the list to be sure I don't miss it send me an email I thank you for all contributions. I will eventually make it a handout and/or PDF file I can email to any one's request for a copy once completed.

73's, Keith N6GKB



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**Field Day is ham radio's open house.** Every June, more than 40,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to our communities and our nation. It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills all in a single event. Field Day has been an annual event since 1933, and remains the most popular event in ham radio.



Field Day is always the fourth full weekend of June, beginning at 1800 UTC Saturday and running through 2059 UTC Sunday.

**Field Day 2020 is June 27-28.**  
**LOCAL INFO FOR OUR FIELD DAY**

This year we will *hopefully* be having Field day at the Yucca Mesa community center: 3133 Balsa Ave, Off Aberdeen and close to the Yucca Mesa Elementary School

I will be gathering plans for the antenna layouts and ideas for this year's event. I have a few cool ideas that might shake it up a little and make it fun as well.

I will be announcing soon during the 10 AM Daily nets as well as Tuesday nights net the Planning Committee Times and dates and HOW we will be meeting.

Keith Board N6GKB  
n6gkb@live.com



**We are having an informal DAILY net, that started Monday May 30<sup>th</sup>. Join us with your own cup!**

For right now it's called the "**CAWFEE TAWK**" net at 10:00 am till 11:00. It's just a way for any and all hams to check in, say good morning and see what everyone is up to. With all the things going on in this world we would just like to stay connected and be sure our local community of hams are ok. A little meet and greet with your coffee and donuts in the morning is a great start.

More like ice coffee now that it has warmed up!



**These Vehicle magnets are still available From Rob, WO4ROB. They 12" long. I believe they are \$10 each. Contact him with your order.**



## Dipole connectors by: Rob, WO4ROB

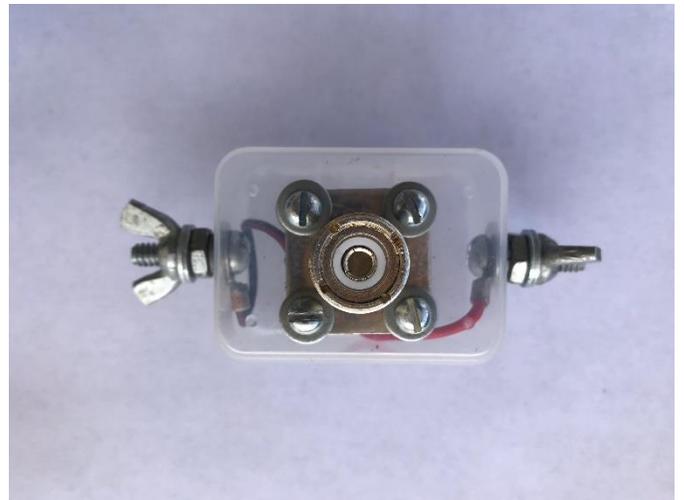
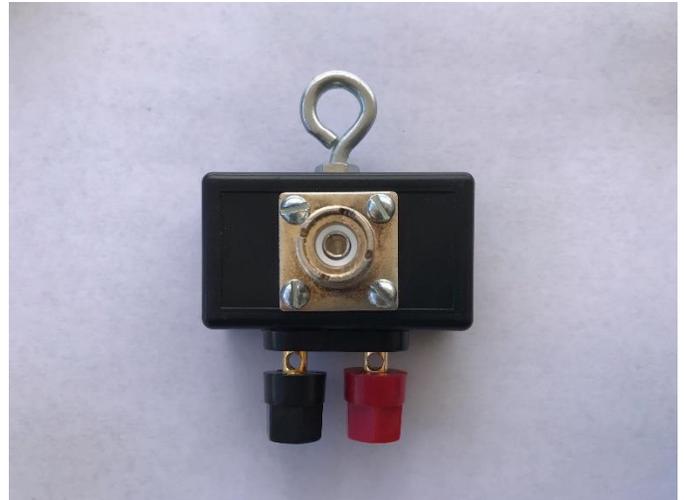
You can make your own antenna with 2 equal pieces of metal, connected to the end of a coaxial cable. The metal pieces could be coat hangers, lamp shade cord, solid copper wire, or aluminum tubing. One piece connects to the copper center wire of the coax cable and the other piece of metal connects to the copper braided shield of the coax cable. You could simply remove the plastic shielding from a piece of coax cable and spread out the braided shield and center conductor to the proper length in the form of a T, but who wants to ruin a good coax cable?

I recommend building your own dipole connector with an SO-239 connector, a piece of plastic, a couple of screws and a couple of wing nuts. The SO-239 can be purchased on Amazon for about \$3 and the rest of the material can be purchased at The Home Depot. There are so many ways you can do this, but I prefer mounting the SO-239 and bolts on a 3/4" PVC pipe tee fitting, so it can be attached horizontally or vertically at the end of a 3/4" PVC pipe.

The formula to calculate how long your 2 pieces of metal should be for a 1/4 wave antenna is  $234/\text{MHz} = \text{feet}$ , or  $2808/\text{MHz} = \text{inches}$ . For example, a 10 meter antenna would be  $234/28.5 \text{ MHz} = 8.2 \text{ feet}$ , a 2 meter antenna would be  $2808/146 \text{ MHz} = 19.2 \text{ inches}$ . An antenna analyzer may be used to determine how much of the antenna you need to cut off at each end to have it resonate on a specific frequency. If your antenna is tuned to a lower frequency than you want, then each end of your dipole must be trimmed at equal lengths. Don't cut off too much because it's hard to add it back on. Only cut about 1% of the antenna length at a time.

A lot of people refer to these dipole connectors as a balun, which stands for balanced/unbalanced. A true balun has a small coil of wire inside the plastic case that chokes the reflected power of an unbalanced antenna to prevent damage to the radio. If your antenna is tuned to the proper length, then you do not need a balun or an antenna tuner.

Here are some pictures of my home made dipole connectors,



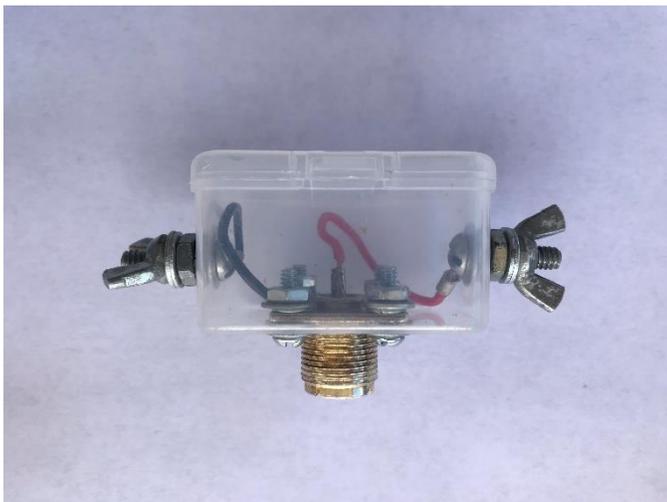
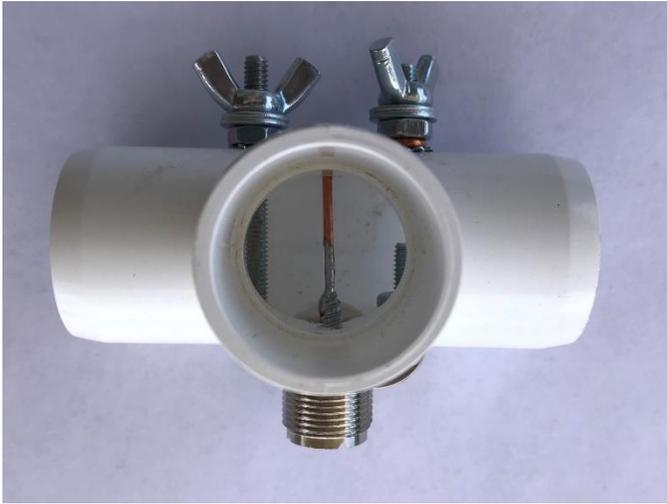
(Continued on next page)



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## [Rob's Dipole Connectors](#)



## Hamvention QSO Party Set for Saturday, May 16

The [Hamvention QSO Party](#), a sort of virtual Dayton Hamvention<sup>®</sup>, will take place on the HF bands on May 16, which would be the Saturday of the now-canceled event.

"Let's celebrate the many years we have all had at the Great Gathering we call Hamvention," said an announcement over the signatures of Tim



Duffy, K3LR, and Michael Kalter, W8CI. "We also want to remember Ron Moorefield, W8ILC, who never missed a Hamvention and contributed to our club until his recent death. Let's light up the

airwaves with our remembrances of Hamventions of the past! See you on the air!"

The Hamvention QSO Party will be a 12-hour event, from 1200 UTC until 2400 UTC on May 16. Operate CW or SSB on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters, exchanging signal reports and the first year you attended Hamvention. If you have never attended Hamvention, send "2020."

Designated members of Hamvention's host, the Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA), will activate DARA's W8BI. Participants can add 10 points for each band/mode contact with W8BI (12 available).

Post scores (number of contacts) to : [3830scores.com](http://3830scores.com) within 5 days of the event. An online certificate will be available to print.

*No logs will be collected. [N1MM Logger+](#) has provided a user-defined contest module for the event. More information is on the [N1MM Logger+ website](#).*



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## ARRL Suggests Taking a Creative Approach to Field Day 2020

This year, ARRL [Field Day](#) promises to be a unique iteration of this annual event, with many individuals and groups coming up with new and interesting ways to adjust their approach. As an event, Field Day is structured to be versatile and can be adapted for any situation.



Many groups have asked how they can adjust their Field Day planning to address social-distancing guidelines that may be in effect in many areas of the country, as gathering at their traditional Field Day site may not be feasible or safe. Instead of participating in a group event this year, consider operating as a Class B, C, D, or E station, utilizing your own call sign.

ARRL will include club names for all participating stations in the published results, so the efforts of your club's members can be acknowledged. While we will not publish an aggregate club score, seeing the name of your club associated with various individual member's results is certainly a way to highlight your club's activity.

Myriad opportunities are possible in this year's Field Day setting. A few options are as follows:

- Consider having an intra-club competition among members, seeing who can make the most contacts during the event. You can award prizes or distribute certificates at a club meeting. This can be a fun way to bolster the activities of individual club members, even though they cannot all gather together at the same location this year.

- Set up a Field Day Challenge with rival clubs in neighboring communities. See how many members of each club get on the air from their own stations and participate in the event. In addition to "bragging rights," perhaps certificates to the top-scoring individual entries in each category can be presented as part of this inter-club camaraderie.

One club is planning to conduct its Field Day as a 4A club group, with participants spaced to comply with social distancing guidelines within the required 1,000-foot-diameter circle and operating individual stations. This club also plans to set up a "Get on the Air" (GOTA) station. The club's plan is to have the GOTA coach at the Field Day site, while GOTA operators participate via remote link.

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**ARRL invites your stories about the interesting and creative ways you're planning to use to adapt your Field Day operation. Share these on the [ARRL Field Day Facebook page](#).**

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Another club is planning to set up a remote-controlled station at its usual Field Day site, with club members taking turns controlling the station from their homes. The club is developing a schedule that outlines when each member of the club will be at the helm via the remote link.

Whatever approach you take to this year's Field Day, keep up to date with the current guidelines issued by local and state health agencies that may impact your proposed operation.

For the latest news and updates, visit the [Field Day webpage](#). -- Thanks to ARRL Contest Program Manager Paul Bourque, N1SFE



## The Battery eliminator for the Baofeng UV-5R radio.

### Baofeng Car Battery Adapter Modifications

A Baofeng car battery adapter can be purchased for less than \$10 to power your Baofeng UV-5R radio using a cigarette lighter outlet. The problem is, they're not made very well. The strain on the cigarette lighter connector pulls the small wires off of the small circuit board from inside the plastic case. In order to fix it, you must break the glue seal around the case. Once you get inside, you realize the glue that secured the cable failed, allowing the cable to be pulled from the circuit board. Here are the modifications I made to the battery adapter:

1. I never did like the cable being routed to the bottom of the case because I could not stand the radio up on a shelf, so I drilled a new hole at the back of the case to reroute the cable.
2. Cable strain was eliminated by wrapping a small piece of wire around the cable on the inside and outside of the case and applying some superglue in the entry hole.
3. The small circuit board was initially held in place with some double sided tape, so I drilled another hole in the case and installed a small bolt and nut through the plastic case, aluminum heat sink, and transistor to hold the board in place.
4. The terminals that make contact with the radio were loose, so I superglued them to the case.
5. The cigarette lighter plug has an internal 3 amp fuse. One of my adapters had a blown fuse, so I replaced it with another 3A fuse.

After putting it all together it worked fine, but I realized that if I transmitted a lot, the back of the radio would get hot. The small circuit board was doing its job reducing the 12 volts from the cigarette lighter outlet down to 8 volts in the way of heat through the L7808CV transistor. The 7808 transistor is rated for 8 volts at 1.5 amps. (By the way, the back of the radio says 7.4 volts, but a fully charged battery is 8 volts.) When the radio transmits it draws about 3 amps from the 12 volt source, which is why a lot of heat is generated through the transistor and why some fuses are blown. I decided to replace the original circuit board with a very tiny adjustable step down power module, also known as a buck converter. The ones I purchased at Banggood are rated for 1.8 amps, 3 amps max, but not for prolonged use. Each module was only about 50 cents. You can order 3 amp rated modules on Amazon for about \$1.50 each.

In conclusion, the small buck converter works great, with very little heat coming from the board while transmitting. If you need a 3A fuse, then I have plenty to give away. If you want a buck converter for your Baofeng, then I have a couple to give away. Have fun with your radio projects and share your work with the club.

**WO4ROB, Rob from Joshua Tree**



*Last picture is courtesy of N6GKB.*



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## MAY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
KAFEE TAWK 10AM DAILY CLUB REPEATER	STAY SAFE STAY HEALTHY STAY IN TOUCH	NO CLUB MEETINGS THIS MONTH				
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	ARES Net 7:15 pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm NCS FRED		ARES Meeting 6:00 pm Cancelled		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Happy Mother's Day	ARES Net 7:15 pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm NCS KEITH				ARMED FORCES DAY
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	ARES Net 7:15 pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm NCS GLENN		Board meeting 5:30 - Club meeting CANCELLED		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	ARES Net 7:15 pm  MEMORIAL DAY ***** REMEMBER AND HONOR	MARC Net 7:00 pm NCS ROB				
31						