JOHNSON COUNTY RADIO AMATEURS CLUB, INC.
P.O. Box 93
Shawnee Mission, KS 66201

FEEDBACK

JULY 2020

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Field Day 2020 will be one to remember. Please extend thanks to the club members who worked hard to help with the "At Home Field day". Jay (WJØX), Herb (NZØF) and Bill (KC4YKL). Bill provided an excellent video on how to install the Field Day software.

Please do not forget Jamie (ADØAB) , Cal (KCØCL), Bill (WAØCBW) who provided ideas for our JCRAC Field day Contest Rules. Special thanks to Ted (NØTEK) who .had the task of pulling all the ideas together and publishing this information on the Clubs' web site.

There seemed to be a pipeline into Texas during Field Day as noted by members on Zoom. At first I though there was something not right with my antenna that I just repaired. It was good conformation that it was the propagation and not my antenna. The Zoom meeting was a great was to share what band were hopping. There were a lot of home stations on the air in the D and E class, but very few Club stations (A class).

If you have not already please submit you entry for the Club contest. Don't forget video and picture of your Field Day operations.

– Bill Gery – WA2FNK

MAY MEETINGS

July 10 *-- Zoom meeting - TBA.*
July 24 *– Zoom meeting - TBA..*

The Johnson County Radio Amateurs Club normally meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month at 7:00 PM at the Overland Park Christian Church (north entrance), 7600 West 75th Street (75th and Conser), west of the Fire Station.

Much of the membership travels to the Pizza Shoppe at 8915 Santa Fe Drive for pizza buffet and an informal continuation/criticism/clarification of the topics raised at the meeting … or anything else.

Leave the church, turn right (west) on 75th. Turn left (south) on Antioch. Turn right (west) on Santa Fe. Pizza Shoppe is just past the Sonic on your left.

-> FEEDBACK <-

A publication of the
Johnson County Radio Amateur Club, Inc.

Bill Gery, KA2FNK, President
Jaimie Charlton, ADØAB, Vice President
Ted Knapp, NØTEK, Secretary
Cal Lewandowski, KCØCL,Treasurer / FEEDBACK distribution

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Chip Buckner, ACØYF, Editor
Charlie Van Way, NØCVW, Photography
Deb Buckner, KDØRYE, Contributing Editor

Hambone Story by Jaimie Charlton, ADØAB

Elmer and the Hundred Dollar Hole

Hi,

It's been pretty quiet around here. My nephews, Hambone and Dude, are gone. It seems they are on some sort of school holiday or another and have gone camping with friends. They took a portable rig with them so they could operate Field Day. Being retired, I'm always on some sort of holiday. At least, that's what the non-retired always say. That being said, I thought I'd take advantage of this quiet period to start a project I've been considering for a long time. I want to install a vertical antenna.

Yes. I have had a lot of antennas, dipoles, fans, OCFDs, long wires, Yagis. They were almost all homemade and were all mostly horizontal. This will be my first vertical antenna. I chose this particular commercial antenna for appearance. There are a lot of designs to choose from, but I wanted one that doesn't look like it fell off some alien spacecraft. The one I chose is about twenty-four feet long, ground mounted and is really just a straight stick with a couple of fat spots. No weird parts sticking out.

Yesterday, I started making the mounting base. According to the vendor's website, I needed to put a piece of galvanized steel pipe in the ground with a bit under two feet sticking out. That involves setting the pipe in a hole about four feet deep filled with cement. It sounds like a simple project, but… well, here's how it went.

The project was composed of three parts: Dig the hole, set the six-foot pipe in the hole and fill the hole with cement. Digging the hole seemed easy. After all, recent rains had softened the ground. To get started, I bought one of those clamshell type posthole diggers. You know, the thing with two long handles and a clam-like blades at the bottom. Cost: $26.

I started about 6:30 in the morning while it was still cool. That's an important consideration because Kansas summer days get hot fast. After half an hour or so of digging I had a hole about six inches deep. It turned out that digging with that digger is not as easy as it seemed. Especially after you pass through the soft surface dirt and start hitting the stuff the rain hadn't reached. Kansas soil somehow turns to concrete in the summer sun. There must be a better way.

Consulting Google, I discovered a device called a *One Man Hole Digger*. It's sort of a gas-powered drill designed to penetrate dirt. Better yet, I discovered a local hardware store that rented these devices. I had never used one, but really, how hard could it be? I've used electric drills and this particular auger (its technical name) was specifically designed to be used by one man. After all, that was its name. I zipped over to the store and rented it for four hours – plenty of time dig one hole. Cost: $55.

When I got the auger home, it seemed to be exactly the tool I needed. That is, until I read the instructions which start out saying that the operator must be in proper physical condition and mental health. Well, I think I'm in pretty good shape for the shape I'm in so I proceeded to get drilling.

Following the instructions, I placed my left hand on the support handle and my right hand on the handlebar which is also the throttle. Then the instructions said to start the engine by pulling the cord. With what hand does one pull the cord?

I stood the auger upright on the tip of its drill, just like the instructions showed, and briefly let go with my left hand to pull the starting cord. This left only my right hand, still on the throttle, to steady the machine. The tiny but energetic engine burst into action, the bit started turning and the whole thing sort of tipped over and started screwing itself over the ground. The twisting effect of my right hand, still solidly grasping the throttle, was to give it more gas. It scurried across the grass like a mad worm trying to find its hole. I looked around to be sure that there were no cellphones filming this event. Finding none, I caught the auger and shut it off.

After mentally reviewing the previous experience, I decided I now had the knowledge necessary to proceed with drilling the hole. This time, to hold it upright, I placed the auger in my previously dug six-inch hole and started the engine again. Although it tried to escape my grasp, I did manage to

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Johnson County Radio Amateurs Club - June 12, 2020

Meeting Date: Friday June 12, 2020. The meeting Started at 7:00 PM.

Attendance: Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this Meeting took place online using Zoom Video Conferencing. 36 were present.

The Minutes from the May 22, 2020 meeting were read and accepted unanimously.

The Treasurer's report, as follows, was read and accepted unanimously.

Old Business:

- We welcomed all 1st time visitors to the meeting.
- Repeater Update – All are working well. Due to high internet usage by the general public, there have been times that the Fusion link repeater coverage has been spotty. Also, as we get into the hot summer days please keep your conversations short on the 145.29 MHz Repeater to keep it from overheating.
- Field Day 2020 – "AT Home 2020" Field Day. Plans are to have contests within the Club's membership.
- Ensor Auction – Vince Sabia, KE0CGR has plans underway for this year's Raffle. If you would like to help him, please let him know.

New Business:

- A motion was made to purchase a monthly Zoom Meeting account for the Club. This motion received a second. A vote was taken and received unanimous approval.
- A motion was made to donate $250 to N3FJP, the creator of the Field Day Logging software. This motion received a second. A vote was taken and received unanimous approval.

Reports:

- 6 m – There were some opening on FT8.
- 10 m SSB Roundtable – 3 participated on June 11.
- 40m SSB Roundtable – NR.
- Fusion Digital 440 net – 15 Check-ins on June 10 and 19 Check-ins on June 3.
- 2m Wheat Shocker net – 27 Check-ins on June 11 and 25 Check-ins on June 4.
- HF Activity – NR.

Announcements:

- Everything Canceled.
- There is a thought that the Hawk 100 will take place in September with a maximum of 100 participants.
- See Larry's List for upcoming Events.

Business meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Program:

- The Program for this evening was "Home Weather Station Recommendations" by Bill Gery, KA2FNK.

Submitted by Ted Knapp, N0TEK, Secretary.

Johnson County Radio Amateurs Club - June 26, 2020

Meeting Date: Friday June 26, 2020. The meeting Started at 7:00 PM.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this Meeting took place online using Zoom Video Conferencing. 27 were present

There was no formal meeting as this was the Friday Meeting before Field Day. For the record we did not hold an on-site Field Day event this year to the Pandemic.

Submitted by Ted Knapp, N0TEK, Secretary.

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steady it and drill down a couple of feet. Then an interesting thing happened.

At about two feet down, the nice sticky black mud turned to an even stickier gray clay, and I noticed there was water in the hole. If I hated the black mud for the way it flew out of the hole and all over me and the way it grabbed the auger and caused it to swing me around, I really hated the clay. I pressed on.

As I drilled down, the auger turned slower and slower and finally stopped. It was stuck in the clay. I goosed the engine to try to break it loose. But instead of breaking loose, the engine twisted itself from my grip and started rotating on top of the drill. I chased it around a couple of times before reaching its kill switch. It seemed the auger was screwed solidly into the clay. Unfortunately, the motor had no reverse gear to unscrew it. I shook and pried the auger but couldn't get it out of the hole. The oozing clay formed a suction that was holding it tight.

Over an hour of pushing, pulling and twisting had passed, it was hot and I was worn out. Then I got an idea. Since thick clay mud was holding the auger in the hole, maybe it could break loose if the mud were thinner. I ran a lot more water into the hole and voila, it worked. The tiny but mighty engine sprung to life spinning the auger with new vigor throwing gray clay mud all over everything. But I got the auger out of the hole. That was the good news. The bad news was that the hole was not deep enough.

Hot, tired and covered with mud, there was no way I was going to mess with putting an extension on that auger and drilling some more.

Thank God my rental time was running out (I only paid for 4 hours) so I stopped short of my goal and took the evil machine back to the hardware store.

*** *The next day* ***

There I was with my hole about 18" too shallow. Then I hit on the idea of pounding the pipe the rest of the way. That actually went fairly well. But pounding is hard work and I had to rest after every 15-20 swats. I finally got the pipe down to within a few inches of the correct depth. I think it hit a rock or something because it would go no further. It was so solid into the clay I was tempted to throw the dirt/mud back into the hole and call it even. But I didn't. I got the cement instead.

The cement also proved to be a problem. First of all, it comes in 60lb bags which seem to weigh half a ton when carrying them from the car to the backyard. I bought two of them. At first, I was going to mix the cement in a big bucket, but then I watched the cement company's video that showed it could be mixed in the actual post hole.

Since I already had water in the hole, I calculated the corresponding amount of cement and poured it into the hole. To my surprise and contrary to the video, it immediately formed a solid lump that floated on top of the water. The fine cement powder also formed sort of a cloud in the hole so I couldn't see what was happening in there. I cleared the cloud by getting down on my hands and knees and blowing it away. My face was now covered with cement powder, but I could see into the hole. I checked again for stealth videoing. Finding none, I jammed my mixing stick to the bottom of the hole and mixed the water with the cement.

Sixty pounds of cement is not very much at all. I added some additional cement and some water and repeated the above process all the time mixing the whole mess the best I could. I finished all this by about 7:30 this morning. As of this afternoon, that pipe is solid as a rock (literally) in the ground. Cost: $6.

Total cost of this hole: $26 for the galvanized pipe, $25 for the clamshell digger, $55 auger rent, $6 for the cement or about $112. I think I will call it my hundred-dollar hole.

73,

Elmer