

Bill Priakos, W5SJ



Autobiography

My aunt gave me a crystal set for Christmas in 1953...I was just over 12. My next door neighbor was a new ham, Bobby, WN5EUQ, two years older. Well, as time goes by, I bug the fool out of him and he Elmer's me. And in February 1955, I was WN5KGJ. I had the biggest pile of junk for a rig, two old radios with short wave where I could "beat" one against the other to create an oscillation and thus could read CW. With my brand new Viking Adventurer and a 40 meter dipole at 15 feet, I was hot stuff. I worked all over the Southwest until one night that summer; I woke up about 3 am and fired everything up. Wow, what a difference! I worked WH6BLI, Ray in Honolulu, and BANG; that was it - the DX BUG HAD BITTEN THIS 13 YEAR OLD AND I WAS HOOKED! With that same lash up, I worked more Hawaiians, and one morning, I snared ZL1IB. Got a Hallicrafters S40B receiver, my Conditional class license, and off I went. I was honored to be chosen to go to Japan for a study visit due to ham radio (another story) and managed to MEET Ray, KH6BLI, on the way to Japan, and then surprised the gang at Gifu Air Base MARS station and was QRV from KA3GG. Yep, I had operated at three DXCC countries before I was 16. By the time I was off to college, I had about 75 Countries. After college and work in Dallas, fast forward to Oklahoma City where I got on the air again in 1966 and then back to Fort Smith where I gained DXCC Honor Roll status, after passing my Extra and changing my call to W5SJ. I had many business ventures around the Southwest before I finally "got them all" in 2012.

I have been a member of ADXA (Arkansas DX Association) for some time and was president during the club's greatest growth in the early 70's. I also was president of the Lone Star DX Association in Dallas for many years in the late 90's. In between, I have been to four continents and have calls from about 20 countries. My best times were at PRØF, where I scored 12th in the world in a CQ WW CW Top Band contest, VP2EJ, where I still have friends, and in the last few years I have operated from the Caymans, as ZF2EZ. The latest "new one" was operating this last October at I5EFO's QTH near Lucca, Italy.

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These ‘mini-DXpeditions’ have all been solo, or with my Elmer, Bob (now W5UQ), owner of Expert Linears - America, a distributor of SPE linear amplifiers. I made another trip with Bob and San, K5YY, to Belize. And last August, five of us took off for the Austral Islands – to operate as TX5T.

My wife, Kathy, and I love to travel, and occasionally a radio will travel with us. We’re going to Europe again this fall and I hope to take my Elecraft KX-3 with me. Kathy and I spent almost 12 years building a vacation rental business in the Tampa Bay area. We still own it but have great management, so we are in Arkansas most of the time to be closer to kids & grandkids in Texas, and to hang out with friends and ham radio buddies that I have known for all of these decades. I am looking forward to our visit in Bella Vista, seeing more old friends— and meeting new ones!

73 / DX Is!

***Bill Priakos – W5SJ
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To kick off the new year for 2019, the Bella Vista Radio Club, as part of its 25 year celebration wants to welcome Bill Priakos, W5SJ to the January club meeting as we listen to the “DX’r extraordinaire” who has worked them ALL! Recently returning from the TX5T DXpedition in the South Pacific.

Come and celebrate with us!

Highland Christian Church
2500 Forest Hills Boulevard
Bella Vista, AR. 72715

Thursday Jan. 3rd 2019 @ 7 p.m.

