



Four States Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

Number 8

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Officers

President

Pat Bell, KG5SC

Vice President

Wes Bolin, WV5I

Secretary

Travis Bailey, K5AVH

Treasurer

Bill Miller, W5HJF

Directors

Wes Bolin, WV5I

Jack Goodson, KA5IQB

Dan Griffin, W5LTQ

Don Lynch, N5DZ

Committees

Activities

Don Lynch, N5DZ 838-4155

Field Day/Flea Market

Dick Curtis, W5NEU 838-6028

Malcolm Bussey, KF5JX 773-9130

Instructional Classes

"Cap" Caplinger, WA5APY 832-1410

Newsletter

Travis Bailey, K5AVH 792-2080

Digital

Hal Clark, KF5YO 772-8742

Skywarn

Al Parsons, KA5LPJ 832-2421

VE Testing

Wes Bolin, WV5I 838-0568

Club meetings are held each Sat. Morning at 9am in the rear of the cafeteria on the 2nd floor of Wadley Hospital. Visitors are welcome. Business meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the same time and location.

Articles for the newsletter must be submitted to the editor no later than the first Saturday of each month.

From The President

Pat, KG5SC

The FSARC Board meeting that was held on Thursday, July 13, was a success.

Fifteen club members were in attendance and everyone participated in the discussions. The purpose of the meeting was to plan activities for the last six months of this year.

The activities that were planned are as follows:

*By-Laws amendments for the August business meeting.

*Appointment of Nominating Committee at the September business meeting to nominate officers for 1990.

*Transmitter Hunt on 9/17 starting at 2:00 p.m.

* Quadrangle Festival Race Communications 9/23.

*Election of Officers and Directors at the October business meeting.

*Club Camp Out at Lake DeGray 10/7, with an alternate date of 10/21.

*Caravan to eat fish at Vaughans which is located between Douglasville and Linden on 10/27.

*Troubleshooting workshop on 11/18 and 11/25 starting at 9 a.m. to be taught by Wes.

*Pot Luck dinner on 11/19.

In addition Al will be scheduling Skywarn training sessions, Hal is planning a mall demonstration booth and Cap has a novice class forming up.

As you can see a lot of different kinds of activities have been planned to make the last six months of 1989 just as enjoyable as the first six months. If you have an idea for a club activity please give me a call. I hope to see you all at our next club function.

One further note, all members of the club are welcome at the Board meetings.

Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake every time you repeat it.

Net Control

Dave, N5MT0

The net has been going pretty well for the last month. On the average we've had about thirteen stations check in. Some of the regular folks checking in last month were WB5APY, K5KQO, KA5IQB, KF5YO, KA5EQU, W5NEU, N5LQV, WV5I, KB5GYR AND KB5CTX. Also heard from was N5BH, W5V5U, KG5RX, KG5RC, KA5LPJ, and W5KYO. I do appreciate all those who have checked into the NET. Sorry if I missed a call here. I know it's difficult to remember the NET, I forgot to call it myself not too long ago. And I have another "anniversary" coming up in November, will be a year that I have been calling the NET (with occasional fill-ins when I couldn't). The NET offers an opportunity for folks to speak their piece if they so desire. Of course just checking in for the count is alright with me too. There are some interesting tidbits passed along from time to time. I would like to see the club officers check in more often and pass along things that we need to know. I expect more check-ins in the months ahead since the days will be getting shorter and most folks are indoors by 9PM. (Wishful thinking?)

Once again thanks to those who have checked in to the NET. When is the net? Every Tuesday night at 9 PM. Hope to hear from you then.

Club Campout

October 7th will be the date you need to set aside for one of the club's newest activities--

The Fall Campout

You will be hearing more about this during

September, but mark your calendar now and start making plans. The Campout will be held at Lake DeGray State Park near Arkadelphia. There will be facilities for everyone ranging from tent camp site to rooms in the lodge. Also available will be the restaurant in the lodge for those of you who do not want to camp out as well as facilities to help keep the kids entertained. This is a first for our club for this



activity and hopefully it will turn out to be a semi-annual event, so get out your tent, camper, motorhome, or make reservations at the lodge, but be sure and join us for this campout which is planned to include the whole family.

Club Longevity...

How do you know when a club has Terminal Longevity? These symptoms sound a little crazy but unfortunately contain some truth.

1. More people in the club own older tube type rigs than state of the art equipment.
 2. One person in the club is seen as being a computer whiz because he bought a Commodore 64 five years ago.
 3. No one in your club has been on packet because it's seen as being too complicated.
 4. During coffee break, folks sit around and talk about WWII.
 5. One person does all the antenna work for the club.
 6. Someone almost got licensed because the guy giving the Novice test didn't realize that he/she gives the exam and was just planning on sending in the 610 form and awaiting the exams return from the FCC.
 7. The youngest member of the club just became a grandparent.
 8. The sunshine fund for sending cards and flowers to those having health problems has gone bankrupt.
 9. Occasionally one or two teenagers have come to the meeting but never return.
 10. The club opts for a luncheon meeting and 90 percent of the members can still attend because they are free during daytime working hours.
 11. Over 50 percent of club members remember when the communications act was passed.
- I think our club passes this test with flying colors....now I had something I was supposed to do-- if I can only remember what it was!

Here's a nifty use for old coaxial cable for those of you who have not already heard of it. As I'm sure you know, coaxial cable deteriorates with age. But when it gets old and you start to lose a measurable amount of signal, don't throw it all away, save part of it

to use as ground strap. To make ground strap from the braided jacket of old coax, begin by removing the outer jacket from a piece approximately the length of the ground strap you need. Next, slide the center conductor and dielectric out of the braided shield. Take the resulting cylinder, and carefully flatten it. Now, get your solder gun and saturate both ends of your homebrew ground strap with solder. After it cools drill a hole through it so you can bolt it to whatever you want to ground.

Digital Talk

Hal, KF5Y0

We had a very good turn-out at the last digital meeting and was very informative. Buddy (NSLUC), talked about the new chat mode for packet which is located in Houston. Its a multiple connect system which can be accessed through the Dallas digipeater then directly connected to Houston through a fiber optic telephone line at a 9600 baud rate. For additional information on the system contact Buddy.

The Mena digipeater is now back up but not quite as reliable as before due to it being back on the ringo instead of the beam. It still can be worked thru TXK in the morning and evenings. Also ETX is now back up after being down for a short time.

I have really been enjoying H.F. packet here lately. Travis (K5AVH) recently spent his vacation in Yellowstone Park and 20 meter packet was our most reliable source of communications. H.F. packet can be very good for general QSO'S as long as you can stay away from the congested frequencies. One way I have been successful in making contacts on packet is to call CQ on one of the more popular frequencies and then after connecting move to a less crowded frequency where you can limit the number of retries. This has worked very well for me and is a suggestion for others wanting to work H.F. packet but get frustrated at being disconnected after a short time into the QSO.

If you have an accessory connector in the back of your H.F. radio for use with digital communications, you might want to consider wiring up your tnc there instead of feeding it into the microphone connector. This will allow you to be able to hear what is on frequency rather than tying up the external speaker

connector and makes no difference on where the AF gain is set. Also it is nice not to have to disconnect the microphone each time you switch from SSB to packet or any other digital mode.

The Interviewer

I think the last time we had a talk, I told you about the two kinds of antennas I started with. One was the old antenna and counterpoise and the second was a single wire fed Hertz. They were both good antennas, not too hard to build and got the job done for what the amateur needed at that time. In the early and mid 30's more thought was given to antennas that could be used in smaller spaces and that would offer more efficient operation. Right here in Texarkana, there was an Amateur named M.P. Mims, W5BDB. He lived in northeast Texarkana on a normal size city lot, about 60 x 140 feet. His home, garage and Radio Repair Shop took up most of his lot. He dreamed of an antenna that could be mounted on a single support and be rotated as band conditions changed. I got to know Mr. Mims, and we became very good friends. I referred to him as W5 Bla Da Bla. I met him when he was operator and director of radio station KCMC which had just gone on the air here. He designed and built an antenna consisting of a radiator, a front shorter director and a third element behind these two called a reflector. Of course we recognize this as a Yagi or beam antenna today but it was quite a novel idea in the 1930's. As his work on the antenna developed, he needed more work space so Mr. Mims moved his shop out on New Boston Road about 3 blocks west of Texas Avenue. He also added a very complete radio parts store--parts that could be used to build amateur equipment or repair any type of radio. As word spread of Mims "Signal Squirter" as it was now called, he began to receive orders from all over the world for his new antenna. He was suddenly in the antenna building business! Then came World War II. Amateur Radio was shut down and that was the end of the Signal Squirter as far as the amateur was concerned, but by this time the Navy had decided it could use Mr. Mims antenna and expertise. I remember it this way... Raytheon Corporation sent a man to see Mr. Mims. This man said he had authority from the U.S. Government to buy Mims plant, parts, shop, and home and move

him and the people who worked for him to Massachusetts to build his antennas for our armed forces. In the deal they also took Few Holmes, W5VAA, who at that time was working with Mr. Mims, to be the mathematician there in Massachusetts. Few returned to Texarkana after the war but the rest of the people who went to Massachusetts stayed there after the war ended. I never saw or heard from Mr. Mims after he moved, but I did hear that he died some time in the late 40's or early 50's. I have told all this as best I can remember it. If you talk with Few, you might get more information on the Mims Signal Squirter. (I also have the December 1935 QST in which Mr. Mims had written a 7 page article about his Signal Squirter and included detailed construction drawings. I will be glad to make copies of this for anyone that is interested. Editor) Had it not been for World War II, we might have had a large antenna manufacturer right here in Texarkana.

More On Ham-Com...

There were 4000 pre-registrations, double the normal amount. There were 8,750 paid admissions, nearly 2,000 more than 1988. The ARRL booth sold more merchandise at Ham Com than at Dayton. The 1990 Ham-Com will be held a week later--June 8,9,10,-- to allow Arlington High Schools to hold commencement exercises there at the end of school.

Vacations and Ham Radio

Travis, K5AVH

Vacations and Ham Radio make a perfect combination. If you are like me, you have probably carried your rig with you on vacation at one time or another with mixed results. During my vacation this year I decided to carry my entire station with me including the computer, packet gear, and a G5RV antenna for 40 thru 10. I had made schedules with Hal and Pat before leaving, but had doubts as to how effective the communications would be since I knew I would be on the move a lot. Upon arriving in Yellowstone Nat'l Park, the first thing I looked for was a campsite with some good tall trees. As luck would have it we found

a perfect site and within about 10 minutes the G5RV was up about 40 feet between two of these lodgepole pines, thanks to my slingshot (remember field day) and some help from my wife, Barbara. The antenna loaded perfectly, and I decided to try Packet since the SSB schedule with Hal and Pat was not until later that night. One of the first things I saw was a Beacon from W5ZIT, Jim, a friend from Greenville who was also on vacation in Fargo, N.D. He was not at the keyboard right then, but I was able to leave him a message in his mailbox telling him where I was. After this, I tried connecting to Hal, who I knew left his Packet station on all day. Sure enough, a connect on the first try! We chatted for a while and then settled on a plan to try 17m SSB later. The band was good on 17 and Hal and Pat and I had a good QSO that night at 9pm. During our two week vacation, Packet became the workhorse for our daily talks. Thanks to the Mailbox feature of Packet, none of use had to be at the rig at a certain time. We would just pass messages back and forth at our convenience--A great feature for a vacation schedule. At first I worried about leaving all the gear running all day since we didn't have electrical hookups. As I soon found out, the motorhome batteries could handle the current drain without any problem even with everything running from about 8am until about 9pm each day. About a 15 minute run of the motorhome generator each morning kept everything going just fine. I was able to keep in touch with home daily and also keep up with my friend, Jim, as well as maintain my own daily schedule of sightseeing. Next time you go on Vacation, take your rig and leave a schedule with some of the club members. It's really neat to be able to stay in touch.

Shreveport Hamfest

Those of you who did not make it to Shreveport for the hamfest really missed a good one. The convention center was filled with dealers, flea market, and people. There were also several good seminars. The flea market was one of the largest ever with all tables filled on Saturday. There was a real good turnout of people from Texarkana and several brought back new or used gear. Don, N5DZ, finally took the big step and bought a HF rig. He should have a log full of

contacts by the time you read this. Hal, KF5YO, came back with a new handi-talkie, Wimpy, KB5GYR, got a linear amplifier, Cap, WA5APY, found a handi-talkie, and Robert, NSLTG, got a new 2 meter mobile rig. I understand that Hal won a rotator in one of the hourly drawings on Sunday but since he was not there to claim it, another name was drawn for this prize. Sorry Hal, maybe next time! Several of us had a flea market table which was a big success. If you didn't make it this time, make plans to attend next year, but if you don't want to wait that long, don't forget Mena on September 8,9,10 at Queen Wilhelmina State Park. We'll be looking for you there.

FSARC Business Meeting

The August FSARC business meeting was held on Saturday August 19, one week later than usual because of the conflict with the Shreveport hamfest.

The meeting was called to order by the President and the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. Bill reported that the bank balance at the end of July was \$638.87 with the major expense for July being the antenna and feedline for the antenna at the BJC building. Wes reported that the club had been offered a place for an antenna and an operating position on the mobile communications bus that Bowie County is making plans for.

Cap said that he hopes the novice class can be started right after the next test session which is September 16th.

Bob announced that a Transmitter hunt is scheduled for Sunday September 17 at 2pm.

Pat reminded everyone that the September business meeting would be rescheduled for Saturday September 16th to avoid a conflict with the Mena hamfest.

Pat brought up the need for a new radio at the BJC location and after some discussion, a committee was appointed to try to find a good used radio for this location with a limit of \$200.00 to be used for this purchase. The committee was made up of Wes, WV5I, Wimpy, KB5GYR, and Travis, K5AVH.

Pat reminded everyone of the activities scheduled for the rest of the year, and told the club that he had been working on some changes

in the club By-Laws which he would present and the September meeting. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. There were 18 members and 2 guests attending.

Tallyho!---The Fox

Bob, KA5FQR

"Tallyho!", the ancient cry of the fox hunter has often resounded through the woods as the hounds struck out on the trail of the sly fox. It has been great sport to ride to the hounds.

Hams in many areas have taken up the sport of being the hounds to find a hidden transmitter. (AKA Fox).

It has been arranged for a fox to be turned out for the run on Sunday afternoon the 17th of September, which is the week after the Mena Hamfest. The muster point for the hounds will be K-Mart Plaza on State Line at 2pm.

The location of the fox will be within the city limits of Texarkana and on public property. The fox will transmit on 146.52 mhz. No one else should transmit on this frequency. When you find the fox, sign in and do not disclose the location to others.

All who intend to be in the pack of hounds should prepare their directional equipment and reception power level indicators.

There have been several good articles in the past in ham magazines. Find the best plans and do some construction and maybe some practice before the hunt.

Tallyho and away we go.

WANTED

The club is looking for a good 2 meter FM transceiver for use at the Bi State Criminal Justice Building in our Skywarn program. We need a good clean synthesized rig in the 25 watt range with no modifications preferably one owner, non-smoker, and with mike and manual. We don't need lots of bells and whistles, just a good solid easy to use rig. If you know of such a rig in the \$200.00 or less price range, please contact Wimpy, KB5GYR--Wes, WV5I-- or Travis, K5AVH.

Four States Amateur Radio Club

Upcoming Events

FSARC 2m Net (146.62)	Each Tuesday 9pm (Swap Net Follows)
Lunch	Each Wednesday 12 noon Mr. Gatti's Pizza State Line Ave.
Digital Meeting	3rd Thursday of each Month 7pm Wadley Hospital Cafeteria
V.E. Testing	Saturday September 16 9am Wadley Hospital Cafeteria
Mena Hamfest	September 8,9,10 Queen Wilhelmina State Park Mena, Ar.
FSARC Transmitter Hunt	Sunday September 17 2pm Meet on K-Mart Parking Lot
Quadrangle Festive	September 23
FSARC Club Campout	Lake DeGray State Park October 7 (Reservations required by Sept 15) Contact Pat, KG5SC or Travis , K5AVH
Catfish Supper	October 27 Vaughns near Linden-Douglasville
Troubleshooting Workshop	November 18 and 25 9am Wadley Hospital Cafeteria
Pot Luck Dinner	November 19

Skywarn Personnel

August
September

Jack KASIQB-- **Bill**, WDSHJF
Dick, W5NEU---**Dave**, N5MTO

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First Class Mail