

The WCARC Report

May 2004

Welcome, New Members!

It's a pleasure to introduce these new members, both of whom have joined the club since our last issue.

George Williamson, KD5ZVT – Round Rock
Robert Brandon, K5PI – Austin

Look for these folks at the next meeting you attend, and introduce yourself – you'll meet some new friends! ☒

New Location for Our June Meeting!

Beginning with our June 3, 2004 meeting, the WCARC will meet in the basement room of the Wesleyan Retirement Home, 1105 South Church Street, Georgetown. There is a link to a map showing this new location on our club's web site. Point your browser to <http://www.wcarc.com/>. Our regular meetings will continue to begin at 7:30PM on the first Thursday of each month. See you there! ☒

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Our May Meeting

by Club Secretary Greg Worthington, AG5W

The May 6, 2004 meeting of the Williamson County Amateur Radio Club was called to order by President Rick Trommer, W5RHT. There were more than 31 attendees signing the sign-up sheet. There was one visitor: Joey Chandler, KD5EVL.

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting as posted on the WCARC web site was moved, seconded, and approved.

Treasurer's Report

Club Treasurer Jon Boles, K5AEM, offered this report:

May, 2004

Beginning Balance	\$ 4,015.39
Receipts/Deposits	\$ 85.00
Expenditures	\$ 203.75
Ending Balance	\$ 3,896.64
ARES Funds Available	\$ 982.02
WCARC Funds	\$ 2,914.62

Acceptance of the financial report was moved, seconded, and approved.

DX Report

None.

Contest Report

Dave Hassell, N5IW, reported that there are at least 34 contests planned for May. They include the FIST Spring Sprint, VOLTA WW RTTY, 50MHz Spring Sprint, US Counties QSO Party SSB, His Majesty King of Spain Contest CW, and CQWW WPX CW.

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The President's Corner

The WCARC club is on the move again! As you might remember, at the first of this year the Georgetown Independent School District mailed our club a notice indicating that all organizations like ours would be charged for use of GISD buildings and meeting rooms. Rental fees ranging upwards from \$36 per hour would be imposed on groups wanting to use GISD facilities, and we would have to schedule our meeting dates and pay the fees in advance.

After this notice was relayed to the club members, Dean Hamilton, K5FDH, suggested that we might be able to use the basement meeting room at the Wesleyan Retirement Home. Dean and I went over and looked around and we believe that it would be a very suitable place for our club to start meeting and I'm very pleased that club members have agreed to this move. So please remember that our next WCARC meeting (June 3rd) will be held at the Wesleyan Retirement Home in the basement.

Dallas Mellichamp, KD4HNX, has placed a map to the new meeting location on the club web site. Please take a quick look at the directions. There is ample parking in the lot at the rear of the Wesleyan Retirement Home. It might be helpful to talk this up on the club repeater as you are heading to the meeting on Thursday, June 3rd.

Field Day is rapidly approaching and our Field Day Captain, Dick Foster, W5TA, is still seeking help for this event. Dick put out a note from the officials in charge of Russell Park saying it will open if the lake level reaches 787 feet. As of May 21st, it is at 786.04 feet and rising slowly.

After all of Dick's preparation to get Field Day up and running, we will still need operators for each station. Please see Dick or one of the station captains and sign up to operate an hour or two.

The Belton Swapfest on May 22nd seemed to be attended by a large number of WCARC members. The tailgate area had a much larger turnout than last year. I hope that everyone had a good time cruising around and looking or finding the things you wanted.

As a reminder....

Jun 18-19	Arlington Ham-Com
Aug 6-7	Austin Summerfest
Aug 28	Gainesville Hamfest

Well that's about it for this month and I want to give a spin through 20 meters tonight as the low end of the phone band is pretty active. Remember, if you have

not been attending the Saturday breakfast at the Monument Café, you should consider it.

73, Rick W5RHT

WCARC-Owned Equipment List

Who Has What -- and Since When

Tower work

Gin pole – John Benedict, KE5RS – 8/30/2003
Tower step – Jeff Schmidt, N5MNV – 8/7/2003

Antenna Measurement

MFJ Analyzer – Ken Larsen, KC5RPF – 12/3/2003
MFJ Grid Dip Adapter – Stuart Rohre, K5KVH – 3/4/2004

Antennas

Butternut HF Vertical 10M-80M – Bob Helms, AF5Z
Cushcraft R7 HF Vertical – Dean Hamilton, K5FDH – 11/6/2003
Hygain Triband – Dick Foster W5TA – 7/4/2003

Masts

Push-Up Masts (2) – Bob Helms, AF5Z – 8/7/2003
Push-Up Mast – Ken Larsen, KC5RPF – 7/4/2003
Push-Up Masts (2) – Virgil Buell, KD5KQV – 7/4/2003

Power Supply

20 Amp Supply – Dave Hassell, N5IW – 7/4/2003

Picnic Supplies

30 Cup Coffee Pot – Don Bonner, NO5B – 8/8/2003
5 Gal Drink Coolers (2) – Virgil Buell, KD5KQV – 8/7/2003
Heavy Duty Power Cords (2) – Chris Hill, KC5AQF
Miscellaneous Picnic Supplies – Don Bonner, NO5B – 8/8/2003

Pending Sale

Commercial Grade Antenna – Bob Helms, AF5Z

Please advise club secretary Greg Worthington, AG5W (ag5w@aol.com), of any additions or corrections.

ARES Report

Tom Whiteside, N5TW, reported that the club repeater on 146.64MHz with 162.2 tone is working well. The status of the generator is still open, and the battery back up is in good shape.

There will be a Red Cross training on Saturday, May 8.

The Williamson County Sheriff Homeland Security group is looking for cooperation with amateur radio.

The ARES program for May will be discussions of the areas of responsibility of the AECs.

Old Business

Dick Foster, W5TA, indicated that the location remained the primary open item for this year's Field Day. There were a number of suggestions from the floor and Dick also brought an offer from Kees Talen, K5BCQ, that the club was welcome to use 10 acres that he owns near Liberty Hill. Along with Dick and the CW and Phone captains, Tom Whiteside, N5TW and Bernie Davies, KC5LGS, agreed to participate in the site selection process.

We still need captains for the VHF and GOTA (Get on the Air) stations.

The goal for this year will be FUN. With the food for Field Day being one of the key contributors to the Fun, Jerry Burran, N5CNG, agreed to handle the cooking responsibilities so long as the menu would consist mainly of hamburgers and hotdogs. The club gratefully accepted his generous offer.

Bob Petrosky, N5TT, had received QSL requests from previous Field Days. Greg Worthington, AG5W, will create QSL cards and respond to the QSL requests pending confirmation of the validity of the contacts from Tom, N5TW, and Dick, W5TA.

New Business

Jon Boles, K5AEM, reported that no progress has been made in obtaining permission to continue using the GISD Administration Building free of charge for the club's monthly meetings. Dean Hamilton, K5FDH, and Rick Trommer, W5RHT, have worked together to secure a new meeting location at the Wesleyan Retirement Home, 1105 S. Church Street, Georgetown, TX. This new proposed facility has more

than adequate space for the current club membership with room for growth, kitchen facilities that are available to the club, adequate parking, and elevator access. This facility is also available free of charge.

With the uncertainty of the GISD situation, it was moved, seconded, and passed that beginning in June, the WCARC would officially move its permanent meeting location to the Wesleyan facility. The address and directions to this facility are to be posted on the WCARC web site.

Dave Hassell, N5IW, reported on his research on an affordable PC projector that could meet the club's needs. He reviewed the key specifications on several units in a fair and unbiased manner. It was moved, seconded, and approved to authorize Dave to spend up to \$1,500 to purchase a Dell PC projector, case, and extended warranty. Dave would have the discretion to choose the appropriate projector model, the type of case, and whether to purchase an extended warranty. Tom Whiteside, N5TW, made a separate donation toward the purchase price of the PC projector to secure occasional usage of such PC projector for the Central Texas DX and Contest club.

The club recognized Jim Bittick, KC5BHF, for the fine job that he did at the recent club picnic. Jim agreed to support the club's October picnic, which will be scheduled to avoid conflicts with both the Belton Swapfest and the DX Bash.

Jim Mischel, KB7UQD, requested volunteer support from the WCARC club membership for the Women's Adventure Race. He needed 12 to 15 hams for this event. Volunteers would receive free food and a tee shirt for the event.

Refreshments for the June meeting will be provided by Dean Hamilton, K5FDH.

Program

Dick Foster, W5TA, introduced Cecil Turquette, K5YQF, a distinguished past president of the WCARC, who provided the club with information on the BPL (Broadband over Power Line) topic that has become very important to ham radio operators. Cecil provided details on the BPL proposals, implementation plans, and their impact on the HF spectrum. He provided short video clips from the ARRL's field testing of current implementations of BPL in the USA. WCARC members were encouraged to make their concerns regarding BPL known to appropriate authorities. ☒

JUNE EVENTS

June 3-6: Republic of Texas Biker Rally at Travis County Expo Center, Austin TX. Motorcycle Special Events Team – Texas (MSET-TX) needs volunteers to help with communications, handle traffic with EMS, Security, and event staff. Volunteer or request information (ray@mset-tx.org).

June 18-19: Arlington Ham-Com, Arlington TX. Register for this ARRL West Gulf Division event on-line <http://www.hamcom.org> or address information requests to Barry Goldblatt, WA5KXX, by e-mail (chairman@hamcom.org), or phone (214-361-7574 or 972-596-4669).

June 25-27: Field Day 2004 setup and operations. Volunteers are needed! For details see the article on page 5 of this issue ("Plans for Field Day 2004"), or contact WCARC Field Day Captain Dick Foster, W5TA, by e-mail (w5ta@austin.rr.com), or phone (512-255-9254). Come on out, join in, and have some fun!

The ARES Report

by Williamson County EC Tom Whiteside, N5TW

Judy and I had a great trip to Utah and hiked an aggregate of 50 miles through some really gorgeous country. Many thanks to Galen Helmkamp, WA0YVQ, for covering for me during this trip!

I want to thank Darrell Bizzell, KD5PUJ, for connecting me with the Williamson County Sheriff's Office Homeland Defense Unit Volunteers. Darrell is part of this group of about 50 private citizens who volunteer under this CERT organized group. They receive training in a variety of areas including Search and Rescue, Map Reading, CPR, First Aid, Helicopter Medical Evacuation, Hazardous Material Basics, Markings of Evidence, Communications and Community Emergency Response Training. They see a need for our help in communications when they outstrip their GMRS capabilities and have asked us to participate with them.

I did a presentation for them this month with assistance from Dan Poggemiller, KB5TWO, and Harvey Henning,

NOAJP, and we had a good interactive discussion. One of the ARES directions from HQ is to get involved with local CERTs so the timing for working with this group is perfect. If we are honest with ourselves, we really need training outside our regular communications area in the event of a major disaster or attack, and interacting with this group should be a help.

Please look to participate in any upcoming drills we do with this group!!!

Bruce Sawteele, W3NJ, has completed initial recommendations on the software and hardware needed for our new Packet Messaging System. Getting critical mass to be able to deploy at least 8 packet stations in an emergency by the end of the year is one of our most critical goals for 2004. Thanks to Bruce for achieving this important milestone.

The architecture is based on WinPack and a program called NTS used to format messages and is linked to WinPack. Bruce concluded that hardware TNCs are the way to go as sound card based software is not yet up to EMCOM quality level. But his approach does not preclude soundcards in the future if that becomes viable.

Time to dust off your TNCs or acquire one. Any Windows based computer will work – obviously laptops are easier to transport. Watch for more information on this on the WC-ARES reflector. Working sessions using packet will commence Sunday evenings at 7PM.

A reminder: The ARES meeting is at 7PM on the second Thursday of the month at the Round Rock fire station on Commerce Boulevard. This month's program will be Joe Dorn, W5VEX, making a presentation on APRS – which should be very interesting. Thanks, Joe!

And we also hope to hear *you* on the Sunday evening nets on 145.130 at 8PM. The response to these has been great – keep it up! ☒

Plans for Field Day 2004

By Field Day Captain Dick Foster, W5TA

At the May club meeting you will recall we formed a committee to find a site for this year's WCARC Field Day operation since the usual Russell Park QTH was not available.

After investigating a number of alternatives the Field Day site committee (consisting of Bernie Davies, KC5LGS, Tom Whiteside, N5TW, and Dick Foster, W5TA) has selected the Heritage Community Garden in Georgetown. We want to thank Dean Hamilton, K5FDH, for bringing this site to our attention. At the time this article is going to press we are working on getting the final approvals from the city powers that be. Hopefully this will only be a formality. The location has ample fields and trees for erecting antennas, but no shelters. It does have running water and one porta-potty. It would be nice to have an RV for each Field Day station. We do have one promised by John McColly, W5RQ, for the CW station; at least one more for the phone station would be great, and a full complement including two more for the VHF and GOTA stations would be outstanding.

We now have a new captain for the CW station, Mark Stennett, NA6M. As reported previously, Dave Hassell, N5IW, who has been captain of the CW station for the past few years, volunteered for this year early on, but developed a conflict which forced him to bow out. Steve Cowell, KI5YG, has volunteered for the phone station captain honors. Jerry Buran, N5CNG, will be the chief cook, serving up burgers and hot dogs Saturday evening.

There are opportunities for everyone to contribute at Field Day. Not everyone likes to operate. Those who come out for setup and teardown make an important contribution and are greatly appreciated. This year we would like to see some of the folks who have been a bit "gun shy" about operating pick up a mike or stroke a key and make a few QSO's. We're going for fun and not expecting to be in the top ten.

The program for the June meeting will be an attempt to tie down all the loose ends for Field Day. And, there are plenty to go around! Opposite is a list of items that we will need. I may have missed a few, but it includes most of the basics. ☒

Field Day Checklist

Power

- Generator
- Gas
- Oil
- Funnel (to pour gas)
- Long high current extension cord (#12 preferred)
- Outlet strips

Life Support

- Table and shelter – RV, tent or at least shade canopy
- Water and other beverages
- Insect repellent
- Fan
- Cushion
- Snack(s)
- Flashlight

Station Equipment

- Rig with power supply
- Antenna(s) – including everything to get them up and down
- Note:** Erecting a tower takes at least two stakes which must be driven in the ground with a sledge, three strong guy ropes, plus a pull up rope, and a step ladder to lean the tower on while assembling antennas. In addition, we may also need some stakes for guy anchors at the new location. It also takes a crew of about 15 men to get it up and take it down safely.

- Coax
- Coax switch
- Mike and/or key
- Footswitch for phone op's
- Logging laptop
- Laptop cable (CW station)
- Transmatch
- SWR bridge
- Coax jumpers
- Light(s) / Lamp for when it gets dark
- Scratch pad
- Pencils/pens

Contingency Items

- Set of "anything to anything" adapters and cables
- Soldering iron
- Solder, wire, coax, assorted connectors
- Tools – pliers, screw driver, wire cutter, socket wrenches, etc.