

# Newsletter August, 1995

## Minutes of last meeting

Greg, AB5NG, called the meeting to order at 7.32pm and the minutes of the July meeting were approved as printed in the Newsletter. Bob, KF5KF reported a current treasury balance of \$1650.09 but several bills are pending.

## VISITORS:

Jerry Cates	KC5IMC
Charlie Doughtie	N5EXY
Kevin Green	KC5NLT
Tony Hernandez	studying
Kevin Roper	KC5OLC
Scott Simmons	KC5PXR
Matt Simmons	KC5PXS

## OLD BUSINESS:

Dan, KB5TWO, reported that our 146.64 repeater eqpt will shortly have to be moved from the Justice Center.

The ARES net moves to the 145.13 repeater starting Sunday Aug 6, at 8pm.

The annual ARRL sponsored "SET" (Simulated Emergency Test) is scheduled for Oct 21. This will be a point-scoring competition. (It was noted that JOTA, the Outlaw 100mi race, and our next license class all occur that same day! JOTA will be discussed at our next Club meeting).

SET plans were the primary topic at the recent ARES meeting in Austin, and will be at the upcoming Williamson County ARES meeting, 7pm Thu Aug 10 at the Central Fire Station in Round Rock.

An informal weather net was brought up on the 147.08 repeater during the storm last week. The net worked well and we should consider making this a permanent arrangement. (Secretary's note - Has anyone asked W5EBJ?).

We still need a Club logo for T-shirts and hats. Ideas anyone? Danny, KC5AIX, reported that the lady who would produce these was currently on vacation.

Pete, KB5YWL, said that our Field Day report had been submitted to ARRL. We made 2998 QSO points, and will be around 3300 or more total points with our various bonuses. This beats last year.

## NEW BUSINESS:

Michelle, KC5BHE, reported that our next Novice/Tech Class will start Sat Sept 9, at our regular meeting place, and will run for 8 sessions. Intensive cw training will be provided by Bill, N5EIF. Michelle, Bill, and Chris, KC5AQF, will discuss how theory and code can be overlapped. Provisional class dates, topics and instructors were shown and rearranged.

Pre-registration will not be required but informal "word-of-mouth" would be helpful. Greg, AB5NG, will check with Radio Shack in Georgetown to determine the availability of textbooks. It was agreed that we will plan to provide our own exam following the classes. VEs are needed!

Greg, AB5NG, said that we need to give some attention to our Club Byelaws, specifically bringing them into conformance with our current practices. This will be on next month's agenda.

Billy, N5UMR, is trying to establish which of our founding members are still in the Club. (We would then consider Honorary Membership for them). Any information would be appreciated. John, NT5C, agreed to check through the secretarial records.

#### **PROGRAM:**

Duane, AC5AA, gave us an excellent presentation on the availability and use of "DSPs", Digital Signal Processors.  
John Warren, NT5C, Secretary.

#### **ARES News**

A meeting of the Williamson County Emergency Service, WCARES, was held at the Round Rock Central Fire Station on Thursday August 10, 1995. The meeting was led by Dan Poggemiller, KB5TWO, who is our county Emergency Coordinator. There were 20 members present, including Joe Fisher K5EJL, District EC. The following items were discussed:

1. The primary WCARES repeater will be 145.13 since it has backup power and sufficient range. The secondary repeater will be 147.08. Mike Adams KC5IPB will work with Joe Makeever and Joe Fisher to get backup power on this repeater also. The third backup repeater will be 146.70 with a 110.9 Hz tone. The simplex frequency will be 147.48

2. Our Simulated Emergency Test (SET) will take place the morning of Saturday, October 21, 1995. The purpose of the SET is to define our emergency communications capabilities. We will do this by identifying key sites throughout Williamson county and testing various forms of communications to and from those sites. The sites will include:

- Fire stations
- Hospitals
- Schools
- Red Cross shelter sites

The locations of the sites will use the grid mapping system recommended by the ARRL. Since this will be the first SET conducted in Williamson county, we will keep it simple and let everyone know what the SET scenario will be.

3. The SET will initially test 2M voice and packet. Other modes and frequencies will also be tested if there are sufficient volunteers and time available. The goal is to achieve a complete mapping of all sites on all frequencies and modes.

4. Volunteers are needed within each local community to be liaison between WCARES and their respective fire and law enforcement agencies. Club members can volunteer at our next WCARES meeting to be held at 1930 on September 14 at the Round Rock Central Fire Station. Having this liaison in place before an emergency is critical. During a real emergency, if the local authorities do not know who we are, we will be "turned away at

the door".

Prior knowledge of our capabilities will also allow the local authorities to make the best use of our network at the time it is really needed.

5. The ARES has set up a meeting schedule of once per month on the Thursday following the regular club meeting. We expect to adhere to this schedule until such time as the ARES organization is better established and the need for regular meetings has diminished.

6. Chris Hill, KC5AQF, has accepted the task of organizing a County Weather Net and serving as the Net Manager. The structure and purpose of this weather net will be further defined.

7. Pete, KB5YWL, volunteered to be net manager and assistant EC for WCARES. Pete will arrange for net control stations for the weekly net which now meets each Sunday at 2000 on the 145.13 repeater. He may also structure such activities as traffic handling and other simulated exercises. Mike, KC5IPB, also volunteered to be an assistant EC to act as liaison with Hutto and Taylor.

8. The need for a 12 volt connector standard was discussed. Such a connector would be employed by all members and would allow all handy talkie brands and other rigs to be interchanged among various power sources. Two candidates were discussed and the chosen standard is the Radio Shack Part No. 270-026. However, it is suggested that members may want to have an additional pigtail containing the Radio Shack Part No. 274-222 which is the connector standard for Travis county.

9. Danny, KC5AIX, identified the need for signs or banners which would read "Emergency Communications" and be used at the communication sites listed above. Danny has also volunteered his good nicely located QTH as a test site during SET and in further mappings.

10. WCARES needs the following:

- a. The loan of a handheld GPS to assist in mapping to the grid system.
- b. Volunteers who would be willing to provide temporary quarters during a real disaster.
- c. Volunteers to participate in the SET!

In summary, this was a productive meeting. We were fortunate to have several hams with valued experience participating. As the WCARES grows along with the county our members will be the foundation that will provide valued public service for the day we hope will never happen but probably will.

73...Mike, KC5IPB

### **WCARC Programs**

Niel Wiegand, WA5VLZ, will be our quest speaker for the Sept meeting. Niel will talk and demo "OLD" radios. His talk is titled "National Radio Co. before the HRO 1914 - 1934"

73...Rick WB5YTG

### **Calendar of Events**

October 21 is the date for the National Simulated Emergency Test or SET for short. Please see details under the "WCARES colume".

The Novice/No-code Technician Class will be held from September 9 through October 28 at the Georgetown ISD main office at 603 Lakeway Blvd. Classes will be held each Saturday from 0900 to 1200.

The 0-5 wpm Morse Code Class will be held from September 9 through November 11 at the McCoy Elementary School at 1313 Williams Drive. Classes will be held each Saturday from 0800 to 1000 in the metal portable building.

The MANCHACA FALL SWAPFEST will be held September 23. Pretty much a repeat of Spring activity and generally held in October. Swapfest begins at 0800 with vendor setup beginning at 0700. License exams at 0930. No admission price to buyers. Sellers will be charged \$4.00 for GRAVEL tailgate area, \$5.00 for PAVED Tailgate area, \$6.00 for indoor tables, or bring your own table and set up outdoors for \$3.00.

To get there go west on FM 1626 off I-35 south of Austin for 2 (two) traffic lights. Don't give up, it's quite a way out and is across the street from McCoy's.

The HAM EXPO 95 is October 7 in Belton at the Bell County Expo Center. The hamfest generally runs from 0700 to 1500 and is located at Exit 292 off I-35. Talk-in is 146.82. This hamfest features:

- All Inside activities
- Handicapped accessible
- Free Admission
- Equipment checkout station
- Ham license exams (by VE's)
- Dealers
- Transmitter hunt

For more information, contact:

Mike, WA5EQQ at 1-817-773-3590  
Eric, N5WFU at 986-1257

### **A Note from the Treasurer**

Let's all welcome the following new members who have joined our club during July and August!

Wes Mossman	N5QCP
Thomas Allen	KD6KQZ
Ron Burdick	KC6FJO
Jerry Cates	KC5IMC
Robert Helms	AF5Z
Kevin Roeber	KC5OLC
Charles Doughtie	N5EXY
Scott Simmons	KC5PXR
Matthew Simmons	KC5PXS
Kevin Greene	KC5NLT

I have attached a copy of the latest roster for your convenience. Enjoy!

73...Bob, KF5KF

### **DX Column**

"Going Around in (great) Circles"

You'll often hear DXers talk about how good long distance propagation can be along "The Gray Line". Sounds mysterious - but it's just the line encircling ol' planet Earth which divides night from day. Don't worry about WHY propagation is better.

Just note WHEN we're on the Gray Line (that's easy - twice a day, at our local sunrise and sunset), and WHERE it goes. It's the WHERE that takes a bit more understanding, but used knowlegeably through the four seasons, it will point you to huge chunks of prime DX territory.

The first thing most DXers try is looking at that wavy Gray Line on charts, on their PC, or even on the beautiful motor-driven Geochron. But all of those start with a HUGE handicap: the old familiar "Mercator Projection" map of the world, hanging in every school classroom. That projection is designed to maintain the correct SHAPE of everything, at the expense of grossly distorting distances (ever wonder if Greenland is really bigger than all of South America?). That's got NOTHING to do with how radio waves travel. It's why the Gray Line is a very different shape each month, which your chart or PC has to calculate.

Wouldn't life be much simpler if the Gray Line was just straight? It is! on a "great circle" projection of the world from your QTH. That's a projection which gives the correct DIRECTION and shortest DISTANCE to anywhere - just like radio waves travel. For example, from Texas, India is north over the pole (or south, going the other way round). Standard great circle charts for east, central and western USA are in all sorts of ham books, and most ham magazines carry ads for \$2 or \$3 print outs for your exact location.

So now you know that Georgetown Texas is at the center of the world (at least on your great circle map), and the Gray Line goes straight through it at sunrise and sunset. But where does it point? If our world wasn't tilted on its axis, it would ALWAYS be exactly north-south.

Fortunately, for those of us who like the seasons (and like a variety of DX), the world IS tilted - at about 23.5 degrees. This causes the two Gray Lines (sunrise and sunset) to fan across a plus/minus 23.5 degree spread from N-S as the seasons change. So, if you want a good chance of working Moscow, Russia (roughly 23 degrees E of N), try immediately after our sunset in mid-summer. Bangkok, Thailand (23 deg W of N)? Try our sunset in mid-December.

I'm going to make a "poor ham's Gray Line calculator" using these ideas. Should cost me about \$4. I'll bring it to a future meeting.

73, John, NT5C.

## President's Column

Throughout the year, there has been a growing interest in the activities of the Williamson County emergency team. The club meetings with program topics related to the use of amateur radio to support the community during emergencies if needed have had the most active participation.

Even though the emergency team is not a direct activity of the club, most of the participants are club members. The club elects the Williamson County Emergency Coordinator since it is representative of amateur radio operators in the county.

When the Williamson County emergency team puts together its overall plan for responding to local emergencies, I would like to recommend that the club provide full and active participation. This can range from support of the simulated emergencies to training club members to be weather spotters for the Weather Net.

We all know how quickly the club has and continues to grow. I think it is important that we develop and use the skills for a professional emergency response capability to establish ourselves as an important part of the community.

73...Greg Worthington, AB5NG

**Buy, Sell, Trade, Rent, Lost or Found****Morse Code Classes**

The Williamson County Amateur Radio Club will be offering a free morse code class beginning September 9. The class will prepare students for code from 0 to 5 words per minute.

## LOCATION:

McCoy Elementary School  
(Metal Portable Building)  
1313 Williams Drive  
Georgetown, Tx

TIME: 0800 to 1000 each Saturday

DATES: September 9, 16, 23 and 30  
October 14, 21 and 28  
November 4  
November 11 (Testing only)SUPPLIES NEEDED: Paper and Pencil  
Straight key or hand key  
3 to 4 foot 2-conductor cable with 1/4 inch phone jackMORE INFO: Bill Sepulveda, N5EIF  
388-0082 (Round Rock)Rick Trommer, WB5YTG  
863-3613 (Georgetown)**Novice and No-code Tech Class**

The Williamson County Amateur Radio Club is sponsoring a free 8-week course for any person interested in earning a beginning ham radio license. The instructors are amateur radio volunteers.

LOCATION: Georgetown ISD office  
603 Lakeway Drive  
Georgetown, Tx

TIME: 0900 to 1200 Saturdays

DATES: September 9, 16 and 23  
October 7, 14, 21  
October 28 (Testing )SUPPLIES NEEDED: Textbook "Now You're Talking"  
(Available at Radio Shack or the Austin Amateur  
Radio Supply)  
Paper and penMORE INFO: Michelle Bittick, KC5BHE  
258-7378 (Cedar Park)Chris Hill, KC5AQF  
869-4211 (Georgetown)[Return to Home Page](#)