

Repeaters  
2m: 145.410-  
70cm: 441.650+(110.9p)



## THE ELLIS COUNTY REPEATER

Official Newsletter for the Ellis County Amateur Radio Club  
www.wd5ddh.org

April 2004  
Volume 2; Issue 4

### E.C.A.R.C. Officers

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### Monthly Events

R.A.C.E.S Training Net  
First Thursday at  
7:30pm on 145.410

ECARC Information Net  
Second Thursday at  
7:30pm on 145.410

ECARC Club Meeting  
Third Thursday at  
7:30pm

## President's Pen



Here we are again in the middle of springtime. It's a time of renewal and fresh starts. It's a great time to do the outside part of our hobby such as antenna building and repair. The ground is

soft for those of us who are looking at digging holes for tower bases. The weather is not too hot and not too cold for working outside. All we seem to worry about is the occasional thunderstorm.

Speaking of thunderstorms we just had a very good Skywarn school. The attendance seemed to be up over last year. It was well attended by a rather diverse crowd consisting of RACES members, Fire, Police, EMS and interested citizens. We even had a person join the club as a result of the school. This happened at the table that was staffed by Richard KD5NFW and Robert KD5YHY. Our thanks go to these hard working ham operators for their efforts setting up the display table and hanging the banners.

While we are on the subject of new growth, the club took on six new members this month. While we are on a roll we can look at following up on the names we collected at the Skywarn school. If we can create more interest in Ham Radio in the local law enforcement and fire departments we can add more of these people to our club.

Other areas that are being worked on include the club repeater. We seem to be getting closer to getting some better equipment on the air which should result in better coverage of the county and surrounding areas. As we all know, better repeater coverage results in more interest in our club. The other by-product of wider coverage is the ability to track storms farther out for better RACES performance.

It's been a busy month for the Ellis County Amateur Radio Club. We had about twenty people attend the last meeting. These meetings get better and better. This month we were able to look at hats, shirts, and t-shirts for the club. We were quoted some very good prices and look forward to purchasing some of these items soon. They will be helpful to our club while working public events. We have some of this type of events on the way this summer. If you have been out of the ham radio habit, now would be a

good time to become active again. There is a lot going on and a lot of spaces to fill. There is also a lot of fun to be had. The first and best place to fire up again is on the air. Get in and start talking, find out what you can do and have fun!

73,

Mark Frankie KA5TBK

## March Club Meeting Notes

by Richard Bird KD5NFW

If you weren't at the last club meeting March 18<sup>th</sup>, you missed another great meeting! There were 19 folks that attended. That means there are roughly 20-30 of you out there that didn't make it. You know who you are! Let's see you at the next meeting.

Before the meeting officially kicked off, we held another Civil Defense Sticker Raffle with tickets selling for \$1.00 each. Through the generosity of the members present we were able to raise \$32.00 for the club. In addition to the raffle, there were club patches available for \$3.00 each that raised another \$33.00 for the club.

The meeting opened with Club Secretary Ray Calhoun, W5ZGZ, reading the minutes from February's meeting. President Mark Frankie, KA5TBK, moved that we accept the minutes, a vote was taken, and they were passed.

It appears that R.A.C.E.S. I.D. cards will be available soon. Bob Fitch, K5ASU, has come up with a design for the I.D. cards that members approved. More details will be available soon, hopefully by the next club meeting.

In regard to club equipment mentioned in Mark's article earlier in this newsletter, we continue to wait for estimates on repair of the P.A. Deck. According to Danny Woodruff, KA5RDB, the ailing amplifier has been repaired.

A work party was organized for Sunday morning, March 21<sup>st</sup>, to mount two donated "whiteboards" in the E.O.C. We had several members show up that morning to help. Maybe it was because we met at the Waffle House for breakfast and conversation before the work began. Anyway, a big thanks goes out to Danny, Kenny KD5VQN and son Travis, Tommy KA5RDC for bringing all the right tools and hardware, Gary KD5ZCP for doing most of the work, Michael KD5ZCO and

yours truly KD5NFW. We supervised the operation. If I left anyone out I apologize. My memory's not what it used to be! We had two representatives from Embroid Me, a local business from Waxahachie, bring samples of hats and shirts to help us decide on a style and color for the club and RACES. We do not have final pricing yet, but here are ballpark numbers as we now know them: \$20.00 – golf shirt with collar and pocket \$11.00 – T-shirt with pocket and chest decal

\$6.50 – ball cap with club logo

\$2.00 – add callsign to hat

We will be taking orders soon. Don't miss out on the opportunity to show your club colors. More detailed information will be distributed when available.

The most important and exciting part of the meeting came when we accepted 5 new members into the club. Everyone please join me in giving a big welcome to Bill Terry N1DZC, Chuck Allen KM5LY, Tim Cofer KD5YBB, and Terry Dowd KE5APL. Our ranks continue to grow. We must be doing something right.

A committee was formed to identify candidates for Club Officer Elections which will be held at the June club meeting. Members of this committee are Danny, Tommy, and Bill Martz WB5RFM. You can run but you can't hide. One or all of these fine volunteers will find you!

Along those lines, we have a friendly reminder from your Club Treasurer. Danny also advises that club dues are due by the June Club Meeting. Beat the rush and pay early and pay often. Finally, several months ago Bob generously donated a vertical HF antenna to the club for use at the E.O.C. A work party will be organized and a date will be set at the next club meeting to assemble, erect, and fine tune this antenna.

We look forward to seeing you at the next club meeting, April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **FCC INVITES COMMENTS ON AMATEUR RADIO RESTRUCTURING PLANS**

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

The FCC is seeking comment on three plans, one from the ARRL, that would reshape the Amateur Service licensing structure. Each Petition for Rule Making responds to World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 actions last summer that made changes to Article 25 of the international Radio Regulations. While differing substantially in some other aspects, the three petitions call for modifications at Amateur Radio's entry level and for a three-tiered license system. One petition goes beyond licensing structure to recommend additional changes to amateur testing and HF digital privileges. A fourth petition focuses solely on the Morse requirement. Comments are due by April 24 on all four petitions. Designated RM-10867, ARRL's petition asks the FCC to create a new entry-level license class--being called "Novice" for now. It would offer limited HF CW/data and phone/image privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters plus certain VHF and UHF privileges. The League plan also would consolidate Technician, Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) and General licensees into a new General license that no longer would require a Morse examination. Current Technician and Tech Plus licensees automatically would gain General privileges, and Advanced license holders automatically would be upgraded to Extra without further testing. Applicants for Amateur Extra would still have to pass a 5 WPM Morse code examination, but the General and Extra written exams would stay the same. A news report "ARRL to Propose New Entry-Level License, Code-Free HF Access,"

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/01/19/1/>, has further details. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) are addressed on the ARRL Web site, <http://www.arrl.org/news/restructuring2/faq.html>. In a wide-ranging petition designated as RM-10868, an "unincorporated grassroots organization" calling itself the Radio Amateur Foundation (RAF) has asked the FCC to modify the Technician ticket to allow limited HF phone, image, data and CW privileges. HF phone/image privileges would be restricted to portions of the 160, 15 and 10-meter bands. The group also proposes retaining the 5 WPM Morse requirement for General and Amateur Extra applicants, upgrading Advanced class holders to Extra and Novices to Technician. The Radio

Amateur Foundation said it sees no need to change licensing requirements for General or Amateur Extra applicants. The RAF also wants to scrap existing Amateur Radio question pools and start over from scratch, keeping the question pools out of the public domain and requiring a 10-day waiting period before retesting. In addition, it would permit only Generals and Amateur Extras--or Technicians licensed more than two years--to request vanity call signs. The RAF has further asked the FCC to permit digital experimentation from 29.0 to 29.3 MHz at bandwidths of up to 15 kHz. In his two-page petition designated RM-10869, Ronald D. Lowrance, K4SX, calls on the FCC to retain the 5 WPM Morse code requirement for General class applicants and to raise the Morse requirement to 13 WPM for Amateur Extra class applicants. He called Morse code "the most reliable mode of communication" in an emergency. Lowrance would make no change in Technician licensing requirements. The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) wants the FCC to establish a new "Communicator" entry-level license. Its petition, designated RM-10870, reiterates the NCVEC's call--first made last fall in RM-10787--to altogether eliminate the Morse code testing requirement. The NCVEC petition would upgrade all current Novices to Communicator class, all current Technician and Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) licensees to General and all Advanced class licensees to Amateur Extra without further testing. Once the Morse requirement goes away, the NCVEC said in its filing, "there will be no effective difference between the Technician and General class licenses." The new Communicator ticket would permit a power limit of 100 W on bands below 24 MHz and 50 W on all frequencies above 24 MHz. Communicator licensees would have to use commercially manufactured equipment (or gear built from a commercial kit). Communicator licensees could operate both voice and digital modes on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters plus VHF and UHF up to 70 cm. All three license restructuring plans call for changes to the present HF subbands. Interested parties may view and comment on these petitions via the FCC Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>.

# Ellis County 2004 Skywarn School a Success

by Richard Bird KD5NFW

The Ellis County 2004 SKYWARN School was held Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, at the Waxahachie High School Fine Arts Center and was a big success. We had over 100 attendees this year. There were 25 Ellis County R.A.C.E.S. members (the rest I trust are current on their training or attended a class in another city). There were 9 HAMS in attendance that are not currently in Ellis County R.A.C.E.S. and they will be contacted by the club to ascertain their interests in this area. We had 64 people attend from 15 different cities in 4 different counties. Many of these were EMT, Fire, and Police. It is very important to have these emergency personnel trained in weather spotting and we were happy to see them there. Gary Woodall from the NWS Office in Ft. Worth once again gave a great presentation, and I have personally received compliments from first timers as well as repeat attendees on the quality of the information and the presentation.. The club set up an information table at the entrance with a club banner prominently displayed behind the table and one on the stage in the auditorium. Pamphlets with information dealing with amateur radio and weather were quickly snatched up from the table. Several potential new members were identified at this table. I would like to thank Robert Crosby KD5YHY for helping me prepare and staff the table during this years class.

## PENNSYLVANIA HAMS HELP EQUIP MOBILE COMMAND POST

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

Amateur Radio input has helped to ensure complete interoperability for a new mobile command post in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The fully decked-out communications vehicle based in Wilkes-Barre is the result of a federal grant and volunteer assistance from three radio amateurs and several other volunteer radio experts, who got keys to the city in return. Armed with a

\$300,000 federal grant, Wilkes-Barre Mayor Tom McGroarty wanted to put some of the money toward a mobile command post--or MCP--project. He approached Bill Harding, KA3QPQ, of the city's engineering office. Harding, in turn, sought advice and assistance from Rich Arland, K7SZ. Other team members included Greg Berholtz, N3SFO, David Anthony and Leigh Thompson. "The plan involved purchasing off-the-shelf communications gear and configuring a mothballed GMC Suburban as a mobile communications asset to support interagency interoperability during emergencies," said Arland. Ham radio operators volunteer emergency communication services to 18 communities in Northeastern Pennsylvania, he noted. After a briefing from Harding, the MCP project manager, regarding Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (ARES/RACES) operations, Arland said, the mayor wholeheartedly agreed that ham radio definitely should be part of the MCP equation. "All in all, the van has the capability to communicate on all ham bands from 160 meters through 70 cm on CW, SSB, data and FM," Arland reports. Of course, it also contains a full complement of low and high-band public safety (police, fire and emergency medical services) communications gear. Future plans call for the addition of a high-end GPS unit and a 2-meter transceiver dedicated to APRS. Needless to say, the van literally bristles with antennas--15 in all--most for VHF and UHF, although there's a screwdriver-type antenna for HF. So far, the MCP has been sent out twice--to support emergency operations following flooding in Wayne County and to assist after a prisoner escaped from a county lockup.

## R.A.C.E.S.

By Bob Fitch K5ASU

Some of the members have asked me about the mapping program MARPLOT. It is software that may be down loaded and placed on your computer from the following web site.

<http://www.epa.gov/ceppo/cameo/marplo t.htm>

This software can be installed on a PC or a Macintosh depending on the version you download. The program is not what I would call friendly until you have had some experience with it but it is a great

program to have available on your computer. With the program you can locate any road in the displayed map. The names of the roads are indicated on the map at whatever level of zoom you select. The map program will indicate the Lat-Lon of any point you highlight on the map. All roads, railroads, streams, lakes and cities are provided on the map. Depending on the map you download you will have maps of any county in any state that can be displayed.

To start I would download the basic software to my computer by going to the above indicated web site and this will come up with Saint Williams County, VA. This is the basic software. At this point you can become familiar with the software and get an idea of how it functions. I warn you that it has some tricky items in the software. Nothing that will hurt your computer but it is hard to figure how to use some of the features. The help on this program will explain some of it but some you just have to learn by doing.

After you have done some work with this county then go to the following web site and download the map for Ellis County, TX.

[www.epa.gov/ceppo/cameo/marmaps](http://www.epa.gov/ceppo/cameo/marmaps)

In this website you will find on the first page a list of the states. Highlight Texas and it will take you to the Counties in the State of Texas. The file for Ellis County is TX139zip. Note the file is zipped. You will have to unzip it and put in a folder in your Marplot directory. Here is where the trick comes in. You have to get into this file which after unzipped will indicate a number "48139" Open it and you will see a file "Name.Map". Remember these as you will have to use them to get the file into the basic software.

To enter the file into the basic program click on "List" on the tool bar at the top. Then click on "Map List" to open the list. Then click on "Find New Map" at the bottom of the listing. Then locate the folder "48139". Open it and then open "Name Map". Click on OK and you have the map of Ellis County in your software. From this point on you will have to do some tweeking of the display. Go to "List" and then to "Layer" list. Move all the check marks to the column marked "Show". Also, look at the top right of the layer list and click on the double blue flags. This will set you up for the most part. From here you can play with the "Range" setting. They are hard to

understand at first but you will soon get the hang of it.

You will find this program very helpful in many things including RACES. You can enter more counties as you desire.

## Dwayne's Corner



That doesn't look like radio equipment to me!

## Kentucky ham offers his good operating tips

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

Don Snodgrass, K4QKY, of Murray, Kentucky, believes that being a good "Elmer" (Amateur Radio mentor) involves much more than assisting someone to pass the license examination. A supporter of the ARRL's recent Petition for Rule Making

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/01/19/1/> to the FCC, Snodgrass says he's eager to do his part to welcome new operators to the HF bands when the time comes. In the meantime, he's offering his recommended "Good Operating Practices"

<http://campus.murraystate.edu/org/msuarc/goodoperatingpractices.htm> on his Web site. "Most hams develop their operating practices--most good, but some not so good--simply by listening to more-experienced hams," Snodgrass said. "These suggested guidelines are based on what one ham feels he has learned from listening to other hams since 1972." His philosophy, expressed within his list of dos and don'ts, is that amateurs who develop good operating practices will help to sustain Amateur Radio's "long and proud tradition of self-regulation." At the top of his "do" list: "Always be polite, regardless of the circumstances. If not, avoid transmitting."

## Call for Articles

By Richard Bird KD5NFW

The Ellis County Amateur Radio Club is growing. Every month we get new members, some new to amateur radio and some seasoned veterans. Every member, regardless of experience, has something to contribute to the club and its members. I would like to put out a "Call for Articles" to all club members. I know we have members who are expert at antennas, DXing and contesting, digital modes, home brew, etc. Share your knowledge and experience with the rest of the club, especially with the newcomers to amateur radio. I can accommodate nearly any format you create your article in. Simply email it to [kd5nfw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kd5nfw@sbcglobal.net) or type it the old fashioned way and give it to me at the next club meeting. I will include it in the next club newsletter as space allows. I look forward to hearing from you.

73

Richard

## HQ staffers get IC-7800 preview

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

Members of the ARRL Headquarters staff got a hands-on preview of the not-quite-yet-released ICOM IC-7800 transceiver, thanks to Icom Engineering Manager John Gibbs, KC7YXD. Gibbs visited Headquarters March 4 with a pre-production model of his company's new top-end Amateur Radio HF plus 6-meter transceiver. Among its multitude of features, the IC-7800 offers a seven-inch color TFT display, two independent receivers, a spectrum display, CW autotune, and RTTY and PSK31 capability just by plugging in a keyboard. The IC-7800 will replace the venerable IC-781 as the capstone of Icom's Amateur Radio product line. In terms of performance, Gibbs claims the IC-7800 will offer third-order intercept (IP3) performance in the +40 dBm range and two-tone, third-order intermodulation distortion dynamic range well in excess of 100 dB. Although a retail price has not yet been firmed up, it's anticipated that owning an IC-7800 will set buyers back less than \$11,000. Musician Joe Walsh, WB6ACU, and audio expert and manufacturer Bob Heil, K9EID, were

among the operators as the IC-7800 saw action at W1AW during the ARRL International DX Contest (Phone) March 6-7. The IC-7800 will be the focus of Icom's Hamvention exhibit May 14-16, and it could be on the market in a month or so.

## Bogus ARRL.net messages still circulating

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

E-mail messages purporting to be from the ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/emailfwd.html>>, "The ARRL.net team" or some variation continue to show up in members' inboxes. The messages, which often carry a subject line along the lines of "Warning about your e-mail account," indicate that the recipient's ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service <call sign>@arrl.net address will be closed within three days because of an alleged violation of acceptable practices. These messages are false and did not come from The ARRL Forwarding Service. They are the result of one of the variants on a number of viruses now permeating the Internet. A file usually is attached to these messages. As always, do not open any attachments that you cannot identify. Opening the file could result in your computer being infected by a virus. This is only one of the several virus-laden messages currently propagating across the Internet. The ARRL advises its members to be cautious in opening any message and/or attachment, even if it appears to be from someone you know. All of these viruses use e-mail addresses from the address book of an infected computer to falsify the "From:" address in the header to make it appear that the message is from someone the recipient knows.

# Terry Dowd KE5APL: April Member Profile

by Cathy Schack



As we all know, an amateur radio club is not just a group of people with a common interest. It is almost like an extended family. The experienced members pass on their knowledge and expertise to new members, and everyone works together to serve the community. Individual and group accomplishments are equally important. Hams become hams because they can use their skills to help others and they can take pride in doing so. Some ham radio operators face exceptional challenges and can especially benefit from participation in an active club.

New club member Terry Dowd KE5APL accomplished a remarkable feat - he passed three licensing elements in one day, a week after receiving his technician's license. This would have been remarkable for anyone, but it is especially so because Terry is blind.

Born in Champlain, Illinois in 1974, Terry started listening to scanners and short-wave radio in high school with his friend Jon, and back then they talked about getting licensed. After high school, Terry and Jon lost touch for several years. Terry attended college at Navarro in Corsicana and at North Lake College in Irving before government red-tape caused him to lose his funding. He also suffered a serious fall which caused a spinal cord injury and forced him to spend many months in a rehabilitation facility in Austin. When Terry and Jon finally reconnected, Jon had just passed his technician's exam and he challenged Terry to do the same. With Jon's help and the use of specialized computer software and study guides, Terry learned Morse code and studied for all four elements. He passed the technician's exam on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004, and the next week, he passed the other three elements on his first try. In attendance at his VE session were club members Bob Fitch K5ASU, Danny Woodruff KA5RDB, and Tracy Mooneyhan KD5WRP.

There are hundreds of visually-impaired ham radio operators across the U.S. and Canada, and thousands world-wide. The Courage Handi-Ham Network is run by blind hams and provides study materials, computer software and support, and encouragement and advice to its members.

Terry operates a Kenwood TS-450 with voice module from his home outside Ennis, where he lives with his wife Jennifer. She is very proud of her husband's accomplishments. The day Jon

accompanied Terry to take his exams they called Jennifer right after the testing was over. Jon told her that "they had some good news and some bad news. The good news is that Terry passed all three elements. The bad news is, now he has a higher license than I have!"

In addition to ham radio, Terry enjoys working with computers and fishing.

We all welcome our newest member Terry Dowd to the Ellis County Amateur Radio Club.



## April Event Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 Mar	29	30	31	1 Apr	2	3
				7:30p RACES Training Net on 145.410		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
				7:30p ECARC Information Net on 145.410		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
				7:30p <a href="#">ECARC Club Meeting</a>		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1 May

## This Months Boat Anchors

For Sale: "Pana-Vise" 6 inch double swivel mount, good for mobile radio mounts. Act quickly while supplies last. Asking price \$7.50 each.

Contact [Gary Haden KD5ZCP](#) or 469 348-6817

For Sale: 2 Meter Beams Cushcraft 26B2 Vertical stacked beams. This is two 13 element beams stacked. They were bought brand new in September of 2002, and are assembled and ready to go. This set up sells for \$399.95 new. I am asking \$275.00

Astron 30amp power supply - \$90.00

Ringo Ranger (New in box) - \$65.00

Kenwood T7H DualBand Handheld w/external Mic - \$175.00

Kenwood 570(D) HF Rig w/matching speaker - \$650.00

Contact :Scott (KD5RON) at 903-875-1741