

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



THE ELLIS COUNTY REPEATER

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

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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



I recently had an opportunity to participate in an interview for the Daily Light newspaper. I was joined by Bob Fitch K5ASU and Richard Bird KD5NFW. As we were answering

the numerous questions posed to us by the interviewer, I began to recall what it is we do as Ham operators. The dominant theme that kept surfacing was the fact that the Amateur Radio Service is just that, a service. We reviewed the different ways we as a group serve the community. We seem to forget this, from time to time, because we have so much fun and fellowship in the remainder of time when we are not weather spotting or providing communication for a bike race or other activity. I began to think of the countless jobs and tasks available to us as club members that while not totally necessary to the operation of the club, still go a long way to enrich our experience as Ham operators.

We are on the brink of a new season of radio activity. Along with spring rapidly approaching we will see more activity such as storm spotting, schools and classes to learn to storm spot, as well as bike races and field day exercises. We are in the process of upgrading our repeater and its location. We should be in a position to reap the benefits of better coverage. This will provide a better view to the west where most of our weather comes from as well as open a wider range to try to enlist new members. On the subject of new members we are also discussing the possibility of starting our classes again to recruit more new operators to our ranks. All these things should work together to make us a better club. I would like to encourage you to attend as many meetings as you can and see if you might have a particular talent you could share with us. There are so many jobs to be done that everyone should be able to have a part. Working together with your fellow operators is where the fun begins. The more we work together the better we will be when we have a real emergency on hand. That brings us

full circle to the fact that Ham Radio is just that, a service.

See you on the air,
Mark Frankie
KA5TBK

Old Timers Honored at January Club Meeting

by Cathy Schack KE5DIO

The Ellis County Amateur Radio Club honored its "old-timers" at their January meeting, which was held at the Waxahachie Fire Station. Club members who had been licensed as ham radio operators for thirty years or more were honored with a party and a beautiful cake decorated with the club's logo.

The five honorees were: David Shaheen WB5GUG (36 years of service); Roy Jones W5RJ (30 years); Ray Calhoun W5ZGZ (53 years); Bob Fitch K5ASU (46 years) and Pat Gardenhire K5RBV (48 years).

Dr. Ray Calhoun gave a very entertaining talk about all the changes in ham radio he has seen over the years. Computers, voice-over IP and other high-tech innovations that are commonplace today seemed like science fiction back when he got his license. He built his first radios with surplus parts left over from World War II.

There are currently about 3 million licensed ham radio operators worldwide. About 700,000 live in the United States.

R.A.C.E.S.

by Bob Fitch K5ASU

It seems that we are still having a problem with members understanding the participation requirements to remain a member of the RACES organization. Listed below are the RACES Participation requirements each calendar year:

- a. Participation in at least eight (8) training or RACES activation nets during the 12 months period.
- b. Participation in at least one (1) public service events which has been approved for credit by the Radio Officer or the Training Office for two (2) hours or more duration during the 12 months period.
- c. Attend Skywarn Training presented by the National Weather Service instructor once every two years. This can be at any location the National Weather Service presents the class.

Please keep these requirements in mind and participate to keep your membership current.

Also, be aware the Skywarn Class is taught in many cities during the spring and you may attend any one convenient for your schedule.

The Skywarn Class will be conducted at the Fine Arts Center, Waxahachie High School in Waxahachie, TX on 28 Feb 2006 at 7:00 PM this year. Members who failed to attend in 2005 should attend this class.

The RACES training net is always held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM. It is conducted on the Ellis County Amateur Radio Club repeater on 145.410 mhz.

The last calendar year we participated in public service events to support bike tours with communications and safety personnel. The participation in public service events gives the members good training in radio net procedures. These nets are mostly controlled nets on repeaters. A controlled net is a net in which stations can only call the net control. If a station in the net need to talk to another station in the net then permission must be obtained from the net control station to call that station. Some of these nets are conducted in the simplex mode. They are run as controlled nets most of the time. The problem with this type of net is the inability of some stations to hear other stations in the net. Each station has to be aware that he might be transmitting at the same time as another station. Therefore, he must only call net control and the net control will respond when the net is clear of traffic. These public service events are fun and the training is

good to keep our communication skills at a peak. RACES members should participate in as many as possible during the year. One (1) 2 hour participation is required but plan to do more.

Thanks – 73s

Bob Fitch – Radio Officer.

ARRL CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PENDING TEXAS BPL DEPLOYMENT

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

The ARRL is taking a cautious, but hopeful, stance following the recent announcement of a commercial broadband over power line (BPL) deployment by the largest electric power utility in Texas. TXU Electric Delivery and BPL manufacturer Current Communications Group have partnered to establish "the nation's first broadband-enabled Smart Grid" that will cover most of TXU's service area. That includes some two million homes and businesses in the Dallas-Forth Worth area as well as other Texas communities. "If TXU is going to install a BPL system, the ARRL is glad that TXU has chosen Current's system--which avoids using spectrum allocated to the Amateur Radio Service--in preference to one that has proven to be problematic," commented ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ. It was another story altogether when TXU operated a pilot BPL project in Irving, Texas, in 2004 and early 2005 using Amperion hardware. The system generated such interference on Amateur Radio frequencies that the League filed a formal complaint with the FCC in support of a Texas radio amateur seeking the system's shutdown and fines for the operator. Within two weeks of the League's filing, TXU dismantled the BPL trial, and the ARRL withdrew its complaint. Sumner says the League is not expecting history to repeat itself when TXU and Current begin installing their "Smart Grid" BPL system later this year. As he pointed out in his "It Seems to Us . . ." editorial in August 2005 QST, Cinergy Corp's deployment of the nation's largest BPL system in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area so far "has proceeded without major interference problems." The Cinergy system also

uses Current Technologies equipment. "Current has avoided putting high-frequency energy on the medium-voltage lines by using low-band VHF (30-50 MHz) instead," Sumner wrote.

Additionally, he noted, Current's system uses Homeplug modems, which avoid all ham bands except 60 meters, to connect individual customers. Limited testing of the Cinergy BPL deployment suggested its interference potential is minimal relative to Amateur Radio facilities. While Sumner won't rule out some occurrences of RF interference in the TXU rollout, he says the League anticipates a low-enough probability to deal with it on a case-by-case basis. ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, says he's discussed with engineers at Current Technologies the sorts of interference issues that might arise. "While they are taking the position that they will wait until problems actually occur, then determine what is needed to fix them, their open dialogue with ARRL will be an important part of the process," he said. "The opportunity for dialogue exists for all of the BPL companies, although not all of them want to work on solutions to the interference problems that have plagued this industry." In October, the ARRL petitioned the FCC to issue a Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making modifying the Part 15 BPL rules it adopted a year earlier and sharply reduce BPL's potential to cause interference. In exchange, the League said it would withdraw its still-pending Petition for Reconsideration in the BPL proceeding, ET Docket 04-37. "It is no longer the case that all BPL systems inherently radiate high levels of RF energy on amateur allocations on overhead medium-voltage power lines," the ARRL said in its petition. "Thus, not all BPL architectures have similar potential for harmful interference to the Amateur Radio Service (and to other licensed services)." The League's petition cited BPL systems by Current Technologies, IBEC and Corridor Systems as being among those that meet the additional requirements it's proposed. The ARRL also has cooperated with Motorola in testing the interference potential of that company's Powerline LV BPL system. Results so far have been very encouraging. Judging from TXU's news release, BPL's ability to provide broadband service to individual customers and businesses take a back seat to its potential to monitor the utility's

power grid, preventing and detecting problems and outages and enabling automated meter reading.

Boat Anchors of the Month

WANTED: I am looking for a sure 444 mic. to use with my Drake station. I am also looking for a hand mic or desk mic. 8 pin for Yaesu radio.

Please contact Billy WB5BXJ at billyandanita@sbcglobal.net

WANTED: crank up tower, at least 60', preferably free standing but not mandatory. Will pick up. Please contact Nick WA6GPW/5 at hkiseloff@sbcglobal.net.

For Sale: Mosely TA-36 six element Tri-band beam [details](#)

For Sale: MFJ-986 Differential-T Tuner \$220; ICOM 706 MKII \$400

Contact Jon Hykel at km5pz@sbcglobal.net

February Event Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Jan	30	31	1 Feb	2	3	4
				7:30p RACES Training Net on 145.410		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
			7:00p Planning Committee Meeting at Cancun's in Waxa.	7:30p ECARC Information Net on 145.410		8:00a QSO Breakfast at Cancun's
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
				7:30p ECARC Club Meeting		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	1 Mar	2	3	4
		SKYWARN school WHS Fine Arts Center 7-9:00pm		7:30p RACES Training Net on 145.410		ARRL DX Contest