

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

July 2004
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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



This is a very good time to be a member of the Ellis County ARC. We are experiencing excellent turn out to the meetings as well as good support for our extracurricular activities. We just had club officer elections and are ready to start a new year. We stand in a very good position for growth and improvement. I am excited about the possibilities this year holds. We hit the ground running this year by providing communication for the Tour d' Italia Bike Race in Italy, Texas on Saturday, June 19. The careful planning and research by several club members, combined with recent work on our club repeater gave us very good coverage of the race course. Due to my location as net control, I was able to see the result of our efforts first hand. The people that I came in contact with were impressed with our ability to provide point to point communication. It was rewarding to see them light up when they realized they could have immediate contact with rest stops and the rest stop coordinator. Several made the comment that this could not have been done with cell phones. Due to the rural nature of the race course many who counted on the use of cell phones found themselves looking for another way to communicate. I would like to thank all who were involved. This project took team work and preparation. All the participants jumped in where they could and did what was required with out complaint. As a result a great time was had by all. We are looking forward to more public service projects like this, as well as our continued work on RACES and weather spotting. Another goal this year is to share our experience with others in the club. There are many aspects of HAM radio to be explored. There are those of

us who are active on the HF bands, others who have knowledge of packet radio, still others who are using APRS. Think about sharing your particular interest with others in the club. This could be in the form of a short club meeting presentation. This could help our growing club meeting attendance. I would like to welcome those of you who attended the June club meeting after a period of absence. It was good to be able to put a face with a call sign. I would like to encourage you to continue to attend. We need your help, input, experience and support. A club like ours is a group effort. There is a certain level of work that has to be done. The more members we have participating the more we can spread these responsibilities around. We will be able to do a much better job, and have better standing in the community by allowing several members to concentrate on specific tasks, as averse to having a few overloaded members juggling many tasks. While we have the basic officers covered there are several other areas that could use manpower. Please consider where you might fit in. It's going to be a busy year for the Ellis County ARC. Let's not forget to have fun and promote our hobby.

73,
Mark Frankie KA5TBK

Richard's Rants



This column will replace "Dwayne's Corner" and may or may not be more

prolific. As the club's new Vice President I would like to thank last year's officers for their efforts and the members who made everything happen. Last year was a good year, and this year will be even better. As Mark has already stated, we hit the ground running this year with the Tour d' Italia Bike Race. It had often been stated that "we would love to help, but that's Ham-Com weekend!". Luckily, several members did not see this as an obstacle and committed themselves to seeing this through. We had 13 club members provide communications support for this bike ride which had over 1,100 participants over a two county area. A couple of stations erected masts to elevate their antennas to insure reliable communication. The race began at 08:00 and was over by 14:30 with no problems or breakdowns in communication. I am sure we will be doing this again next year, and hope more of you join us in the fun and the learning of the experience. We had plenty of volunteers for this event, but we will need more next year if we want to properly staff all the positions. Photos of the event may be seen on the club website at

<http://www.wd5ddh.org/about.htm>. I

would like to recognize the following volunteers for their instrumental support in making this event a success: Dwayne KD5HWP, Marla KD5UIV, Bob K5ASU, Bill KD5PMB, Michael N5TZR, Glenn KC5JQK, Mark KA5TBK, Jean-Claude KD5WPI, Donna KE5AZU, David WB5GUG. Extra thanks goes to Robert KD5YHY for his efforts with the Lone Star Cyclists during preparation for this event, and Gary KD5ZCP for accepting the responsibility of SAG on very short notice.



Directly on the heels of the Tour came Field Day the very next weekend. With everything going on in the month of June, this one snuck up on some of us. I knew it had snuck up on me when I received an email from Ken KD5AIA the Thursday prior to Field Day asking who had sent out press releases for the event. OOPS! Thankfully, Ken jumped on it and got press releases sent out to

all the local media and we were visited by 2-3 of the local newspapers during Field Day. This resulted in a couple of nice articles about the ECARC and amateur radio. We had over 25 club members and guests visit the EOC during Field Day. The HF vertical antenna that Bob donated to the club performed great from 10-40 meters. The wire antennas at 40m and 80m also worked well. Overall we made 315 contacts, all voice. Many more contacts could have been made, but we spent a lot of time rag-chewing amongst ourselves during extended breaks! We did not get the treat this year of watching the art of CW at its finest. I was really looking forward to that and was disappointed when it did not materialize. Several members made the suggestion of a sign up roster for next year's Field Day where members can reserve a specific time slot to operate. This is a great idea and will allow us to spread operators over the full 24 hour period without burning out operators or having too many at one time for only 2 stations. I think everyone enjoyed the experience and I look forward to next year's event. Photos of this event are also available at <http://www.wd5ddh.org/about.htm>.

73,
Richard Bird KD5NFW

CALIFORNIA ARES/RACES TEAM HELPS WITH REAGAN FUNERAL CORTEGE

Reprinted from The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League

California's Ventura County ARES/RACES group assisted June 11 in the funeral activities for former President Ronald Reagan. Due to the large number of people wanting to view the Reagan funeral procession when the former president's body was returned to California for burial, law enforcement agencies asked the Amateur Radio volunteers to serve as additional eyes and ears along the 18-mile procession route. "Operators were stationed on freeway overpasses, road intersections and other key locations on the route," said David Gilmore, AA6VH, who's Ventura County's ARES District Emergency Coordinator and RACES

Radio Officer. He says some 50 radio amateurs participated. "We in Ventura County have always felt a connection to President Reagan," Gilmore. The county is home to the Reagan Presidential Library as well as Point Mugu Naval Air Weapons Station, where Air Force One often landed when Reagan visited his ranch in neighboring Santa Barbara County. Gilmore said the ARES/RACES members "were grateful to be able to participate in this historic occasion, and to uniquely serve and honor President Reagan for the last time." He also noted that Ventura County ARES/RACES members had undergone law enforcement background checks during the past year. "This was fortuitous, as the United States Secret Service--responsible for overall security--felt comfortable in having our participation," he said. The ARES/RACES team members worked side by side not only with the Secret Service but the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the US Coast Guard, the California Highway Patrol and various local law enforcement agencies. "At the end of the day we received compliments from a number of persons in various capacities to the effect that our reports of the position of the motorcade were invaluable," Gilmore concluded. One especially gratifying comment came from an FAA representative who complimented the team on its skill and professionalism.

R.A.C.E.S

by Bob Fitch K5ASU

As I write this article we are just finishing up the Field Day operations for 2004. We had a number of RACES members who participated in the operations. Members learned the fun and challenges of operating a net under conditions with a lot of traffic on the bands. It can get difficult at times to get the message you have to send to a designated station. Other stations working on frequencies close by cause interference that at times become hard to overcome. Under these conditions it is necessary to use good communication practices.

Good practices as a communicator require that you:

- Listen before transmitting.

- Use standard ITU phonetics.
- Use 24-hour time format.
- Accuracy is the first priority, rather than speed.
- Be clear and concise by not using unnecessary words.
- Talk across the FACE of the microphone.
- Transmit messages exactly.
- Always transmit FACTS rather than hearsay.
- Stay alert -- take breaks when needed.
- Always know your location.
- Avoid using Q-signals or 10-codes in voice transmissions.
- Speak slowly and clearly, with little emotion in your voice.
- Use tactical call signs whenever possible.
- No wisecracks or jokes on an emergency net.
- Never transmit the names of deceased individuals over a voice channel.

Read every message before transmitting it. If you have questions about what is being communicated, get clarification from the originating party. A good message will never require the recipient to ask for additional information. The above list of items was extracted from a guide that Richard, KD5NFW, provided in an e-mail to club members. If you operated on the bands on Field Day you encountered a lot of people not following the procedures outlined above. The most often thing that you encountered was operators failing to "Speak slowly and clearly, with little emotion in your voice". This caused a lot of repeat transmissions to get the information from the operator that should have been provided on the initial transmission. Understand that band conditions at times will prevent you getting the information and repeats are necessary but the chances of getting the information the first time is increased by this simple rule. Study the above list and make every effort to follow them while operating in the RACES net or any other net. It will increase the efficiency of the net and make your communications less stressful.

As an addition to Bob's article, I (KD5NFW) would like to make an announcement here. Beginning next month, RACES Training Net topics and materials will be posted to the club website's RACES page 1 week prior to the net. It is encouraged that you review the topic and material before the net. I hope this will stimulate thought processes and conversation during the actual net and lead to better training and understanding.

June Club Meeting Notes

By Richard Bird KD5NFW

The June club meeting was very well attended by 30 members. Believe it or not, the meeting was actually called to order at 7:30. Club Secretary Ray Calhoun W5ZGZ read the minutes from the May meeting and the club voted to accept the minutes. Club Treasurer Danny Woodruff KA5RDB stated there were no expenditures for the month. Club merchandise ordered from a local business would be ready for pick-up that Friday, June 18. The T-shirts however, would not be ready until at least the middle of the next week. At the time of this writing, several weeks later, the T-shirts are still not ready. If you placed an order for caps, shirts, or vests please go by and pick them up. KA5RDB reported that the p.a. deck was repaired for \$12 and the controller could be repaired for \$150-200. Participating in the July 4th Parade in Waxahachie was discussed, but due to lack of interest it was dropped. Members were reminded of the upcoming Tour d' Italia Bike Race on June 19 and Field Day June 26-27. Three new members were accepted to the club: Michael Cedeck N5TZR, Donna Bird KE5AZU, and Bill Mahaffey. Bill, I apologize I did not catch your call and I hope I spelled your last name correctly. I will correct it in the next issue. Please join me in welcoming these new members and give them a shout on the repeater. After the finish of normal club business, attention was focused on the main business at hand and the reason for such a great member turnout, Club Officer Elections. This year's elections were different than elections I have witnessed in the past. We had multiple candidates for each and every office. I would like to thank everyone that put

their name in the hat to run for an office and try to help to improve the ECARC. After the dust settled, your Club Officers for 2004-2005 are: President Mark Frankie KA5TBK, Vice President Richard Bird KD5NFW, Treasurer Danny Woodruff KA5RDB, and Secretary Ray Calhoun W5ZGZ.

One final note, I agree with the President's previous statements regarding members we've heard of but never seen. I, of course, am speaking from my limited time in this club. I am sure that in the past these members were active, and due to inactivity of the club, did not see the need to continue attending meetings. Your club is active again! We need your support. We need your expertise. Please consider becoming active again and help the ECARC achieve its goals for this upcoming year.

July Member Profile: Tommy Vinson KA5RDC

By Cathy Schack

Tommy Vinson grew up in Waxahachie and has lived there all his life. His dad was a machinist at Larkin, an oil field equipment company, and Tommy took after him -- he has "always been good with his hands". In time, Tommy followed in his dad's footsteps and also became a machinist. In 1969, Tommy joined the Navy and was sent to aviation ordinance school in Jacksonville, Florida. He was sent to Viet Nam in 1970 aboard the U.S.S. Ranger, and he served three tours there. He held several positions during his service aboard ship, among them ordinance officer and drug exemption officer. He was discharged in 1973. He joined the National Guard in Waxahachie in 1975, and he served in the Guard for the next ten years. During this time, he met up with Bob Fitch K5ASU who held classes at the armory in ham radio operation. These classes got Tommy interested in ham radio, and he bought his first radio in 1979 from Noel N5KFC. He still uses that radio today. Tommy enjoys ham radio immensely because "once you get into amateur radio, you get to meet people on the air with many different interests and occupations that you might never get to



meet face to face.” He has been involved in many Field Days over the years, all over Ellis County. Several Field Days were conducted at the supercollider site in Waxahachie before it closed down. Field Days were started in 1933 to encourage public interest in ham radio and to give radio operators an opportunity to practice their skills by contacting as many stations as possible on all amateur bands. Thus they learn to operate under abnormal and less than optimal conditions. Field Days are intended to “develop skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness as well as to acquaint the general public with the capabilities of amateur radio.” The public is invited to attend to see exactly what amateur radio operators do and to get an idea of how they serve the community. Promoting ham radio among young people is one of Tommy’s goals for the club. He would also like to see more training within the club by members who act as band captains. He feels that everyone’s input is important and that each club member should find his own area of interest within the field and contribute knowledge and expertise to

the club about that particular facet. This would benefit the membership at large and keep ideas flowing.

Tommy worked at Northrop Grumman for 18 years as a tool and die maker until his retirement. With his technical skills and many years of amateur radio experience, Tommy is a valuable asset to the club.

Tommy’s other interests include collecting pennies (he has collected them for 35 years). He is married and has three sons, two in Ellis County and one in Tyler.

July Event Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|--|
| <u>27</u> Jun | <u>28</u> | <u>29</u> | <u>30</u> | <u>1</u> Jul | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Field Day | | | | 7:30p RACES Training Net on 145.410 | | |
| <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>10</u> |
| | | | | 7:30p ECARC Information Net on 145.410 | | 8:00a Breakfast QSO at Cancun's in Waxahachie |
| <u>11</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>16</u> | <u>17</u> |
| | | | | 7:30p ECARC Club Meeting | | |
| <u>18</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>20</u> | <u>21</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>23</u> | <u>24</u> |
| | | | | | | |
| <u>25</u> | <u>26</u> | <u>27</u> | <u>28</u> | <u>29</u> | <u>30</u> | <u>31</u> |
| | | | | | | |