

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

July06
Volume 4; Issue 7

E.C.A.R.C. Officers

President

Mark Frankie
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Vice-President

Richard Bird

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Secretary

Ray Calhoun

W5ZGZ

Treasurer

Kenny Hickey

KD5VQN

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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 dog days of summer. It's been a busy month for us at the Ellis County ARC. We have provided communication for the Italy bike race and did our Field Day exercises.

I would like to thank everyone for their help in these areas. We received several letters thanking us for our efforts at the bike race. This is the type of community service that reflects well on HAM radio. Field Day had a little different twist this year. There seemed to be a more diverse group of people operating this year. I noticed more experienced and higher class operators helping the newer hams get on HF than in years past. This type of encouragement is good to see. Over all attendance was down a little but the operation seemed to be more organized. We may be looking at different locations for next year to provide a more comfortable environment for those members who are more sensitive to the heat of working outside. Another aspect of a location change is to find a spot that would give is more exposure to the public.

While we are on the subject of change we are looking for a different place to have the monthly meetings. Our hope is to find a place that will appeal to a broader base of members. The thought is if we can find a place where we can have dinner as part of the meeting we will have more time to visit before the meeting starts. This might be more convenient for those with a tight schedule that are trying to get home from work, eat, and still make it to the meetings.

I look forward to hearing your input on any of these topics. Thanks again to all of you who contributed to the bike race and Field Day exercises this year.

Mark Frankie
KA5TBK

June Club Meeting Notes

By Richard Bird KD5NFW

The ECARC June club meeting was held Thursday, June 15 with nineteen members present. Club President Mark Frankie KA5TBK opened the meeting at 7:30pm. Club Secretary Ray Calhoun W5ZGZ read the minutes from the May meeting and the members voted to accept them as read. Several motions were made and accepted to pay for the Field Day site and food for the event. Reports were given by the Repeater Committee and the Planning Committee. A RACES report was delivered by Ellis County RACES Radio Officer Bob Fitch K5ASU. Robert Crosby KD5YHY, chairman of the Education Committee, is calling for volunteers to help organize and implement a class. Volunteers so far are Bill N5OAJ, David WB5GUG, and Mark. Anyone interested in helping out with this important project should contact Robert at kd5yhy@sbcglobal.net or give him a shout on the machine. Dues were also collected at the meeting and Treasurer Kenny Hickey KD5VQN reminds everyone that dues must be paid no later than to August meeting in order to remain on the club roster.

The other order of business at the June meeting was to elect club officers for the 2006-2007 term. After much conversation and debate, the outgoing officers were all re-elected to be the incoming officers at their same positions. Your club officers for 2006-2007 are:

President: Mark Frankie KA5TBK

Vice President: Richard Bird KD5NFW

Secretary: Ray Calhoun W5ZGZ

Treasurer: Kenny Hickey KD5VQN

Please take the opportunity to thank each of these members for stepping up to (remaining at) the plate and volunteering their time to help make ECARC a successful organization.

R.A.C.E.S.

It appears that we have been crying "Wolf" all this spring about the weather that we had coming in to our area. Even the National Weather Service has been fooled on a number of forecasts this spring. Our greatest problem in the area at the present time is drought and fire danger. Normally we are not required to provide communications services for the fire problems.

That is not to say we will never be used in that roll. The only thing we can do for the fire fighters is insure we are not the cause of any fire by some dumb action on our part. I guess we can pray for rain or do a rain dance. Joking aside, use care and observe the fire ban. We have worked three of our public service events on our schedule and made a good showing in all cases. We have one more event for the summer. The Red Hot Chili Pepper Rally is scheduled in August and we will need some units to participate with the Dallas and Irving radio clubs. The event will be held on 19 Aug 06. Any member that can participate please go the www.w5fc.org and submit your request for an assignment on this bike rally. Remember they participate when we need them and we need to give them a hand when they have their event. Our next possible request for service is on the horizon. It is hurricane season and if one comes into Texas as it did last year it is always possible our services might be needed. Each hurricane that comes in takes a different path and we can't determine that until it happens. We need to stay prepared at all times with our equipment and supplies for a possible call. It is too late to prepare when the storm arrives in our area. Stay cool for the summer and be ready for what Mother Natures sends our way.

73,
Bob Fitch K5ASU

Treasurer's Report

If you have not paid your dues, please pay them as soon as you can. They were due at the June club meeting. After the August meeting if you have not paid your dues you will be dropped from the roster. If for some reason you cannot pay them due to personal reasons, please let me know and we can work something out. Your Treasurer
Kenny Hickey

Richard's Rants

(aka Bird Droppings)

The 2006 ARRL Field Day was held June 24-25. The ECARC held its activities at Lake Bardwell under the pavilion at Mott Park. Just as last year, it was a huge success. We had club members and family members running

from young to old (well ok, not as young). A number of members arrived at the site around 10:00am Saturday morning to begin setup. As luck would have it, the only rain shower in north Texas decided to form and rain itself out for nearly 1 ½ hours right on top of Mott Park! Once the rain stopped we hit the ground running and managed to get on the air around 1:30pm. Kenny KD5VQN cooked up a mess of hot dogs to keep us energized while we set up operations. Glenn KC5JQK did a great job networking the computers from each operating position to simplify the logging of contacts. Everyone else got the radios, masts and antennas set up. Joseph KD5RFC showed up Saturday evening to make some CW contacts for us. Activity stayed pretty busy until late in the evening when most folks headed back home for some rest. A few die hard operators held out for most if not all of the night to keep the contacts coming in. The final tally for contacts came in at 625. Not too bad, especially since we operated for about 6 hours from one station through an antenna system that may as well have been a dummy load. Or would that be a dummy operator? We definitely learned a lesson this year to take the time to check out every system before you go on the air. Overall the event was a huge success and everyone that participated had a great time. And in the end, that is all that matters. We are looking for comments and suggestions from members on how we can improve the event for next year. Please contact any one of your club officers or Jon KM5PZ, Planning Committee chairman, with any ideas you may have. Until then, get on the machine and burn some of the cobwebs off of it.

73,
Richard Bird KD5NFW

ROLLING BIKES / ROLLING THUNDER - AND A CLOSE CALL!

By Cathy Schack KE5DIO

The Tour d'Italia Bike Race on Saturday, June 17 attracted some eleven hundred entrants this year. Despite bouts of heavy rain and thunderstorms, hundreds of intrepid riders finished out the race. My husband Robert KD5YHY and I (KE5DIO) were among the hams that provided radio communications for the

race. It was sprinkling lightly as we left home at 5:45 a.m. to head for our assigned location at Navarro Mills. Upon our arrival at Rest Stop Four we could see a squall line out west over the lake from our high vantage point. Lightning Safety Awareness Week started off with a bang, literally, when a tree approximately one hundred yards from our truck was struck and exploded with a loud pop that sounded like a gunshot. Ten minutes before, we had been outside securing our 30-foot high antenna mast to the front of our truck so we could get a radio signal to Net Control. The squall line rolled in very quickly over the lake and as soon as we heard the rumble of thunder, we high-tailed it into the truck and notified Net Control that we would be turning off our radio and disconnecting the coax until the storm had passed. There was no point in tempting Fate and risking a fried radio, or worse yet, fried people! Interestingly, this was our second close call in a month involving lightning. A huge old oak tree in the hollow of our backyard had been hit a few weeks prior, toppling the gigantic trunk and vaporizing the sap inside it. In both instances, the trees in low spots had been hit, while the lightning ignored much higher targets nearby. There is a tower at the high school close to our house, and several antenna towers at Navarro Mills. So much for the old adage that lightning always strikes the highest point! Fortunately, none of the Tour d'Italia riders who braved the elements were hit by lightning. By noon, the weather had cleared up and the lovely cool breeze brought on by the thunderstorms was just a memory as the muggy heat of June returned.

After our dramatic introduction to Lightning Safety Awareness Week, I am heartily recommending that everyone look at this very informative site from the National Weather Service – <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/wee k.htm>

As a reminder - lightning doesn't always act like you think it will. It's always better to be safe than sorry. In retrospect, the next time we are providing radio communications at an event such as the Tour d'Italia, we will dispense with putting up our antenna when we hear the rumble of thunder.

73,
Cathy Schack, KE5DIO



"A huge old oak tree in the hollow of our backyard had been hit a few weeks prior, toppling the gigantic trunk and vaporizing the sap inside it." (Red Oak, Texas)



"Lightning Safety Awareness Week started off with a bang, literally, when a tree approximately one hundred yards from our truck was struck and exploded with a loud pop that sounded like a gunshot." (Navarro Mills Lake)

July Event Calendar

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