



May 2004

San Antonio Radio Club
P.O. Box 3463 San Antonio, TX 78265-4263

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W5SC.ORG

From the President

- Charles W5BRC

What's been going on??? Lots!!

First, thanks to Jan N5YPK, Mike K5UCQ and Richard WA5FOE for their work on the first picnic at SARC in many years. Thanks also go to Pat AD5BR, for getting a mailing list downloaded so we can mail all area Hams and invite them to come to the picnic.

We need assistance in putting on programs –SO– we need volunteers to step up to the plate and offer any suggestions as what they would like to see.

Second, after discussions with Larry W5EX, the Treasury report will be handed out to the membership prior to the meeting. This and the minutes being available before the meeting should allow more time for our technical programs.

Third, thanks also go to John W5JLR who is enthusiastically putting together a list and calendar of events for special event stations of W5SC for the coming year.

Fourth, The Bexar Wire has a new look with this issue as you can tell for yourself, and a new editor. I twisted the arm of Lee N5NTG to take on this duty for the time being.

Fifth, The banner has been created and will be presented to the club at its May meeting.

Sixth, A great deal of thanks goes out to all our club members, especially to those who have volunteered to be a member of our cabinet. Remember – it takes the participation of all of you to make the club. We need your support so — if you haven't volunteered to be on one of the secretarial positions and see one of interest – call up the secretary of that section and let them know you are available. If you are interested in one you don't see, give me a call and we'll be positive about entertaining an addition at our growing Cabinet. Thanks for all your support!

Check out the contact directory listed on page 7 of this issue that has most of the names and contact info for each of these volunteers. Most have email addresses available for contact and all have phone numbers listed so you can reach them.

April Meeting Highlights

- Program on Antenna Hunting for April 8th was done by Jim W5JMR.
- Gordon K5SUZ brought in his antenna as an example to show and also explained the antennas.

Upcoming Meeting Highlights

- May's meeting on the 13th will feature Steve WA5FRF who make a presentation about Pluto.
- June 5th will be the date of our first annual Picnic. Location and more details to be announced at the May meeting and posted on the club web site, www.w5sc.org
- Our June Meeting will be on the 10th
- Field Day will be June 26th & 27th

April 8th, 2004 Meeting Minutes -Draft

Note: These minutes will be voted upon for approval or amendment during the May 13th meeting. To save time during the meeting, we are publishing them in the Bexar Wire in advance of the meeting so all members have time to review them and be ready with any corrections. Send corrections now via email to the Secretary at secretary@w5sc.org or bring them to the meeting in person. - Barbara WA5RLF

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Charles, W5BRC, club president. Members introduced themselves by stating their names and call sign. One visitor, Phillip KA5SHI, and 27 members attended the meeting.

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Swapfest 2004 was a success.

Chairman Royce KA5OHJ, reported at the last board meeting on April 21st that we cleared \$380 after paying all expenses for the event. We rented 140 tables and still had a few more left if needed. We had more commercial vendors than ever before, with ten of them this year including the vendor from Oklahoma.

He expressed his thanks for *REACT* in providing their usual talk-in services using the club call W5SC, as they have now for the past dozen years or longer. *REACT* donates their time and service for this event.

Appreciation was expressed to Lee N5NTG for getting the club's web site updated with info about the event this year, including taking the time and effort to visit many of the local hotels / motels in the vicinity so that their rates and locations could be listed on the web site for our out of town guests to use.

Royce also expressed his thanks for the following people that helped in setting up for the Swapfest on Thursday. These people were (according to the sign-in sheet):

- Fred Bonavitz, K5QLF
- Diana Taylor, KD5SXI
- Royce Taylor, KA5OHJ
- Eddie W. Thorn, AA5XA
- David Freiburger, K5OLE
- Royce Pinkston, KB5VVT
- Andy Meyer, KD5TNI
- Lee Besing, N5NTG
- Frank Coop, W5TTK
- Jerry Berry, K5AXN
- Richard Shephard, AI5H
- Barbara Manley, KA5RLF
- Charles Manley, W5BRC

The date of the 2005 event has already been reserved for the same location, and that date will be of course Saturday, January 8th.

Royce announced his intention to "retire" from the chairman position of this committee and commended Eric W5ETS for his fine job as an assistant chairman these past years.

President Charles W5BRC expressed his hopes that other members of the club will step forward to volunteer for both the advance planning and the actual day of event volunteer needs. He asked that we begin publicizing this event even earlier than before, in order to get the word out at other Swapfests during the year.

New members of the club: George W5GHS, Bob W2IK, Jim W5JMR and Ed KS5V. Each new member introduced themselves and a little about their background.

Discussed ARRL membership being submitted to make money for the club. Discussed amount of Dues.

Frank W5TTK made a proposal that ARRL membership dues and Club dues are given at the same time, club should give them a 2 year membership. Charles KD5EXS motioned that the amount of membership dues should be left to the Board of Directors. Lee N5NTG seconded it. Motion carried.

List of Cabinet Members were discussed. On-the-air Cabinet meetings will be on the 3rd Tuesday of each month and will start at 8:30 PM on 145.39 club repeater (100 PL tone).

Elmer on the Air Radio Net — Ed KS5V will direct this net. Time will be Saturday at 8:15 PM on 145.39 club repeater (100 PL tone).

Discussed picnic committee. Date of picnic may be in May.

UTSA Radio Club: Charles, KD5EXS discussed UTSA radio club. It has 8 members. April 15th is the first meeting. On Monday the constitution will be approved. Robert KB5UJM will help members get by the morse code. Pat AD5BR gave UTSA radio club membership information to help get them by the exams.

Royce KA5OHJ wanted minutes and treasurer reports read, commenting on the fact that they hadn't.

Minutes were read. A motion to have the minutes approved was made and it was seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer report was read. A motion to have the treasurer report approved was made and it was seconded. Motion carried.

It was announced that the special guest speaker tonight would be on Antenna Hunting by Jim W5JMR. Gordon K5SUZ also had some show & tell direction finding antennas available for us to see practical aspects of this hobby.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Barbara Manley, Secretary KA5RLF



Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) Comments Filed with FCC from Steve Cerwin, WA5FRF, VP SARC

1. Need There is no real need for BPL, especially in light of the almost certain damage it will cause to users of the HF spectrum, including the institution of Amateur Radio. I live in a rural area in Medina County, TX and have no less than three options for Internet access: 1) dial up, 2) a broadband satellite service, and 3) a 2.4 GHz local broadband service. I chose the satellite service (Direcway) and have excellent, broadband Internet access that poses no interference to or from any other service. These services are available virtually everywhere and do not conflict with radio services.

2. Radiation from power lines The power lines were designed to act as efficient transmission lines for low frequencies only. Radiation losses increase dramatically as line separation becomes even a small fraction of a wavelength. At the frequencies proposed for use with BPL (HF and low VHF) the power lines will constitute a very poor and leaky transmission line, causing both undesirable radiation of wideband noise and susceptibility to interference from radio transmitters. Technically, BPL is a bad idea.

3. Damage to Amateur Radio and Education The Commission seems to have turned a blind eye to the damage to Amateur Radio and education BPL will cause. I am an Institute Scientist with Southwest Research Institute and owe my career in science to ham radio.

I was licensed as WA5FRF at the age of 12 and the hobby fostered a lifelong interest in science. Many other scientists, engineers, and astronomers got their start the same way. If the curious and intriguing sounds of natural ionospheric activity are replaced with the grating sound of high-speed data transfer and weak signal detection is obliterated, radio will lose most of its attraction for everyone. One of the prime motivators to encourage young people to enter science will be lost forever.

Polluting the HF radio spectrum with wideband noise can be compared to dumping used engine oil into the ocean. The radiation aspect of BPL is only half the problem. Ingress is the other half. Even a modest amateur radio station could easily wipe out an entire block of Internet access provided by BPL. Agreed, the part 15 rules state that BPL must accept this interference, but history has shown that the general public neither understands nor accepts the distinction.

An amateur causing Internet interference, even though it will be completely legal to operate his/her station, will be ostracized from the neighborhood and treated as a pariah.

4. Legal remedies If the HF spectrum is trashed from BPL then I foresee the eruption of one or more class action lawsuits. Many amateurs have a lot of money invested in radio equipment and antennas. If they become useless due to an unacceptable rise in the noise floor caused by BPL then they will seek compensation. In addition to the direct loss of their investment in equipment, they would seek significant punitive damages for the loss of a lifelong hobby.

Because amateur radio is used to assist educating young science enthusiasts, the damage to education will come into play as well. There are many hams that have already expressed an interest in pursuing such a lawsuit, making the total damages sought a huge sum. The targets of the lawsuit would be the companies responsible for promoting and implementing BPL.

There is a very good chance the companies could either be sued out of existence or made to take the system down. It probably would not be difficult to prove that they either did not perform adequate analyses regarding the amount of broadband power they would radiate or that they, in fact, knew but concealed the facts from the public and the FCC.

Anybody with access to a NEC antenna program can calculate the radiation efficiency of the power line structure once the excitation details are known. It has been reported that they plan to put up repeaters every quarter mile or so along the power line. Surely, only a part of this is to supply signal to the users. The rest is to make up for radiation losses - the very losses they claim not to have.

It would be interesting to calculate the total level of radiated power summed across a city or the nation. It may well exceed the power the Voice of America uses to broadcast to the world. And the worst part of it all is that the energy is radiated in the frequency band capable of widespread ionospheric propagation. Therefore, even distant users of the HF spectrum will be affected.

5. Summary In conclusion, BPL is not needed. There are alternate broadband services available that do not pollute the spectrum nor cause damage to existing services.

Using power lines as transmission lines for high frequency signals is very poor engineering practice because the line spacing is far too great to comprise an efficient transmission line. The resulting leakage into and out of the lines will cause unwanted radiation and susceptibility to interference.

This has far reaching implications to all users of the HF and low VHF spectrum, including the demise of amateur radio.

This would be a serious blow to emergency communications and to education.

Ham Radio Among the Alligators

by Bob Hejl, W2IK

On April 12th, after careful planning, packing and cursing, we set out on a 100 mile trek south from San Antonio, Texas with a plan: To activate McMullen County. We picked this county after snooping around in the resource area of the "Texas QSO Party" web site. In September 2003, we operated our station in the hill country during the Texas QSO Party making 460 contacts in 18 hours.

Looking up scores, and the counties that were activated, we saw in the resource section that there were currently NO HAMS residing in McMullen County. What a chance to combine both a vacation and offer "county hunters" a chance to bag this county! Upon investigation we found an area that would best suit our needs.



The Calliham Unit of the Choke Canyon State Park is located in McMullen County and offers many sites to camp in either an RV, Tent or Screened Shelter. A short pre-visit to the park to check it out was an experience unto itself. When we paid our day-trip fee of six dollars and drove past the management building we were met with large signs that announced "ALLIGATORS EXIST IN THIS PARK". ooookay...

Driving along the park roads to see the different areas available for use we saw other signs advising the same thing and "NO SWIMMING" signs also posted by the tent camping areas. humm.. Planning to take our small dog with us, we thought that he might make a tasty treat in that area, so we continued on to the screened shelter area. This area had a choice of 20 cabins with windows, electricity and water. The jackpot! We had planned to be there over a weekend, but had to defer our operation to a non-weekend because all campsites were reserved. So, we took the plunge reserving a screened shelter for April 12-14th.

Figuring out what to bring can be a chore as you can't go back home if you forget something. I decided to bring two HF rigs that I normally use for special event stations and three antennas. Two of the antennas that I brought with me were my "IK-STIC2" all-

band verticals. They are over 25 feet tall, yet weigh under 5 pounds. The other antenna packed was my ladder-line backpack special that covers 40 and 20 meters without a tuner. The IK-STIC2s require tuners so I brought along two MFJ mobile tuners. Various coax and power cables, headphones, mics, a hand key, better speakers, two AC power supplies and three deep-cycle emergency batteries (one weighing 75 pounds), log books and pens finished most of the major components needed to operate. I had two complete stations in case invited ops stopped by.

There were many radio nets that did welcome us and allowed us to stay on their frequencies for a spell to see if any of their ops wanted to contact us. Many did. Some of them were the 20 meter YL ISSB Warm up Net (each morning) and the RV Net to name a few. On 40 meters several of the traffic nets, after their work was done, were more than happy to welcome us. Our operation was a delight and all of those we contacted were happy that we made our journey to hand out McMullen county.

For the full report on what happened during this trip, please visit Bob's web site at

<http://hometown.aol.com/realhamradio/McMullenHamActivation.html>



On the left is what they call an Alligator Snack, aka our dog.

Setting up the IK-Stik2 antenna was so fast that Murphy's Law didn't have time to strike on this trip. Photo below.

In the photo below, Bob W2IK decides to be mosquito bait and try operating outdoors because of the weather was so cooperative, unlike it was the weekend before.





FCC Releases NPRM to Amend Part 97

- Courtesy of www.QRZ.Com web site

In this NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rulemaking), the FCC proposes to revise operating privileges for amateur radio service licensees as well as to eliminate obsolete and duplicative rules in the Amateur Radio Service.

Specifically, the Commission proposes to amend the Part 97 Amateur Radio Service rules in response to the filing of nineteen petitions for rulemaking and one informal request.

Four petitions address on-the-air operating privileges. Six petitions relate to the types of communications an amateur station may transmit. Three petitions concern the vanity call sign and special event call sign systems. Two petitions focus on the amateur service operator licensing system.

The FCC feels some of the petitions have presented sufficient evidence to warrant proposing rule changes, and in the interest of administrative efficiency, they have consolidated these matters in this Notice.

They also propose other amendments to our Rules to conform the amateur radio service rules to the international Radio Regulations, revise portions of our amateur radio service rules, and amend certain rules to reflect changes in Commission organization and practices.

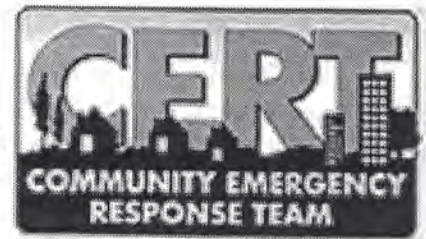
The major rule changes proposed are as follows:

- Revise the operating privileges of amateur radio operators in four High Frequency bands;
- Permit auxiliary stations to transmit on the 2 m amateur service band;
- Permit amateur stations to transmit spread spectrum communications on the 1.25 m band;
- Permit amateur stations to re-transmit communications from the International Space Station;
- Allow amateur service licensees to designate the amateur radio club to receive their call sign, in memoriam;
- Prohibit an applicant from filing more than one application for a specific vanity call sign;

For full details visit this web site:

<http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-04-79A1.pdf>

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)



Training has begun locally, sponsored by AACOG, Bexar County Emergency Management and other agencies. SARC member Pat Knight AD5BR took the training in April to learn how to become a certified CERT trainer.

The Community Emergency Response Team trains people in neighborhoods, the workplace, and in schools to develop basic disaster response skills, such as fire suppression, urban search and rescue, and first aid as well as helps them take a more active role in emergency preparedness.

In Texas the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (DEM) has delegated program administration to the Texas Association of Regional Councils. CERT is funded through the Governor's DEM by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

A new mailing list has been created for CERT Communications. The list will NOT be limited to Amateur Radio Topics since many teams use FRS, GMRS, MURS, Public Safety Frequencies and even CB but will be limited to communications topics only. For more information go to: <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/certcomms>> (Rich K4GPS, certcomms Moderator)

For more information about the CERT program, please visit <<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/CERT>>

Amateur Radio Web Sites

By now most of you, if not all, know about the new flurry of Amateur Radio related web sites popping up all over San Antonio. The two newest sites are from our sister club, San Antonio Repeater Organization (SARO) and a non-club affiliated site called <SanAntonioHams.org>.

After a long absence, SARO has returned to the web with a fantastic web site at <www.sarepeater.net>. You can also reach it spelled fully out as <SanAntonioRepeater.Net>.

The other site has lots of news about what is happening in San Antonio for about a dozen clubs, including an up to date listing of all VE sites around our area, contact info for most of the clubs, including their downloadable membership applications, and much, much more.

Ham Activities!

For a full list of what activities are scheduled in upcoming months, visit the club's web site at www.W5SC.org, or SanAntonioHams.org. There are lots of opportunities to use your radio skills in the month of May.

Don't forget the W5SC Picnic to be held on Saturday, June 5th. Location to be announced at the May 13th meeting and posted on the web site when available.



Field Day 2004

Planning for the 2004 Field Day is well under way. Chairman Paul N5IUT has reported that we have secured the same site as last year, out at Shavano Park in front of the police and fire department. Lots of trees to tie off those lines to string up antennas everywhere and lots of room to spread out under the trees.

This year we are doing one thing a bit different. No I'm not talking about how we will adapt our power situation without Onan The Generator. I'm talking about the BBQ we traditionally have in the evening on Saturday.

The Board has decided that instead of catering in the entire meal (for a tremendous expense), we would simply provide a variety of meats (brisket, sausage & chicken perhaps) to be grilled on-site, and ask each member to bring a side dish of some sort (your choice). The club will still provide a supply of paper plates, cups and some drinks in the form of tea or lemonade, etc., but anything stronger to drink will be up to the individual members.

Planning for this event will be discussed during both the May and June membership meetings, plus the on-the-air Cabinet meeting on Tuesday nights at 8:30pm. Watch the club web site and this newsletter for more details.



UTSA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

by Charles R. Manley IV KD5EXS

We have recently started a new club here at UTSA. The students of UTSA are ready to compete with N5TX and W5AC as the club continues to grow. We had our first meeting March 29th, 2004, where we had 4 members. The club has been constantly growing and we are now up to 8 members

Why is the number of members so significant? The number of members required by UTSA in order to be an "official" club is 5. We have met their requirements and submitted our signatures. Right now, we are waiting for the official approval but I have received numerous e-mails from the Engineering department and Communications department that have been very promising.

Also, the Tuesday before our April 22nd meeting, we set up our very first mobile radio station. We set up a FT-3000M with a 30 Amp Power Supply in front of the Human Social Sciences (HSS) Building. This is a building where all the clubs normally go to present new ideas to the students on campus.

My father, Charles W5BRC, helped me with the setup of this radio station, and Lee, N5NTG, supplied me with some brochures and other cool items to hand out to the students.

Most of all, I just want to thank one person that has helped me a great deal at putting this club together. I met a man at the beginning of this semester that had some really cool ideas. Whether it being transmitter hunts or field day events, this guy was like an Amateur Radio encyclopedia. He also gave me the confidence to build this club. This man's name is Jim WJ4M. Without the time and effort that he has put into this club, it would never have happened and I thank you for all that you have done in starting this club.



I also want to thank Charles WA3PAY, for the names he gave me in the very beginning. He has a lot of great friends out there and they have also given me the encouragement to build this club.

I hope that in the fall, we will have our official station, and you will be able to hear Jim and me, and the rest of the students at UTSA, on the air for the first time in Amateur Radio history!

Special Event Stations

- **May 1st** - Special Olympics 10a-2p held at Kennedy HS in San Antonio, TX. K5BCR
- **May 14th-15th** - Karnes County 150th Anniversary 7pm-7pm in Hobson, TX. W5SC and W5ROS. See www.sanantoniohams.org