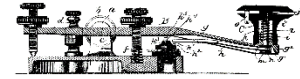




Bexar Wire

San Antonio Radio Club
W5SC



.....
2025, No. 3 March 2025
.....

San Antonio Radio Club Tailgate Sale

Get ready for the Tailgate, 3-23-2025 at the Encino Park Library Parking lot from 8 AM to 2 PM! Buyers are FREE. For Sellers there is a \$5 donation to the library to support library programs. Commercial Vendors welcome.

This tailgate event is for selling or buying ham radio gear and equipment. It is an opportunity for you to bring your excess gear, open your trunk, van or tailgate and let your treasures find a new home!

Dipping My Toe Into Digital Jim Neff WJ4M

After a hiatus of several years, I renewed my amateur radio hobby and now I'm trying to learn new things. One interesting but confusing thing is digital radio.

Back when I was first licensed in 1979, we did not have the internet, nor digital



radio. The closest thing was radioteletype, or RTTY that used alternating tones to encode/decode letters. On the air, HF mainly, it had a warbling sound. As digital networking advanced, so did amateur radio use of

The next meeting, March 13, 2025, will be at 7 PM at Blanco BBQ, 13259 Blanco Rd, San Antonio, TX 78216, (210) 251-2602.

the developing network technology. The first I remember was packet radio.

In the early days of networking, Ethernet won out as the dominant protocol. The "magic" behind ethernet was called X.25. That described the ethernet packets that contained the information. Packets resembled an electronic envelope in principle with address information and a way to verify and confirm receipt. Amateurs adapted the X.25 into the AX.25 and used the protocol to transmit packets over amateur radio. It used the callsign instead of a digital ID. AX.25 had its limitations, but it worked.

To use packet radio, you had a terminal node controller, or a box



that assembled the packets for transmission by a standard radio. You hooked it into your computer via a data port, then to your transceiver with a push-to-talk line and audio line out of the TNC. The speed, or baud rate (look it up) was originally 1200 (as I recall). Alternatively, another version would support a baud rate of 9600. The signal made a tearing sound if you listened on a standard radio. Eventually faster systems evolved. The TNC or packet box had a memory chip and could store packet messages sent to my station like e-mail. If a message was in memory, a red light would blink on front of the TNC. Packets would be sent from node to node until they arrived at the target node, identified by your callsign. You could talk keyboard to keyboard, but few used it that way.

(Continued on Page 6)

PRESIDENT'S RADIOGRAM

NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
3R		N5IUT			San Antonio, TX		March 2025
TO							

Sun 3/9/2025 4:51 AM
Hello South Texas,

There are so many radio meetings and events in the area we had to create a calendar!
<https://saradioclub.groups.io/g/main/calendar>

main@saradioclub.groups.io | Calendar

Show all keyboard shortcuts. ctrl + g :. Navigate to a group

saradioclub.groups.io

It shows the meeting, testing and event dates for the Alamo Area Radio Organization (AARO), the San Antonio Digital Radio Club (SADRC), Kendall Amateur Radio Society, Medina County Amateur Radio Corporation (McARC), The Radio Operators of South Texas Amateur Radio Club (ROOST), and the San Antonio Radio Club.

We also just added the excellent Belton HamExpo, April 5, 2025.
For a nice local event come out to the Encino Park Library Parking Tailgate on March 22, 2025, from 8 AM to 2 PM! Buyers are free to attend, sellers pay a five-dollar donation to support library programs. Commercial Vendors are always welcome.


Buyers can walk through the parking lot looking for good deals from local hams.
There is no power, but generators are ok. Library bathrooms do not open until 10am - so plan accordingly.

A tailgate or any radio event is multifaceted. Some attend to sell or buy ham radio gear and equipment but for me it is an opportunity to see old friends and make some new ones.

73 Paul Guido, N5IUT, President, San Antonio Radio Club

Bexar Wire

Published monthly by:



Paul Guido N5IUT
President, San Antonio Radio Club
Jimmie Neff, WJ4M
Editor
210-563-2121
jineffjr@sbcglobal.net

The due date for articles is the **Monday** before the first **Thursday** of the month

San Antonio Radio Club Meeting Minutes 7:00 p. m., February 13, 2025 Blanco BBQ, 13259 Blanco Rd., San Antonio, TX 78216

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM//Pledge of Allegiance//Introductions

Presentation: Jimmy Neff WJ4M – Elecraft KX-1 operation for QRP CW operation.

Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting

There being no additions or changes, the minutes were passed without objection by unanimous consent.

Officer Reports:

President – Paul Guido, N5IUT – Winter Field Day: 43 people showed up.

Vice President – Jason Lawson, KJ5CHW resigned his position on 1/29/25 – If interested in filling this position, contact Paul Guido.

Secretary – Jack Bannin, N5JLB – The minutes from club meetings can be found at the w5sc.org website, in the Newsletters section.

Treasurer – Jon April, KI5CSK – Tickets now on sale for the 2025 Scholarship raffle. Tickets can be purchased from the Treasurer or on the website.

Chairman of the Board Report – Harold Fleischer, AE5AS – Board of Directors met 01/10/25 and approved the 2025 budget.

Education and Training – Marvin “Marlo” Brown (KJ5BQV) & Travis Buhler (KI5TXG): No report.

Emergency Communications – Ned Lee KG5US – No report.

Web Site – Bill Craft, KD2HIQ

If you have anything for Facebook publication, contact Aubrey Mason

Activities for February 2025

- 1. Web Site
a. Posted newsletters
b. Updated scholarship page
c. Created new scholarship flyer
d. Tailgate
2. Groups.io
a. Updated membership list
b. Updated calendar

- 3. Mail chimp – Meeting notice, Zoom notice
- 4. Facebook – Meeting notice

MEMBERSHIP –

- One-year free membership if you test successfully with SARC.
- Active-duty military: free membership!

As of 2/10/2025	New Members Since Last Report		
Paid: 105	First	Last	Call
Mil: 5			
Family Members: 17	Mike	Czajka	KJ5JKP
RF-Free: 3	Kevin	Kanter	AI5QQ
Fee-VE: 11			
ARRL Members: 79			
Total Membership: 141			

POTA – No Report – Texas POTA is 4/12/25, and SARC will participate. Details to follow.

Fox Hunt – Steve Ortiz – KJ5HIH – None scheduled. Two will be scheduled for 2025.

Newsletter Editor – Jimmie Neff – Newsletter distributed January 12, 2025. Contact Jimmy if you want to contribute an article for publication. Deadline is the Monday before the monthly meeting.

Field Day – Jon April: No Report

Finance and Review – No Report. Invited the membership to volunteer to conduct our annual review. No accounting degree required.

JOTA – Position vacant. No Report.

Centennial Committee – Tom O’Brien AB5XZ – Swag is still available (coins, patches, pins).

Radio Fiesta – Aubrey Mason – No updates. Still working to finalize the venue contract. Club is in contact with ARRL to create a large event in 2027, the 100th anniversary of the 1927 ARRL regional meeting in San Antonio.

VE Team – Benny Martinez, NU5P

Testing opportunities:

Most are at the Leon Valley library 12:00
6425 Evers Rd
Leon Valley, TX 78238

- Feb 22 12:00
- Apr 26 12:00
- June 7 Radio Fiesta 1:30
- June 29 Field Day
- Aug 23 12:00
- Oct 25 12:00 Leon Valley Fire Station
- Dec 20 12:00

Silent Key Committee – Rodney Brown, AA5RB – All items are listed in Rodney’s binder, available to all.

Executive – No report.

Election Committee – Paul Guido, N5IUT – No Report.

Scholarship Committee – This year, we will raffle Icom radios. Nominate your favorite young local ham today for these scholarships! Tickets on sale now for \$25 each. Maximum tickets to sell: 400.

Old Business (Motions carried over from previous meetings) – None.

New Business – None

Announcements

- Tailgate: March 22 8am-2pm. More info: <https://w5sc.org/tailgate/>
- There is a Radio Shack in Hondo about to close. Everything is one-half off. Contact the store prior to going to confirm operation hours.
- Reminder about the AARO weekly net on 2m at 8:30 for ARRL Newline, followed by the net and slow code training.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:20.



Volunteer Examiners at Work



From Bennie Martinez, NU5P VE Coordinator
Three people came to the February 22 testing session, outnumbered by the 9 Ves. All passed.

Next test session is scheduled for April 26.

Register at HamTest@w5sc.org
Other info at W5SC.org click “Getting Started” then “Testing.”

SUGGESTION:

SET GOALS- One of the best ways to increase your Amateur Radio activity for the year is to set goals and/or use a checklist of items. Maybe a contact a day, work all states, work DXCC, check into a net for 12 consecutive weeks, etc. Below is one I created last year. Share it with your club and ham friends; you can even turn it into a friendly competition.

At the end of the year see how many you completed. Make notes on each attempt about problems encountered and how you solved them. (Hint, could make good newsletter article or meeting presentation.)

Dipping My Toe (Continued)

Eventually it evolved into a worldwide packet network much like the early relay system in amateur radio. I once communicated via packet to a ham friend who had been transferred to Frankfurt, Germany. You could turn on the tracking list for the packets that would tell you the path, or nodes the packet message took to get to you. You can do that with ethernet too. His messages to me went from Frankfurt to the Netherlands via VHF links, then via HF to Tel Aviv, Israel, then via HF to Moscow where it was uploaded to a PACSAT or amateur satellite dedicated to packet. From there it was downloaded to a receiving station in Baltimore, Maryland, then via VHF to Andrews Air Force Base then to my basement in Dale City, Virginia! Whew!

Packet is still around, although none of my equipment works anymore. Things have migrated into other, faster ways to communicate via digital means. Amateur radio not only adapted the networking technology, but also adapted other digital techniques, including voice over internet protocol, VOIP to develop systems to digitize your voice so it could be transmitted, via digital stream over the FM carrier to be decoded by a transceiver at the other end. The system uses less bandwidth than traditional FM voice and results in a much clearer sound. One downside is that on weak signal fringes it does not fade, it just cuts out.



A couple of years ago I bought a Yaesu FT70DR handheld that is capable of digital voice communications over VHF/UHF. While on a trip to Florida, I checked into a local net as a guest. After the normal round of comments, the net control shifted the repeater to digital mode. The difference in audio quality blew me away. I was hooked. I eventually replaced my mobile radios and base station with Yaesu digital rigs. I'd like to say I use them a lot for digital communications, but I don't. Not yet. Most hams I talk to still use the analog repeaters.

There are several digital formats for audio over a radio, but the three main formats are: DMR, D-Star used by Icom and other brands, and System Fusion/C4FM used by Yaesu. Most of the digital activity in San Antonio uses the C4FM system. The crew at the San Antonio Digital Radio Club have set up several digital repeaters using the C4FM system. Check their web site, [San Antonio Digital Radio Club](#), for a list.

All of the formats work. The usual recommendation is to buy what is used in your area. Or buy them all!

If you have a C4FM-capable radio, you can use it for the local digital repeaters. Be aware that the repeaters linked. You won't be talking on one repeater, you will be talking on many repeaters, depending on the network. On one network, repeaters from south of Ft. Worth to Corpus Christi are linked and you talk on all of them at once. Be careful what you say.

I recently bought an "Open Spot 4 Plus" hotspot device that will allow me to connect, via the internet, to repeaters around the world. I'm still playing with it. Like someone who gets a new radio and doesn't know who to talk to, I am trying to learn what is on the "other side" of the system. Last Saturday I managed to talk to Doug, N8IQT in San Antonio from my brother-in-law's place in Palmetto, Florida. I was using my Yaesu FT5DR handheld, the openSpot 4 and my cellphone which I set up as a hotspot to access the internet. We heard each other as if I were next door



It is only one of several techniques that allow VOIP over the radio. Another is WIRES-X, by Yaesu, which, apparently, requires only a simple contact using a C4FM radio, or an analog radio through a Wires-X capable repeater using an address code. Greek to me, but I'm researching it.

. The title of this is "Dipping my toe into digital" and that is about it. I don't claim my information is correct, only that it should prompt you to look things up for yourself. If you understand it, tell me. I'll try to do a more in-depth report on digital voice and on other systems, like FT8 as I learn more. Until then, keep working on your amateur radio experience. Get on the air and talk to someone. The world awaits you.

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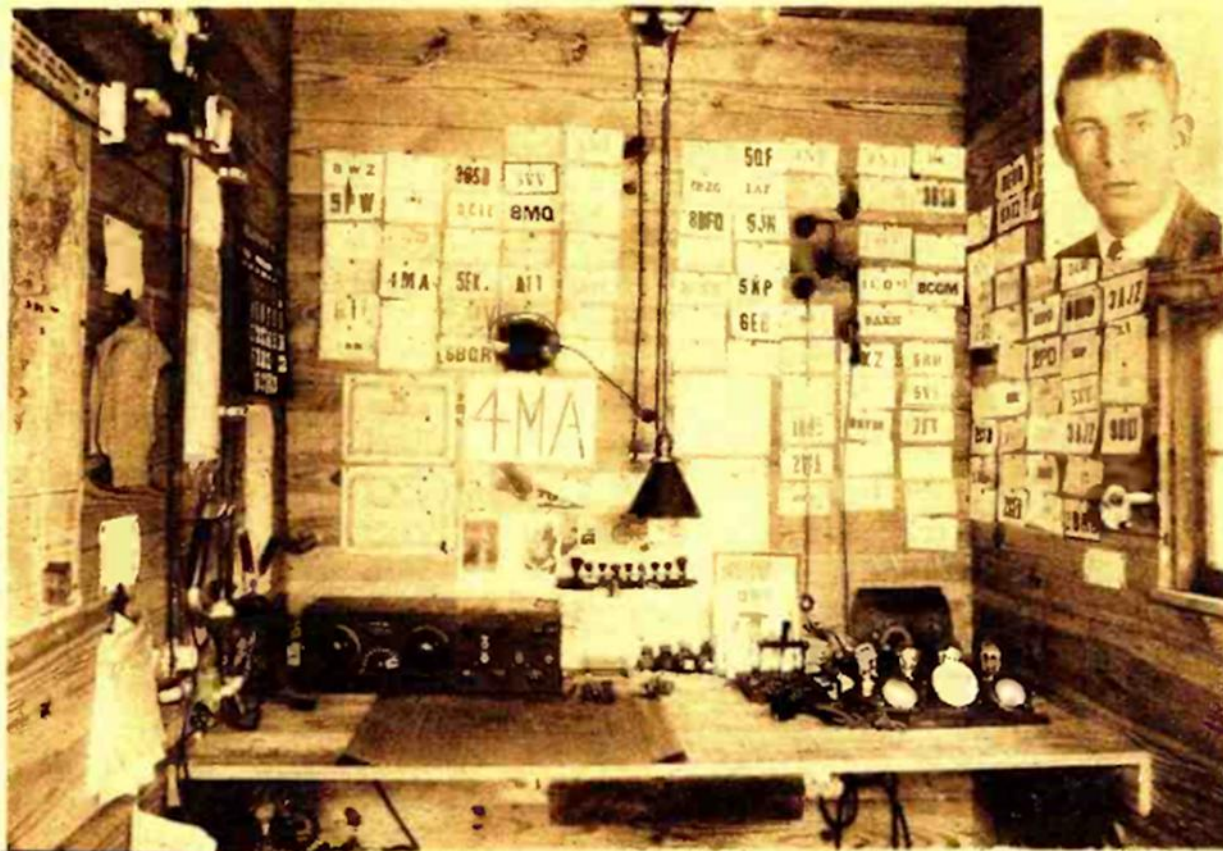
Free Shortwave & Amateur Radio Receivers-Online SDRs You Can Tune and Listen To

One of the problems with setting up a new HF radio station is the need for an adequate antenna. Although we now have HF radios that can fit in your pocket, the antennas usually need to be big and outside to work best. The second issue is that most portable Shortwave HF receivers do not include SSB reception, which is necessary to receive Amateur (Ham) Radio voice communications. So what do you do when you just can't put up an antenna, don't own an HF receiver, or maybe you are traveling and just want to tap into ham radio? Well, if you have Internet access, you can get on the air to listen. Although you can both receive and transmit with a remotely controlled station, that is beyond the scope of today's project-- simply listening to the ham bands.

Unlike transmitting through a remote station, listening requires no license or special access to closed and/or paid remote stations. Fortunately, there are many free and open SDRs (Software Defined Radios) that you can control, tune and listen to with your laptop, phone, Chromebook, tablet, etc., as long as you have Internet access.

Web SDR has links to over 75 such remote receivers listed on the web sdr website.

These sites let you tune the HF bands and, unlike some non-ham sites, even receive using SSB. I will use this site to give you a guide to using these remote receivers. Although there are some variations on other sites, these general guidelines will get you started. Other collections include is the Kiwi SDR online list & Receiverbook.de.



Station 4MA owned and operated by John B. Gray, Jr., Wilson, N. C. The transmitter is a 20-watt C.W. and phone set using the Hartley circuit. A 200-watt, 500-volt R & M motor generator supplies the plate juice. Radiation is $3\frac{1}{2}$ T. C. A. into a six-wire cage aerial and a 30-wire counterpoise. A CR-13 is to take the place of the present CR-9.

The Endurance of CW in Amateur Radio CW Spans a Century

I've enjoyed using my "new" [GRC-9](#) radio for making CW and AM contacts over the past month. During that time I've also discovered <https://worldradiohistory.com/Archive-Radio-News/> which has magazine articles about radio dating back to 1919. Reading about amateur operators building and using equipment at the time where CW (continuous wave) was beginning to replace spark-gap operation in wireless communication made me consider just how enduring the ability to communicate using CW and AM have been.

Prior to the introduction of continuous wave transmitters and receivers, the detector used for spark gap communication would have made it difficult to hear a CW transmission (lacking a BFO). So, even though wireless transmission and reception of International Morse Code dates back earlier than 1919; employing CW (continuous wave) to send Morse Code seems to have begun its popularity around that time. AM (amplitude modulation) phone mode was also in use at the time, and grew in popularity during the 40's and 50's until more efficient voice modes overtook it in popularity for voice communication.



SARC has had a Groups.io. Its name is saradioclub.

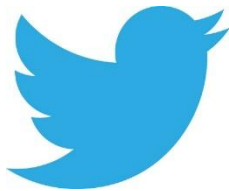
If you haven't signed up for group.io, you should. Groups.io is our primary email messaging method to all club members. It is FREE for all members.

Several members have asked where are the notices, schedules and codes for Zoom meetings?

1. The groups.io calendar has a schedule of Zoom meetings and access codes.
2. The calendar can be accessed directly from the club web site <https://w5sc.org/events-calendar/> NOTE: it is the same groups.io calendar.

The saradioclub Group.io is being used to publicize SARC business meetings. It can be used for other things like promotion of VEC testing and classes. Members of the saradioclub Group.io can and have asked each other technical questions or sought assistance.

The saradioclub Group.io is a closed group. To become a member, go to saradioclub.groups.io. (You may need to have a Groups.io account.) You will then need to select *Apply for membership in this group*. This generates a message. SARC members can expect approval to join the saradioclub Group.io in probably less than 24 hours.



Reminder: there are two active X (Twitter) accounts for the San Antonio Radio Club. They are @SARadioClub and @ARadioFiesta.

The @SARadioClub is being used to publicize SARC meetings. It can be used for other things like promotion of VEC testing and classes.

When work again commences the @ARadioFiesta will be used.

SARC members are encouraged to follow both Twitter accounts

SARC Facebook



There is a San Antonio Radio Club – SARC (@saradioclub) Facebook Page.

The newsletter editor is making posts about SARC meetings and other activities. Any Officer, Committee Chairperson, or member who believes that they have information that should be posted to this page should contact the newsletter editor using the contact information for the newsletter editor on page 2 of this newsletter.

SARC members are encouraged to follow this Facebook Pa

SARC SLACK



There is a San Antonio Radio Club Slack team – w5sc.slack.com.

Slack teams are meant to foster communication between team members. Paul Guido, N5IUT, has established the w5sc.slack.com team for SARC. He has also established some channels. Think of the channels as topical areas.

To join send an email to Paul Guido, N5IUT, at radioteacher@gmail.com. In actuality, any team member already a part of the w5sc.slack.com can invite you, but Paul is known to be on it.

JOTA

Jamboree-on-the-Air, or JOTA, is the largest Scouting event in the world. It is held annually on the third full weekend in October.

JOTA uses amateur radio to link Scouts and hams around the world, around the nation, and in your own community. JOTA 2024 was held at McGimsey Scout Park Cub Pavilion 10810 Wedgewood Dr, Castle Hills, TX 78213.

. Anyone wanting to operate a station next year need to do the BSA Youth protection Training (YPT) and complete BSA Health forms.

<https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/>

Amateur Radio License Classes

For more information, check the club web page, W5SC.org

SARC has a website:

w5sc.org

Webmaster: Bill Craft KD2HIQ
Billc851@gmail.com
210-570-0335

License Testing Dates for 2025

SARC does all of its licensing testing as a part of ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) organization so all of the Volunteer Examiners in SARC are duly authorized Volunteer Examiners of ARRL's VEC. Register at HamTest@w5sc.org
Other info at W5SC.org click "Getting Started" then "Testing."

Radio Fiesta 2025

Radio Fiesta 2025 will be at Schertz Civic Center on June 6-7. Get a table and bring stuff to sell or just come in and browse the deals, listen to the presentations and swap tales. Hope to see you there!

Emergency Communications

If you are interested in emergency communications, contact:
Ned Lee, KG5US
RACES Bexar County
210-344-3481/210-391-8258

David Rice, NB5K
ARES Bexar County EC 210-367-8623

Field Day 2025
Field Day exercise, June 28 – 29 at the City of Shavano Park city hall for the twenty second year. Start planning for FD 2025, *where SARC proves they are an eating group with a radio problem.*

SARC Meeting Dates for 2025

- January 9, 2025
- February 13, 2025
- March 13, 2025
- April 10, 2025
- May 8, 2025
- June 12, 2025
- July 10, 2025
- August 14, 2025
- September 11, 2025
- October 9, 2025
- November 13, 2025
- December – No meeting

Meetings are normally held at Blanco BBQ, 13259 Blanco Rd, San Antonio, TX 78216 at 7:00 p. m. Room is available at 6:00 p. m. for supper