



The GroundWire

RICK'S RANTINGS

ISSUE 2011-06

FAREWELL TO AN ERA

Rebecca and I got up early this morning to watch something that will not be around much longer. At 5:20, we watched the ISS with the Space Shuttle Endeavor docked to it pass overhead. Although the distance is far too great to be able to resolve the actual vehicles, even with good binoculars, we were treated to the sight of this epitome of technology pass directly over, like a -4 magnitude star zipping across the sky. After just a few minutes, it was gone over the horizon to the early morning dawn in the Northeast.

That overhead transit evoked deep feelings in me of the diminished role the space program has seen in recent times. I grew up in the 60's during the heyday of the Race to the Moon, and was a witness to the excitement as we took each step that brought us closer and closer to that pivotal event. We were all sitting around the television and heard Neil Armstrong utter the famous words, "The Eagle has landed" followed a few hours later by "That's one small step for (a) man, one giant leap for mankind."

As I watched the ISS/Shuttle go over the horizon, I realized I was watching the sunset of the US manned space program. Oh, we'll still be sending astronauts to the ISS, but they'll be riding as *passengers!* Somehow, I find this unsettling and unacceptable.

Earlier in the week I attended a meeting at the North Texas Council of Governments regarding the airports in our region, and one of the topics on the agenda was the urgent need for students to attain degrees in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) fields. One statistic leaped out at me with the gravest of concern: Last year, only 15% of the US college graduates receiving bachelor degrees received their degree in a STEM field. By contrast, 47% of Chinese students receiving bachelor degrees pursued a STEM education. I also find this unsettling and unacceptable.

I was talking with some of my peers at work last week who are a generation younger than me, joking about the things that have changed that they don't know about. I mentioned that I used to use a slide rule...that I had actually competed in that subject in high school. And of course, their response was "What's a slide rule". I realized that not only did they not know what a slide rule was, but they



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had never known a day without pocket calculators. Every now and then one of them giggles and whispers to me when I scribble out a quick calculation on scratch paper during a meeting, asking if I need a calculator. But the point is, I don't!!! I'm not dependent on a calculator: I was taught math! And sometimes I find their complete dependence on a calculator unsettling and unacceptable.

So what can we do about it?

For others, not much. People who choose to live in a world of technology but don't comprehend what they use are leaning into the world of fantasy and magic. Indeed, it was the noted science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke who said something to the effect that to a primitive society, advanced technology and magic would be indistinguishable. But how many of us know what we're really using when we operate a ham radio, or a personal computer, or even something as simple as a microwave?. How many of us are content to just turn the switch on and hope it works (and fume and fuss when it doesn't) as opposed to those who have a comprehension of what makes something tick and can work their way through problems?

So my challenge to all of us, me especially, is to take a few minutes to learn just a little more about our radios and other ham equipment. Connecting it all together and plugging it in is great, but knowing a little more than that will serve us well when things aren't going as they should.

I love to explore, whether it's while driving around and taking new routes to wherever I'm going or playing on the computer and learning a new function or software. There's an excitement in discovery! The same holds true with my radios: I love to push the buttons doing the "what does this do?" Is there a risk that I'll configure something wrong and my radio will look at me and refuse to do anything that I want it to? Of course!! But that's part of exploration. And I know that all of my radios have a reset function that I can restore everything to factory default and try again...something akin to a parachute for the logic! I've had to do that a couple of times and discovered that the reprogramming of the memories into a radio really wasn't that great a chore and was a cheap price to pay for the learning experience.

So, I challenge all of us to go learn something about our radios, antennas, or other equipment today. Just one little tidbit. One little function that we didn't know before. Something. Anything. Explore. Have fun!! And then repeat that exercise tomorrow. Learn something else!

73 to all!!!

Rick / KJ5UY

FEMA Administrator Calls Amateur Radio "The Last Line of Defense"



In an [FCC forum](#) on earthquake communications preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency ([FEMA](#)) Administrator Craig Fugate described the Amateur Radio operator as "the ultimate backup, the originators of what we call social media." The forum-- held May 3 at FCC Headquarters in Washington, DC -- brought together officials from the White House, the Department of Homeland Security ([DHS](#)), the United States Geological Survey ([USGS](#)), FEMA, the FCC and the private sector. Fugate and FCC Bureau of Public Safety and Homeland Security Chief Jamie Barnett gave the opening remarks.

Later in the forum, Fugate spoke more on Amateur Radio. "During the initial communications out of Haiti, volunteers using assigned frequencies that they are allocated, their own equipment, their own money, nobody pays them, were the first ones oftentimes getting word out in the critical first hours and first days as the rest of the systems came back up," he told the forum. "I think that there is a tendency because we have done so much to build infrastructure and resiliency in all our other systems, we have tended to dismiss that role 'When Everything Else Fails.' Amateur Radio oftentimes is our last line of defense."



In an earthquake communications preparedness forum sponsored by the FCC, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate praised Amateur Radio, saying "...when you need Amateur Radio, you really need it."

Fugate said that he thinks "we get so sophisticated and we have gotten so used to the reliability and resilience in our wireless and wired and our broadcast industry and all of our public safety communications, that we can never fathom that they'll fail. They do. They have. They will. I think a strong Amateur Radio community [needs to be] plugged into these plans. Yes, most of the time they're going to be bored, because a lot of the time, there's not a lot they're going to be doing that other people aren't doing with Twitter and Facebook and everything else. But when you need Amateur Radio, you really need them."

Source - www.ARRL.org

Financial Report ... May 2011



May-11	Income	Expense	Balance	Petty Cash
General Fund				
Beginning Balance 5/1/11			\$1,193.82	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2011	\$25.00			
Transfer From Matl. Property				
Tranfer Petty Cash income				
TOTAL INCOME				
	\$25.00			
EXPENSES				
Form 802 - Sec. of State, TX.		\$5.00		
TOTAL EXPENSES				
		\$5.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$25.00	\$5.00		
Ending Balance 5/31/2011			\$1,213.82	
Special Events Fund				
Beginning Balance 5/1/11			\$95.14	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Trans from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME				
	\$0.00			
EXPENSES				
TOTAL EXPENSES				
		\$0.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Ending Balance 5/31/2011			\$95.14	
Material Property Fund				
Beginning Balance 5/1/11			\$2,582.82	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2011	\$25.00			
Transfer from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME				
	\$0.00			
EXPENSES				
Telephone Pymt 02MAY		\$37.81		
Go Daddy 3 yr Reg. Chk 624		\$206.15		
Transfer to General Fund				
TOTAL EXPENSES				
		\$243.96		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$0.00	\$243.96		
Ending Balance 5/31/2011			\$2,338.86	
May Balance	\$25.00	\$248.96	\$3,647.82	

2011 Board Members

President

Scott Crappa (KE5NLK)

Vice-President

Tom Poindexter (KE5GKK)

Treasurer

Mike Harang (K5MMH)

Secretary

Jerry Keltner (KB6OJE)

Directors

Rick Ellis (KJ5UY)

Paul Dryer (KD5IVP)

Lester Wong (K5ITO)

Committee Positions

Repeater Trustee

Johnny Roberson (KJ5LB)

Newsletter Editor

Bill Ellis (N5TXN)

Web Master

Russ Thompson (KX5G)

MN²

Monday Night Net

Net Time 8:00PM

147.060(+) Primary

444.500(+) Alternate

Minutes of Board Meeting ... May 3, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Scott Crappa, KE5MLK at 6:30 pm.

Invocation was given by Richard Baker, N5KXA.

Executive Board members present: Scott, KE5NLK; Jerry, KB6OJE; Rick, KJ5UY; Mike Harang, K5MMH, Lester, K5ITO. And Tom Poindexter, KE5GKK. Club members present: Bill, N5TXN and Johnny, KJ5LB, Ben Barber, K5NEB.

Guests: Tonya Hunter, Emergency Management Officer, Grand Prairie.

Minutes: Motion to approved by Rick Ellis, KJ5UY Motion 2nd by Tom Poindexter, KE5GKK

Motion passed.

Treasure Report Motion to approve: was made by Rick Ellis, KJ5UY and 2nd by Tom Poindexter, KE5GKK. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Repeater: Both repeaters are working.

VE Session: One person took General Class exam.

EOC: Johnny to meet with the Cedar Hill Fire Chief about advertising for Field Day. Duncanville EOC antennas are not working. The 2m at DCH&HS will be up and running by the General Membership meeting.

Membership: Two applications were received, Gene Eubanks, KD5UHG and Colette Wong, KF5KMX. Rick, KJ5UY, made motion to approve and Tom, KE5GKK seconded it. Motion passed.

Net: Walt Vinson, WV5TEX and Karen Cardwell, KG6RLS responded to the call for additional Net Control operators by Rick Ellis, KJ5UY. There were 10 check-ins.

Web: It is up and running. Floyd has been updating it.

Groundwire: The last Groundwire had content. Thank you everyone for the articles.

OLD BUSINESS

Jerulesum Market Place at the Windsor Park Baptist Church was April 21, 22 & 23 this year. Following members helped with Security and Parking: Johnny, KJ5LB; Lester, K5ITO; Bill, N5TXN; Jerry, KB6OJE, Billy Thomas, KB5ZZW and Pat Roberson, KB5YPP.

Head For The Hills Bike Rally will be May 7 and we still need more radio volunteers.

Field Day is 25 & 26 June, Johnny, KJ5LB, is getting with Cedar Hill Fire Chief about getting article stuffed in the Cedar Hill water bills. Lester, K5ITO is in charge of Food, Grilled Hamburgers and Hot Dogs for Saturday night meal. Members are asked to sign up for bringing side dishes. Sunday breakfast will be purchased with orders taken Sunday morning before going to pick up food. Johnny, KJ5LB is furnishing the radio for the SSB station. The Club Box will be used for the G.O.T.A. station, with Jerry, KB6OJE and David, N5UV in charge. Larry, K5YS to furnish the Delta Loop again this year for the G.O.T.A. station.

NEW BUSINESS

Windsor Park Baptist Church Royal Ambassadors will be in a camp August 1 to August 3 and would like a radio demonstration to the youth and an opportunity to get on the air. Be thinking about volunteering for this activity to help out the church where we meet.

Treasurer, Mike, K5MMH, reports that the 802 has been filed with the state

Mike, K5MMH also reports that Chase Bank is charging us \$15 per month for not having minimum balance in our account. He is working with Gene at the Chase Bank to get it reversed. He has provided them a copy of our IRS 501 © (3) letter and he was forwarding it to his Supervisor.

WEB: There was discussion about Domain Name coming due in early July and getting away from AT&T's high cost for hosting the web site. Mike, K5MMH, made a motion to get \$50 Domain Name with Go Daddy and Rick, KJ5UY seconded it.

Mike, K5MMH, made another motion to get Ultimate web hosting from Go Daddy paying 3 yr in advance. Rick, KJ5UY seconded it. Motion Passed. Bill, N5TXN to do it.

Tonya Hunter, Emergency Management Officer, Grand Prairie, TX talked with the Board about using our repeater for emergency communications. It was also discussed that they were welcome to check into our emergency nets when they were up. No final action was taken.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Rick, KJ5UY.

General Membership Meeting ... May 17, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Scott, KE5NLK at 6:30 pm on 17 May 2011. Invocation was given by Ben, K5NEB

Executive Board Members Present: Scott, KE5NLK; Tom KE5GKK; Jerry, KB6OJE; Rick, KJ5UY; Paul, KD5IVP; Lester, K5ITO,

Recognized Guests: Ronnie Russell, Nelda Poindexter, John Walters, Jeffrey Browning, Darrin Ellis, Hrold Wheat
Motion Made to accept the Minutes as in the GroundWire was made by Paul, KD5IVP, and 2nd by Rick, KJ5UY.
Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ben K5NEB to accept the Treasure Report as in the GroundWire was 2nd by Rick, KJ5UY.
Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Repeater: Both repeaters are still working. 2m repeated used for the Cedar Hill Head for the Hills bike rally and didn't have any problems. Ben, K5NEB, reports there was some CW being received from the 88 repeater.

VE Session: There are six takers tonight, five for Tech and one for General.

EOC: Paul, KD5IVP, says nothing to report. Johnny, KJ5LB, reports the EOC in Cedar Hill has been approved for our use for Field Day. The Fire Chief of Cedar Hill to get 3three flyers provided by David, N5UV, in the Cedar Hill water bills and newspaper, but they were not in this months water bills. Maybe next month..

Membership: One application was turned in at the meeting by Gene Eubanks, KD5UHG and applications for complimentary membership for the remaining of this year are being sent to the ten who passed their exams on 31 March and the five who passed on 17 May..

Net: There was no net on 16 May. Several members have signed up to be net control and Rick, KJ5UY will be adding them to the roster.. The weekly net is a good place to keep up with what is going on.

Web: Floyd, KC5QBC, is posting and keeping the web updated while Russ, KX5G, is out of action.

Groundwire: It is available on the web.

OLD BUSINESS

Jerusalem Marketplace was presented by the Windsor Park Baptist Church on 21, 22, & 23 April 2011 each evening at the church. SWDCARC members came through and helped directing traffic for parking and watching the parked vehicles.

Cedar Hill Head for the Hills Bike Rally was Saturday, 7 May 2011, SWDCARC provided the radio communications for this event again this year. A total of 24 people worked the HFH Bike Rally.. The organizers had nothing but praise and thanks for our support. Those who worked the Bike Rally need to send Jerry, KB6OJE, things that were done good and things that could be improved upon, both from the SWDCARC communications standpoint and from the Organizers standpoint. APRS was available only on one vehicle, SAG4.

HamCom: June 10 & 11, 2011. SWDCARC has two indoor tables reserved again this year. Rick, KJ5UY, says it is not too soon to be gathering your surplus equipment for sale on the SWDCARC tables at Ham Com. Don't wait until the last minute

Field Day: June 25 & 26, 2011. Ben, K5NEB, reports that he had no orders for the field day shirts consolidation ordered Day. Lester, K5ITO, said there will be a sign-up sheet for bringing food for Field Day. He is in charge of the food for the Saturday night dinner, which will be grilled hamburgers and hot dogs. Mike, K5MMH, Field Day Chairperson was not at the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

26th Annual Tour d'Italia, Saturday, June 18, 2011. If interested in providing radio support, contact Rick, KJ5UY, and he will give out the contact info.

PROGRAM: Ronnie Russell, Battalion Chief, Desoto Fire Department, on their new emergency command vehicle and demonstration.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Bill Ellis, N5TXN at 7:30 pm.