

Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club

2012 CLUB OFFICERS

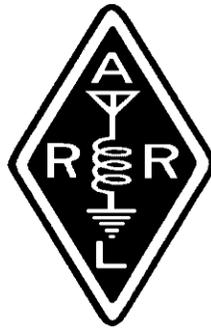
Pres: Rusty Sanders - KD5GEN

VP: Mike Brown - KF5KEY

Sec/Treas: Army Curtis - AE5P

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club is to support and promote Amateur Radio by public service, offering training to unlicensed interested parties and licensed Amateurs, mutual support of other Amateurs, engaging events that promote Amateur radio to the general public and other Amateur radio operators, and continuing fellowship by regularly scheduled organized meetings and events.



JANUARY MINUTES

The January meeting of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club (NARC) was held as scheduled on January 4th. **President Rusty KD5GEN**, opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall of Christ Episcopal Church. Nineteen members and two guests were present. Each person present introduced himself. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as published. The Treasurer's report was read.

Marshall, K5QE gave a report on the recent K5N grid-dxpedition to

DL99/DM90 on six meters.

Shuttle Columbia Special Event Station will be held February 4th, 2012. Kay Simpson (N5YA xyl) is the manager of the Shuttle Columbia Museum in Hemphill, and has invited us to hold our SES at the museum. Kay has requested NASA to send an astronaut to participate with us, and is expecting one or more to attend. NARC will be organizing car pools to assist members with the drive to and from Hemphill. It promises to be one of the best SES operations yet.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20.

Program: Army - AE5P gave a program on the upcoming ARRL VHF Sweepstakes, and the

several folks coming from California to rove with us during the contest. It should prove to be a most interesting way to spend a weekend.

OSCILLATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Hello to all NARC members and others reading this newsletter.

The great VHF roving party is now somewhat over. Equipment is still being dismantled and stowed until the next event. We had quite an experience this past weekend, Jan. 21 and 22. It was interesting to see all of the gear and antennas and to see how pack roving worked. We had some long days and many miles covered in this event and hopefully our club should be somewhere in the running for a top position once all the logs are entered and calculations finished.

It was very interesting to see how challenges can be

overcome and worked through during such an event. Sometimes radios would function properly one minute only to fail the next minute. One never knows what is coming next.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for all those who participated in the pack roving party, taking time for the event to volunteer for the club. I appreciate K5QE for everything he did to support the roving party. I want to thank Dr. Tom, W5TV for all his help this weekend, as he was my roving partner. He understands how the various systems work and was able to keep us on track. Last but not least is Army, AE5P who loaned out his facilities as a rover build facility along with the numerous hours he spent to coordinate the whole event. The members of the party that enjoy roving found ways to make equipment work better for the next time around. It will be interesting to see all the changes that occur before the next round.

As we toured the 3 states and many grids, citizens were in awe at the array of antennas and the number of vehicles in the convoy. Many times we were asked if we were chasing tornadoes only to disappoint the folks with telling them we were contesting. Since some of the area was expecting severe weather, those folks were just sure we were there to chase the storms coming in. One member of the convoy did meet someone who was interested in ham radio and was given information on how to become licensed.

The Columbia Shuttle special event station will be coming up shortly and hopefully we will have a great turnout of members to assist in this event. This year, the event will be taking place in Hemphill at the museum dedicated to the shuttle disaster. Members will be carpooling from Nacogdoches to the event in Hemphill so you can catch a ride if you need to do so.

A number of other future events are on the calendar including Belton, Dayton, the Neches river canoe event and Field Day. Be sure to mark your calendars if you are interesting in attending or volunteering for duty in one of these events.

Hope to see you at the meeting on February 1.

KD5GEN- Rusty

email:

rusty.sanders@att.net

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hi. My name is Mike Brown, and my call sign is KF5KEY.

Having just been nominated, seconded, voted in and installed as Vice-President of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club in a matter of some ninety seconds, it has been pointed out that I am also to write a column for the monthly newsletter. Obviously you folks have a high tolerance for pain, but here goes....

I became interested in ham radio and electronics at the age of eight. I wound my first coil, got a surplus set of headphones (cheap!), got a piece of germanium crystal and followed the instructions for constructing a crystal radio. I spent untold hours touching the crystal with the "cat's whisker" and moving the contact lever across the coil in order to bring in the one station that the set's "detector" was able to access. My Mom was less than enthused about the wire antenna strung back and forth across the bedroom that I shared with my older brother. Nor was he a fan of my budding electronics genius and would constantly pull down the wire that was encroaching on "his" side of the room, amid much yelling and screaming on my part. Ah, the cretins we wizards must suffer in the quest for enlightenment....

Over the next few years, I fell more and more under the spell of radio, and

after having collected bottles, saved allowances and squirreled away lunch money, I became the proud owner of a Hallicrafters S-20R receiver. The fact that it wasn't working wasn't of any consequence at all...I had a radio! After a couple of months of sitting in the dark, mesmerized by the glow of tubes and knob twiddling, I thought that it might be a great deal more interesting if the damn thing worked, so I began hanging out with a neighbor two doors down, Mr. Hill...who also happened to be a radio/TV repairman. I swept his shop, cleaned his work benches, offered endless services and generally made a total nuisance of myself until the poor man finally fixed my radio out of desperation...see how we geniuses work!!

A whole world opened up to me...the first dit-dah I heard and I was hooked. I fell under the spell of heterodyne squeal. The hours that it took for the S-20R to warm up to the point that it wouldn't drift

were nirvana...I spent endless hours chasing those wandering frequencies, knob tweaking and twiddling until the wee hours. My "ham shack" was my miniscule clothes closet...my Mom had absolutely no sense of humor about my throwing out the clothes that were invading my space...it was MY shack...who needed clothes? I was on my way to becoming a ham. How was I to know that it would take some 60 years to get there....

(to be continued)

VE TESTING

Our next VE testing is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15th at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall of Christ Episcopal Church. Applicants should bring a picture ID, the original and a copy of their current Amateur license, the original of any CSCE's and \$15 to cover the cost of the exam(s). Correct change is always very much appreciated. 73 de AE5P

email: ae5p@arrl.net

CLUB NETS

Remember to join us each week for the 2-meter nets sponsored by NARC. Each **MONDAY** is the **NARC ARES/RACES** net, at 8:00 p.m. on the club's 146.84 repeater (PL 141.3). Second, on **THURSDAY** evenings at 8:00 p.m. is the **Deep East Texas Skywarn Emergency Weather Net** on the 147.32 repeater (PL 141.3). Please join us for one or both. We are always looking for folks who would like to become net control operators. If you are interested, please contact any of the existing net controls. We will be pleased to help you in any way we can.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday February 1st** at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall of Christ Episcopal Church. The church is at the corner of Starr and Mound Streets

in Nacogdoches. A program is planned. Hope to see you there.

THE GREAT EAST TEXAS ADVENTURE

The ARRL VHF Sweepstakes contest was the weekend of January 21-22, and as is the normal thing, K5QE was active from his big multi-multi station near Hemphill, and a couple of club members were out "roving" with mobile rigs. This year was different!

Back in early December, Marshall and Army received an e-mail from their friend Wayne Overbeck, N6NB, who lives in California. Wayne has been a serious VHF contester for many years, and has put together teams of rovers in Southern California that have set national records that may never be broken. Wayne asked if we were interested in him bringing several of his California friends to East Texas to rove with us in January. The response was an immediate "absolutely!"

Wayne and John, N6MU arrived in Nacogdoches on Tuesday, January 17 in Wayne's big Ford E-350 van, loaded with six of Wayne's signature "tool box" stations. These are complete VHF stations covering all VHF/UHF/microwave bands from 50MHz through 10GHz, complete with antennas. Essentially all the equipment is mounted inside a standard Craftsman 20" toolbox that mounts on the roof rack of any vehicle. A small console is then mounted inside the vehicle, normally in the back seat, and includes two radios, a Yaesu FT-897 which is used as the IF for all of the transverters in the toolbox on the roof, and a 222MHz FM mobile that is used to coordinate rover activities. Later in the week, the husband and wife team of Marty N6VI and Clara KJ6CNO arrived. David N6HD and Art W6XD also arrived later in the week. Marty and David brought rental cars with roof racks, and Army provided two loaner vehicles for two more rovers.

Friday evening everyone met for dinner at Clear Springs; all of the rovers and all of the operators from the K5QE station, and it was quite the crew. Saturday morning began with a breakfast for all the rovers at IHOP, and then the caravan started to the Nederland/Port Arthur area. We had eight vehicles in the caravan. Marty N6VI and Mike KF5KEY, Wayne N6NB and Bob K5ME, David N6HD and John W5FWR, John N6MU and Ken K5TRK, Army AE5P and Kenny KF5KLW, Tom W5TV and Rusty KD5GEN, Clara KJ6CNO and Fay K5FAY, and Bill WK5F brought up the rear in his 4 band limited rover. With the exception of Tom and Rusty in the Red Rover, all other vehicles had 10 bands on board. Three rovers had 11 bands.

We started in the Nederland area, grid EL39. Never a dull moment as a security guard at the shopping center we were operating from tried to force Army and Kenny to leave. She was not successful. All of the rovers worked each other on all available

bands, and all rovers tried to work K5QE on all available bands. Not unexpectedly, this turned out to be a major task and consumed a lot of time. From there, the entire group moved up the road towards Beaumont to grid EL29 and repeated the process. Most rovers looked around for other stations to work as time permitted, and several of us discovered six meters was open and worked as many stations as possible.

From the Beaumont area, everyone drove up to Jasper for grids EM20 and EM30. A careful time-line that had been planned in advance was now completely useless, as we were at least two hours behind schedule. Everyone headed for Texarkana, a drive of about 3 hours, where we spend what was left of the night at a hotel there.

Sunday morning, the plan was to leave the hotel at 7:00 a.m. and head up into Arkansas for 2 more grids. Army almost had a revolt on his hands with that plan, so the plans were quickly changed and everyone started the day with 2 grids on the east side of Texarkana. From there it was down to Shreveport, and then back to the Hemphill/Milam area. We finished our final grid (10 grids for the weekend) at about 9:30 Sunday evening, 30 minutes before the contest was over. To put it mildly, everyone was totally worn out, and we still had to drive home! Several were heard to be repeating over and over to themselves "This is fun... this is fun... this is fun..."

Logs are still being entered and final scores are not yet known. There were A LOT of contacts made, and certainly new personal bests will be realized by all of the local operators. It was a great event for bringing club members together and a great learning event for all as well. While several club members have made it clear they don't want to do this again, it has revitalized some others who want to get more active in events like this in the future. It definitely was an adventure!

Following are some pictures taken of the event. We were very pleased to have the folks from California join us for this. Marty N6VI is the ARRL Vice Director for the Southwestern Division. David N6HD is the ARRL Section Manager for the Los Angeles section. Wayne is a former Vice Director for the Southwestern Division. Art W6XD is a former Vice Director and Director. Lots of talent in this group.



This is the lineup of rovers at the Shopping Center in Nederland just before the start of the contest.

The other pictures will be shown on the big screen at our meeting this coming Wednesday, along with a recording of one set of contacts being made between the rovers. Sometimes tongues got a little twisted and it was often difficult to maintain the attention needed to make all of the required contacts in a timely manner, but overall everyone did a first rate job.

Come join us Wednesday for the meeting. I'm sure there will be many war stories to be told.