

# Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club

## 2023 CLUB OFFICERS

Pres: Aaron Baker - KI5FIQ

Vice Pres: Mark Phillips - KI5POH

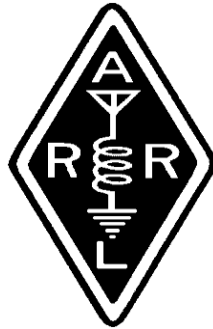
Sec/Treas: Army Curtis - AE5P

Visit our web site at

<https://w5nac.com/>

## 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 and having fun.



## JULY MINUTES

The July business meeting of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club (NARC) was held June 28, on the club's 146.84 repeater. The three club officers checked in, as well as seven additional club members.

**Announced** that the next meeting will be the annual Ice Cream Social. Meeting is open to members and family members. Bring your favorite flavor and enjoy.

**Army AE5P** reported that the County has determined the tower at Road & Bridge is seriously corroded, and requires removal in the

near future. This will require the removal of our DMR and 32 repeaters. At this time, we do not have another location available. More info as it becomes available.

**KD5GEN** asked if we can proceed with the transfer of the NFD UHF repeater to NCEC. This will be looked into.

**WD5EFY** asked if a time line for these changes is available. It is not available at this point.

**W5TV** suggested keeping the DMR equipment together so it can be easily installed again. This has been done.

**KI5RAT** suggested using the EOC as a location for 32. Unfortunately, there is no tower at the EOC yet,

but it might make a good location in the future.

Net closed at 8:21 p.m.

The regular July meeting of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club was held as scheduled on July 5<sup>th</sup> at the City/County EOC with 14 members and 5 guests. **President Aaron KI5FIQ** opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Introductions were made by all present. Minutes of the previous meetings were approved as published. Treasurer's report was read.

**KD5FEE** announced the next fox hunt will be July 22. Rally at Newks after the fox is found.

**VHF contest** does not appear to have enough participation to justify roving.

**Program:** **KI5FIQ** debriefed Field Day. Total of 499 QSO's, best yet. Using all Flex radios worked very well.

Meeting closed at 2001.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

The start of the second half of the year has kept me busy this month. Didn't get too much radio done, but hopefully things will start slowing down again once the fall semester starts later this month. Been elbows deep in classroom upgrades so those should be winding down soon.

Enjoyed the fox hunt this past month, I'm sure I drove by it about 3 times before I finally found it. Great job Robert for choosing an excellent spot.

The one thing I'd like to close with is a little continuation from Field Day. For those who don't know, I treat the message handling bonus by sending mini QSLs to home stations and thanking them for the contact. Well, it just happened to be we got a response back to one of them via message handling thanking us for the message. I'll have the radiogram at the

meeting for people to read if anyone is interested. Just thought that was a neat little treat to end field day.

Until next month.

73, Aaron KI5FIQ

Baker.barisax@gmail.com

## FROM THE VP CHAIR

Wow! Can you say HOT! July's weather was intense. I hope you can stay cool in August. Our July Fox Hunt was fun and Robert (KD5FEE) did a great job hiding the Fox. The next Fox Hunt is tentatively scheduled for September and maybe it will be cooler then. Our club meeting presentation for the August meeting will be on Artificial Intelligence by Tim Leonard. This will be a very interesting program.

I hope to see you all at the August meeting.

73, Mark KI5POH

[KI5POH21@gmail.com](mailto:KI5POH21@gmail.com)

## NOTES FROM OUR EC

I ended last month with the same thing I'm leading with this month, it's hot, it's hot, it's hot.

As Rusty has reminded us it's dangerously hot. If you are going to be out or doing things, plan accordingly. Hydrate, hydrate, and sorry the caffeinated sugary drinks are not recommended. Water and electrolyte drinks (watch the sugar) are better.

Plan your outside activities as best as you can. The neighbors may not like hearing the mower at 3 AM.

Nacogdoches county established a burn ban 21 July. The Texas A&M Forest Service notes that elevated heat dried fuel will support a chance of wild fire. The outlooks seem to be continued hot for a while.

Let's move to Hurricane Season 2023 for a bit. As of 24 Jul, there have been 5 storms since 1 January and 4 storms since the official start of the season. July had a Cat 1 Hurricane. Looking over last year's numbers, August had no storm activity; perhaps August 2023 will follow suit. We shall see what the rest of the season holds.

It has been a busy month for me. The security company I worked for is closing its doors and my office has been picked up by another security firm. Not much changed, a new uniform some policy changes but I still work at the same place for the same people. Hopefully when we are fully settled, I can get back to some things.

Thanks everyone for checking into the nets stay inside, stay cool and play on your radios.

73 all, see you on the Nets.

John KC5MIB

## VE TESTING

We had one person for the July VE test session. Unfortunately, they were not successful in passing their exam. They promised to hit the books again and return for the next session.

We do want to remind everyone that we offer in-person testing for all classes of Amateur Radio licenses on the third Wednesday of every month.

Many thanks to VE's, Rusty KD5GEN, Mike AA5HH, Mike W5NXX, Ralph N6RH, Robert KD5FEE, and Army AE5P.

For the latest information always check the club website at:

<https://w5nac.com/ve-testing/>

73 de AE5P.

email: [ae5p@arrl.net](mailto:ae5p@arrl.net)

## TWO METER CLUB NETS

Please join us each week for the two-meter nets sponsored by NARC. All stations are welcome to check into the nets.

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.

## HAMLIST

Are you on Hamlist? Check it out and join at:

<https://w5nac.com/about/email-reflectors/>

## NEXT MEETING

The monthly business meeting is held on the Club's 146.84 repeater, 8:00 p.m. on the Wednesday before our normal scheduled meeting which is always the first Wednesday of the month.

The next regular NARC meeting will be Wednesday August 2nd at the Nacogdoches City/County EOC. Meeting begins at 7:00; doors open at 6:30. Come early for socializing before the meeting. After a very short business meeting, Tim Leonard KE5PQL will present his program on Artificial Intelligence (AI). This was deferred from earlier in the year and should be very good. Definitely a program you do not want to miss.

Hope to see ya'll there.

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF NOTE

Mark your calendars for the following events coming up in the next few months. Full information on these events and much more can be found at <https://www.contestcalendar.com//contestcal.html>

### NAQP CW

Aug 5 - 6, 2023

<http://www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf>

### NAQP SSB

Aug 19 - 20, 2023

<https://www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf>

### ARRL Rookie Roundup RTTY

Aug 20, 2023

<https://www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup>

### ARRL September VHF Contest

Sept 9 - 11, 2023

<http://www.arrl.org/september-vhf>

### TEXAS QSO PARTY

Sept 16 - 17, 2023

<http://www.txqp.net/>

### CQ WWDX RTTY

Sept 23 - 24, 2023

<http://www.cqwwrtty.com/>

### CQ WWDX SSB

Oct 28 - 29, 2023

<http://www.cqww.com/rules.htm>

Check out the many contests listed on the Contest Calendar link shown here. There are many State QSO parties and 'Parks-On-The-Air' events that may be just right for you. Check 'em out.

# A New Web Tool for POTA Hunters

Jim Edmondson, N5JGE

During one of my recent web searches, I happened across something called POTAPlus. POTAPlus is a browser extension for any Chrome-based browser (Chrome, Edge, Opera, etc.). It was developed in early 2022 and is still under development, although the last update was in December 2022. There are some bugs present, but overall, this is a very useful tool for the POTA hunter.

When the [POTA spots page](#) is opened with the extension installed in the browser, many enhanced features are added to the page. The two screenshots below show the differences and I will explain some of those later in this article.

**Note:** POTA.app page **without** POTAPlus

**Note:** POTA.app page **with** POTAPlus

In addition to the page enhancements, POTAPlus can also provide rig control with the use of a small helper application and it can log your POTA QSOs to several popular logging programs. Details of the features and use of POTAPlus can be found at the following links:

[POTAPlus Browser Extension](#); and

[POTAPlus Options](#).

The first link provides a link to download the extension and helper application. The extension is not in the Chrome store, so installation is a bit of a process. If want to try this

extension and need help installing it, let me know. Once downloaded, unzip the file and note the file location. In your browser find the settings page to manage extensions and you will see a button labelled "load unpacked" or something similar. You may have to turn on a switch labelled "developer options" or "advanced". Point the browser to the file location noted above and click OK - your done with that step. If you want to try rig control and logging, you will also need to download ham-app-proxy.exe from the first link above. There is no installation, just start the program and leave it running minimized while using POTAPlus. There are multiple ways to control your rig via the helper application. More details on how I did rig control are given below.

The second link above describes how to set the many options for POTAPlus. In addition to the standard POTA.app buttons to sort and filter spots, POTAPlus ads checkboxes to hide spots by active mode, band and / or region (see gray-shaded area in figure above). The orange highlighting on the enhanced POTA spots page indicates entities for which you have no confirmed contacts. In the figure above, I have no parks confirmed in Greece and none in the "NC" region of France. Depending on the options that you select, this highlighting can be applied to operators, parks, US states and N1CC award totals. Blue badges are used to show the number of confirmed QSOs with a particular entity. Another option is to show operator and park details when you QSY to a spot. Operator photo, POTA stats, callsign(s), QTH are shown along with park number, name, location, POTA stats and a map.

The above features are useful by themselves, but the real power of POTAPlus is when you enable rig control. I initially tried to control my FTdx10 and IC-7300 using the ham-app-proxy to interface between the browser and ALog. However, ALog did not change the mode when I tried to QSY on POTAPlus. I then tried Omni-rig and it worked perfectly. Omni-rig is a free program with "ini" files for many common ham transceivers. It offers basic rig control functions such as setting the frequency and mode. The ini files are text files that can be edited to control other rig functions such as filter selection, attenuators, preamps, etc. depending on the rig. (Omni-rig has settings for two rigs, but only Rig 1 is active from POTAPlus.) The basic ini files worked well for me. Now when you click on a QSY button in the POTA spots list, your rig tunes to that mode and frequency as set in the POTAPlus options and you can make your call. This feature can also be used to scan all of the listed spots with the transceiver changing mode and frequency as required. The rig will stay on each spot for a length time that you choose in steps between 5 and 55 seconds. This useful to see if you can hear each station and if there is a pileup before choosing which stations to work.

The third major feature is QSO logging and spotting. Once you complete your POTA QSO, simply click the QSL button to bring up the dialog box shown below. Most of the pertinent information is pre-populated. You can change signal reports if needed, add multiple operators or multiple park numbers. POTAPlus will then generate the QSO records for those entities. I found that there were bugs in the implementation of logging into ALog. Park number is not populated into the ALog QSO form, comments are not transferred into the form and the time off is always 00:00:00. Multiple parks and operators do not generate additional log entries. It is fairly easy to correct these errors in ALog. The developer is reportedly working on fixing these problems. I considered switching to

Log4OM or DXKeeper, which reportedly work very well with POTAPlus. I decided that the learning curves were not worth the effort compared to editing ACLog POTA QSOs.

A good 5-minute discussion of how avid POTA hunter, WD4DAN used POTAPlus during the recent “Plaque Event Weekend” can be found from ~22:00 to ~27:00 of the video at link [WD4DAN with AA0Z - POTAPlus](#).

POTAPlus is another example that could have been included in my list of “active ham radio software development” in last month’s “Why I Think That Ham Radio is Such a Great Hobby” article. I have only been working with this tool for a few days, but in my opinion, if you actively hunt POTA QSOs, POTAPlus is well worth the time to install and get configured the way that works best for how you like to operate.

Re-Spot

Activator Callsign W1RCP	Spotter Callsign N5JGE		
Frequency (kHz) 14057.0	Park Reference K-3636 <small>Madison Blue Spring State Park</small>		
<b>Comments</b> <hr style="border: 1px solid green;"/>			
RST Sent (ctrl-# for 5#/5#9) 599	RST Rcvd (ctrl-# for 5#/5#9) 599		
TX PWR 100	RX PWR	Other Ops (comma/space-delim)	
Park Ref #2	Park Ref #3	Park Ref #4	Park Ref #5

**Wrong mode?** Mention a mode in the Comments field to change the mode for this spot (e.g. “QSY CW”, “RTTY” or “Switching to FT8”).

**Mention QRT** if this activator is no longer on the air to mark this spot as finished. This spot will be **marked hunted** for this band and mode.

CANCEL
SPOT
SPOT+LOG
LOG W1RCP