

Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club

2025 CLUB OFFICERS

Pres: Mark Phillips -
KI5POH

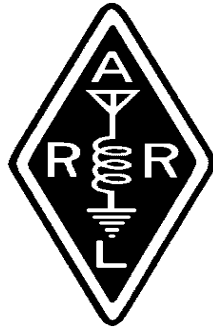
Vice Pres: Dave Emmerling
- NR5AT

Sec/Treas: Darrell
Thornton - KI5PYQ

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.

SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Mark, KI5POH, started them meeting off at 19:00. Introductions were made and minutes were approved. The treasury report was read.

Old business is figuring out the status of the "Green Monster" mast. Still in process of taking to recycle center.

New business committee was created for new officers. Andy, KE5EXX, Jim, AE5JE, and Darrell, KI5PYQ, are the members of the committee.

Andy, KE5EXX, proposed the club should be apart of many events in Nacogdoches. Mike, AA5HH, announced the Lufkin club's POTA event on Oct 25th and they are doing ARRL Winter Field Day Jan 24th. Lufkin would love to see Nacogdoches Club attend both events.

Meeting was adjourned at 19:12.

2025 DUES ARE DUE

Dues are just \$20 a year and cover all licensed hams in a family. Please get your dues to KI5PYQ either in person or mailed to his

home address. Sooner is better than later. Make checks payable to NARC.

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

Are you a member of NARC? Do you check into one or more of the weekly nets on 2M? If not, why not? Do you participate in the club Fox Hunts? If not, why not? Do you participate in the club Special Events K5C and K5T? If not, why? Let us know how we can get you involved in our club. Is there an event or program that you would like to see, let your club officers know.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The ARRL is asking all Hams to send letters to congress to pass the Amateur Radion Emergency Preparedness Act (H.R. 1094 / S. 459) to secure antenna rights. The legislation is intended to prevent restrictive homeowners associations (HOA) rules that currently prohibit or limit the

installation of amateur radio antennas. Passage of this legislation would give amateur radio operators the same rights to install antennas on their property as those enjoyed by users of TV antennas, wireless internet and flag poles. The process to send letters to congress has been set up at www.arrl.org/HOA, put in your call sign and press the red send my letters. We all know the importance of Hams being able to communicate regularly and especially when disasters strike.

I am thankful for each of you for being a Ham and being part of our club!

73, Mark KI5POH
KI5POH21@gmail.com

FROM OUR VP

Hello everyone,
My article for the October newsletter is a repeat of an article I sent out this morning. Please give it a read and hopefully take the time to respond to your congressman/woman. We have a chance to make a

difference here, so please consider doing so.

HOAs certainly have their place. Though in my opinion, there is a difference between making sure my neighbor cannot turn his front yard into a used car lot, and telling me I am not using the approved mulch around my bushes! Jason from Ham Radio 2.0 points out some inequities and government policies that penalize HAMS regarding antennas in a neighborhood, which I found concerning. By the end of the video I had already sent a letter to my congressman.

Here's my email from this morning:

Saw this on the Ham Radio 2.0 page and thought I would pass it along as I think it deserves a look. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8alioEigr9w>
Basically, the ARRL is trying to get legislation passed that would prevent Homeowner Associations (HOAs) from stopping/restricting Hams from erecting

antennas. Even though you may not be personally affected by an HOA, many hams are. Sending a letter to your congressman is quick and simple. A fast and easy way to support this

ARRL effort. <https://send-a-letter.org/hoa/>

Hope everyone has a great day! (at least the mornings are cooler)

73, NR5AT
Dave Emmerling
Dke1955@duck.com

NOTES FROM OUR EC

Nothing at this time.

73 and see you on the air,
de John Chapman KC5MIB
Jlchapman2@gmail.com

VE TESTING

Our September VE testing session did not have any applicants, but the VE team had a pleasant social evening out.

Many thanks to our VE team of Rusty KD5GEN, Ralph N6RH, Mike AA5HH

and Donna Hooks AA5HH xyl, Mike W5NXX, Dave NR5AT, and Robert KD5FEE.

There is a very real question as to how much longer NARC will be able to continue this service, and the answer to that question depends on you. Army AE5P was not able to attend the September VE session due to medical problems that have severely limited his mobility. Getting more NARC members to become certified VE's, while a great step in the right direction, do not solve the problem. The problem is getting one or more of the NARC VE's to become certified as the liaison for our VE sessions, the position that Army has held for many years now. Army is now 84 years old. Getting someone else to take on the job is the answer, but unless the new liaison is a whole younger than 84, it doesn't kick the problem very far down the road.

Army has agreed to write up a document that details the things a VE liaison must

do. That should be a big help in getting one or more of our VE's to take on the liaison position. You may be able to come up with a better solution and if you do, more power to you.

Interested in learning more? Give Army a call at (936) 552-4351. If you can't get through, please leave a voice-mail.

Remember that we provide VE testing sessions the third Wednesday of EVERY MONTH with exams for all classes of Amateur Radio licenses. Sessions are held at the EOC with doors open at 6:30 and testing beginning no later than 7:00 p.m.

73 de AE5P.
email:
ae5p@suddenlink.net

Each **MONDAY** is the **NARC ARES/RACES** net, at 20:00 on the club's 146.84 repeater (PL 141.3).

Second, on **THURSDAY** evenings at 20:00 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 next regular NARC meeting will be **TUESDAY** October 7th at Nacogdoches EOC. Meeting begins at 19:00; Please plan

to arrive early for socialization with the doors opening at 18:30.

We will have a short business meeting. The program will be hosted by Mark, KI5POH. He will be talking about our Orange Boxes and how to deploy for emergency situations in Nacogdoches County.

Looking forward to seeing everyone there.

FOX HUNT

The Fox Hunts will be on hold for now. We currently do not have enough attendance to continue currently. If you would like to have another fox hunt, please let Darrell KI5PYQ or Mark KI5POH know that you would like to participate.

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>

You will need to scroll to find the correct month.

Link to ARRL Contest Calendar

<https://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>

Club Meeting Dates

Oct 7th 19:00

Nov 4th 19:00

Part 2: How Can an SDR Help a Ham Radio Operator?

Jim Edmondson, AE5JE

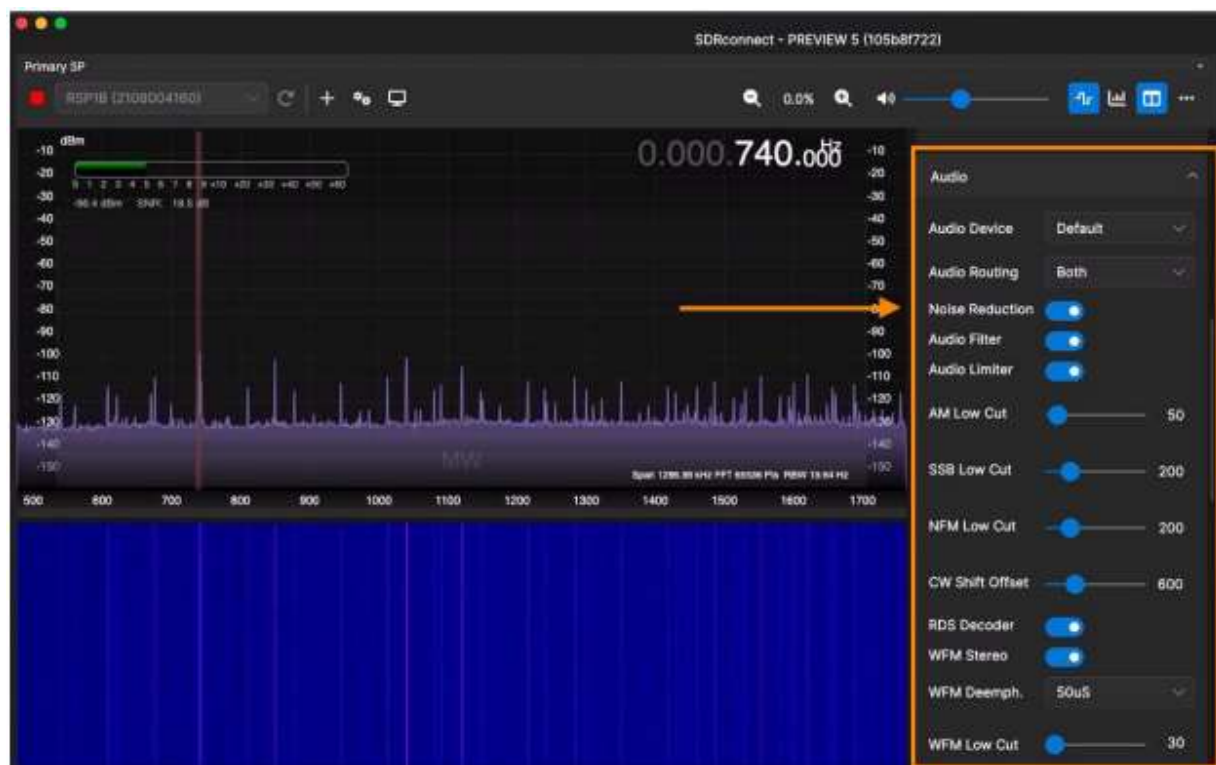
Just a quick follow-up to last month's article on two issues. As I mentioned last month, the inexpensive 2' diameter [magnetic loop](#) worked very well in FT8 tests of the RTL-SDR versus my Kenwood TS-890S. However, the manufacturer could use better quality control. The antenna consists of the loop attached to a low-noise amplifier (LNA) and a power unit in the shack. Those are connected via RG-174 coax. When I received the loop, it was not very sensitive, the low-noise amplifier (LNA) did not work as it should and the battery did not appear to charge. Repeatedly pressing the power button is supposed to cycle from off to low, medium and high amplification levels; then back off again. The button appeared to only turn the LNA on and back off. Furthermore, the LNA only worked when the unit was powered by the USB cable even though it has a built-in, rechargeable 18650 battery.

Due to those issues, the first several hours of operation were very frustrating. Rather than contacting the Amazon seller and possibly waiting days for some resolution, I decided to open up the LNA and power units to check for obvious defects. I found that the 18650 battery in the power unit was loose in the battery holder. The holder did not incorporate a spring at the negative terminal as is typical. After prying the positive terminal of the battery holder towards the negative terminal, the battery fit tightly. With this fix, the LNA powered up on battery, worked as it should and the battery took a charge.

The second issue was that the cheap RTL-SDR was very susceptible to interference and birdies. As mentioned last month, the 10M band was almost useless and it took a lot of fiddling when changing bands to get good reception. I decided to purchase a better SDR. After researching mid-priced models, I decided on an [SDRplay RSP1b](#). Compared to the RTL-SDR, the RSP1b has a much wider bandwidth (10 MHz vs. 2.4

MHz), a 14-bit ADC (vs. 8-bit) and continuous coverage from 1 kHz to 2 GHz (vs. 500 kHz to 1.75 GHz). See the link above for the complete specs.

Another advantage is that SDRplay has a good software package ([SDRconnect](#)) which is similar to SDR# but optimized for SDRplay SDRs. There is good tutorials at the "[QuickStart](#)" page and a [support ticket](#) system where help can be obtained even if not using SDRplay software with your SDRplay SDR! The software is a 64-bit application that can run on x64 and ARM64 under Windows 10 / 11, MacOS, and Linux. The software is under active development as it will eventually replace the older SDRUno software. Unfortunately, SDRconnect does not yet have support for rig control using Omnirig. For this reason, you will need to use SDRUno or one of the two applications discussed last month (SDR#, SDR Console) to use the RSP1b as a true second receiver. However, I find the SDRUno software to be difficult to use and much prefer the single-window graphical user interfaces of the others. Below is a screenshot of SDRconnect tuned to the AM broadcast band and highlighting the noise reduction module.



I need to use the RSP1b and magnetic loop antenna more to draw firmer conclusions about their operation. So far, I have found the magnetic loop to be quite sensitive

with a low noise floor. One thing that Dave Casler mentioned is that you can use a magnetic loop in the horizontal position to get an omnidirectional reception pattern. I have yet to try this and for now I just rotate the fiberglass pushup pole on which I mounted the loop antenna.

As far as the RSP1b goes, I have been impressed with the ability to change bands without a lot of user fiddling. The RSP1b with SDRconnect software seems to automatically adjust RF gain and perhaps other parameters as you move among the bands. It has a module with buttons to tune common bands including the amateur radio bands. If you select your IARU region in the app settings, the band definitions will be correct for your location. These buttons tune the SDR to over the entire band (14.000 to 14.350 MHz for 20M in the US as an example) while optimizing the bandwidth and RF gain. This is very helpful for band hopping. Anyway, that's it for now, I need to play with the SDR some more!