SEPTEMBER 2026 Volume 09-2026

Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club

2026 CLUB OFFICERS

Pres: Mark Phillips – KI5POH

Vice Pres: Aaron Baker – KI5FIQ

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.

AUGUST MINUTES

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

Old Business – Orange box discussions and unification. HF Mobile Rig completion.

New Business – Discussion on ways to honor club SK members. Webpage, tree planting, and others were discussed. Darrell, KI5PYQ, got permission from the club to change over trustee information to himself.

Meeting was adjourned.

SK AE5P

Army Curtis, AE5P, went silent key on August 16, 2026. Army was a strong key player in Nacogdoches ham radio. He played a vital role in NARC that will always be remembered for years to come. He will be missed as a friend, mentor, and fellow amateur radio hobbyist.

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

Are you a member of NARC? How can you help the club and amateur radio

by leading a project. Ask yourself, how can I participate and advance amateur radio in our community.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

This year has been a tough year for our club membership. The loss of Bob Knibb (K5ME) earlier this year
and recently Army Curtis (AE5P). Words seem to be inadequate to express our sorrow and the void that will be felt in our lives and our club without Army. He was a wealth of knowledge and his leadership in our club was incredible. Army will be truly missed, and our prayers are with Pat and her family during this difficult time.

September is National Emergency Preparedness month. The federal government has a site dedicated to emergency preparedness at www.ready.gov. This site has a lot of information to help be prepared for many different disasters and emergency scenarios, with building a disaster supplies kit, financial preparedness, being tech ready and how to care for our families and pets. Check out this site, it has some good information. Being a Ham Operator also means making sure we are prepared to help provide communication when needed. Check your equipment often and participate in the weekly ARES/RACES nets.

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

Hope everyone had a good August. Nothing too much to report here this month.

Now that we are in September, I'm starting to count down the days until it starts to cool down so I can get out and finally do some POTA activations like I said I would do back in January. If you weren't aware, did you know that the Texas Parks and Wildlife offers a yearly pass for the state parks? The pass gets you in free to the parks and if you want to camp there, you can for a discounted nightly rate. Something that I've taken advantage of as I get back into camping.

I'd like to end with a reflection of my ham radio journey, as I'm sure others have been doing lately after hearing the news of Army becoming a silent key. I'm thankful of the guidance he gave me when I got my license back in 2019. I had just recently found out about it after a weather podcast I listened to had a ham radio episode that showcased ARES and the like. After joining the club, I got more involved with the encouragement from Army and it's snowballed ever since. I really don't think I would be here writing this article tonight if it weren't for him. He will be greatly missed in the club.

Aaron Baker KI5FIQ
baker.barisax@gmail.com

VE TESTING

Our August VE testing session had two candidates. Unfortunately they were unsuccessful with their test. Hopefully they will keep studying and try again.

Thanks to Dave NR5AT, Mike W5NXK, Ralph N6RH, and Mike AA5HH for showing up and making VE an option for folks.

Remember that we provide VE testing sessions on 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.

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 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.

ARES/ RACES Mondays	146.84 (PL 141.3
1st	Jonathan W5WJC
2nd	Robert KD5FEE
3rd	Robert KD5FEE
4th	Tom W5TV
5th	Jonathan W5WJC

Skywarn Thursdays	147.32 (PL 141.3)
1st	Wolfie KI5MHB
2nd	Mark KI5POH
3rd	Rusty KD5GEN
4th	Aaron KI5FIQ
5th	Darrell KI5PYQ

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 on TUESDAY Sept. 1st at the Nacogdoches EOC. Doors will open at 18:30 and meeting will start promptly at 19:00. Following the business meeting we will a program over portable antennas. We hope to see you 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. We would be happy to create one.

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 here. You will need to scroll to find the correct month.

Link to ARRL Contest Calendar
https://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar

Club Meeting Dates

Aug 4th 19:00
Sept 1st 19:00
Oct 6th 19:00

Looking for a New HF Radio? - It Can be Very Confusing

Jim Edmondson, AE5JE

There are many ways to learn about ham radios that you might consider buying. My focus here is on 100W HF transceivers for common use cases. Word of mouth recommendations from fellow hams and club members is a good way to narrow the potential list of radios. Getting to operate a radio at a friend's ham shack or during field day can be a big help in your decision. You could even make a trip to HRO in Plano, which has radios setup that you can operate. Less personal and less interactive are published reviews. Video reviews are especially helpful as you can see and hear the radio in operation. eHam has a huge collection of written equipment reviews from hams that cover all types of equipment including transceivers. There are also professional reviews on many websites and blogs. QST also frequently publishes review articles of many types of ham equipment. QST reviews include objective lab measurements to validate manufacturer claims.

In choosing an HF transceiver strictly by performance, the receiver specs are key. Transmitters are relatively straightforward to design to create a certain power output with various modulation methods while meeting regulatory requirements with regards to signal cleanliness. Receivers, on the other hand, have to deal with many incoming signals over wide ranges of signal strength and spacing. Modern receivers have excellent sensitivity to weak signals, but being able to extract those signals from the noise in the presence of external (and internally generated) interference is where the differentiation occurs.

The premier source of objective testing data is Rob Sherwood's list. Rob has published the "Sherwood List" since his engineering company was founded 50-years ago. Rob's list is "Sorted by Third-Order Dynamic Range Narrow Spaced -or- ARRL RMDR (Reciprocal Mixing Dynamic Range) if Phase Noise Limited". This is a static list on a webpage, so you cannot sort it by other factors. Basically, Rob's ranking favors receivers based on selectivity and lack of interference generated in the receiver itself. He is specifically targeting excellent performance under crowded CW band conditions (i.e., chasing DX or contesting). If you do not operate this way, the ranking is less important and you may want to rank based on other data in Rob's list. Obviously, evaluating a receiver is rather complicated since it depends on your use case. When you use it differently than how you chose it, performance may not

be as good! Fortunately, if you want to dive into the details, Rob provides a list of presentations that he has made over the years on his methodology and the relative importance of various receiver specs. While these are quite old, the concepts are still important.

I found this YouTube interview of Rob very interesting. One of the most interesting aspects to me was that the radio that Rob uses in his own shack, is not at the top of his Sherwood list! In fact. it is number 10. Obviously, there are many factors that enter into this decision beyond technical performance specs and Rob discusses some of these. First Rob states that any radio in his list with a Dynamic Range - Narrow Spaced of >90 dB is an excellent choice and the final decision comes down mostly ergonomics - the front panel and menu systems. Unfortunately, in today's market a big front panel means a high price tag. Developing menu software is a lot cheaper than adding physical controls and their engineering.

The ARRL recently developed a similar ranking tool to the Sherwood list. It was described on pages 44-45 in the July 2026 issue of QST. The web tool requires an ARRL login. It is very interactive with filtering by type of equipment (transceiver, transmitter, amplifier, etc.), type of operation (mobile, base station, etc.), frequency range (HF, UHF, etc), power level, modes, etc. Also, the columns can be used to rank the list and comparisons of list members can be generated. Clicking on the equipment name links to the original review article. Explanations of terms and videos links will eventually be added. The ARRL list is helpful in choosing a radio because it takes into account some of the use information along with technical data.

The list below gives some of my thoughts based on my experience on selecting a new HF transceiver:

- I would start my decision process with the available budget. What is the most that you are willing to spend? Special financing deals or waiting for special pricing, rebates or coupons can help you afford a "better" rig.
- Second is where will the radio be used: base station, vehicle or portable? Some rigs produce 200W output and require 120VAC power, so those cannot be easily used mobile or portable.
- Third is the use case: contesting, chasing DX, rag chewing, hunting or activating POTA, etc. Contesting or DX'ing are much more demanding

and technical specs become more important compared to other criteria. Also, features like dual receivers are more helpful for these uses.

- Fourth is robustness / reliability. For this I am thinking of the digital operator. 100% duty cycle use at higher power levels (>50W for a 100W rig) is very demanding. For this, the transmitter becomes more important, including factors like heat sinking, fan operation, etc. An alternative would be to use an amp and run the rig at low power (5 - 15W drive power) with the usually beefier amp handing the high power (100 - 300W output).
- Fifth, and maybe most important is ergonomics. How many buttons and knobs are on the faceplate? Where are they placed? How big are they? For items that require using the menu system, does the menu structure make sense? Do you need a computer to operate the radio?
- Sixth is antennas that you use. If they are resonant or close to resonant perhaps you do not need a rig with a built-in tuner.

I own transceivers from each of the traditional "big three" manufacturers. All of these rigs are single receiver, 100W rigs with most being HF + 6M. Some of my observations with prices in late July 2026 are listed below.

- ICOM IC-7100 ($900): superhet radio, nowhere near the best technical specs, but a great mobile rig with HF / UHF / VHF (shack-in-a-box), built-in sound card for digital, one cable between body and control head with mic / key / external speaker connections on control head for easy, clean installation, easy menu system, no waterfall / lame spectrum scope, no built-in tuner, D-STAR if you want that.
- Yaesu FT-891 ($670): great portable / POTA activator rig especially for CW and SSB, extremely small form factor for a 100W radio, customizable function buttons partly make up for a nightmare menu system, great noise reduction / noise blanker, no sound card, no waterfall / spectrum scope, no built-in tuner.

- Yaesu FTdx10 ($1700): second on the Sherwood list, hybrid radio, best receiver that I own, great roofing filters, excellent noise reduction, poor ergonomics with many small buttons crammed around VFO knob, menu system pretty good for Yaesu, good waterfall / spectrum scope, built-in tuner.
- ICOM IC-7300 ($1040): fully SDR radio with decent specs, easy menu system similar to IC7100, great starter radio (it was my first rig), great waterfall / spectrum scope, built-in tuner.
- Kenwood TS-890S ($4400): superhet radio, easily my absolute favorite radio to operate, huge faceplate with a button (73) or knob (14) for almost everything, most buttons operate with short press, while a long press opens a window for adjusting that feature, for buttons that increment on short press (say attenuator), a long press decrements the value, full equalizer system per mode for receive and transmit, max power and tune power limits per band and mode, menu system is well organized and rarely needed, huge diecast aluminum chassis (Kenwood tested with key down at 100W for 2 hours and final FET stayed at 65C), noise reduction is not great, great waterfall / spectrum scope, built-in tuner.

If course, there are other quality manufacturers such as Elecraft, Flex and Apache currently producing QRO rigs with excellent features and performance. I do not have hands-on experience with those brands, but NARC members can educate you on Flex and Elecraft if you are interested in those brands.