



KEY CITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

July 2004

June Meeting Highlights

Kent West, KC5ENO

The meeting was called to order by Randy Robinson, N5JZH, at 6:58pm on 14 June 2004.

Randy then read the minutes from the May meeting. Gary Peterson, NZ5V, motioned to accept the minutes as read; Jake Mullins, KC5GZP, seconded.

Peg then read the Treasurer's Report; there were no questions.

Jim Richard, K1UQI, then showed a 5-minute video; this video was an interesting music video dealing with ham radio, with the various singers hanging off various tall antenna towers. The video can be found at <http://www.hamband.com>.

Discussion turned to the upcoming Field Day, scheduled on the 26th and 27th of June.

We then discussed ways to get young people involved in ham radio. Some ideas were to have an APRS balloon launch or a satellite QSO demonstration, or to setup various

Club Meeting Reminder

Remember to attend the next meeting of the Key City Amateur Radio Club Monday, 12 July, at 7pm on the second floor of the Abilene Public Library.

booths at parks, the mall, the State Fair, and similar events/places.

We then moved on to discussing plans for Hamfest 2005. Costs for the Civic Center have gone up from \$850 to \$975. There was no consensus as to whether we want to hold onto the Civic Center at these prices. If we don't sign up by 7 July, we'll "forever" lose the Civic Center, as it has about a 10-year waiting list for reservations. The club decided to wait until the last minute to make the decision, in hopes that someone would come up with an alternative meeting place. Peg moved, and Chris Robinson, KC5PYL seconded, that the President form a committee to gather information and make a decision; the motion was carried, and Randy was appointed chairman of this committee.

Peg then moved to adjourn, Gary seconded, and the meeting was dismissed.

Field Day 2004

Kent West, KC5ENO

The annual Field Day, which is always on the fourth full weekend in June, was on June 26-27.

Lance Tolar, KD5EFB, as the Field Day Chairperson, arranged for a great Field Day this year.

Field Day provides amateur radio operators an opportunity to hone their skills at setting up emergency stations,

making contacts in a hectic environment, and have a lot of fun. Operators around the country have 24 hours in which to set up their emergency station and make as many contacts as possible, which adds an element of competitiveness.

This year, the KCARC operated as a 3A setup, using the callsign WX5TX, belonging to John Bogart. We had a 40 meter station, with the 40-meter beam attached to a bucket truck for easy lifting/lowering, a 20-meter station, plugged into a 20-meter beam on a surplus military quick-setup tower, and a 6-meter station, radiating via a 6-meter beam lifted into the air on a telescoping fold-ever tower-on-a-trailer. We had the use of a quiet-running Caterpillar diesel generator which provided the electricity for our operations all week. The 6- and 20-meter stations operated in air-conditioned comfort in a couple of trailer vans backed up to each other; the 40-meter operators braved the heat, rain, wind, and "wha??!", the cold. Yep, Saturday night / Sunday morning got plum chilly, and folks were hunting long sleeves and sweaters. Coolest, wettest Field Day I've ever experienced; it was great!. For a few hours we had a wire antenna hanging from a weather balloon, until the wind blew it into a thorny mesquite tree and ended that fun.

Saturday evening Congressman

Charles W. Stenholm and his driver/assistant stopped by to check out the goings-on. He also provided a Proclamation to the club recognizing the "contributions of the Abilene ham radio operators during Field Day 2004."

Late Saturday night local DJ J.B. Cloud, licensed two weeks earlier as KE5BSK, stopped in and worked the 40-meter station.

All in all, we had a good time. You can find a link to pictures of the event and to a PDF copy of Congressman Stenholm's proclamation at <http://www.qsl.net/kcarc/>.



Fig. 1: Randy, N5JZH, and Charlie Stenholm at Field Day



Fig. 2: A family enjoying a day at the park stops by at the 40-meter station.

Because of financial issues, Hamfest 2005 is in jeopardy. We need to decide what we're going to do about the Civic Center next year. Although our reservation was due on July 7th, the Civic Center has graciously allowed us an extension to reserve our spot until after the next club meeting. If you have an opinion about next year's Hamfest, be sure to be at the meeting this Monday night.

Key City Amateur Radio Club Income and Expense Report May 10, 2004

<i>Regular Account:</i>	Balance Forward	\$641.35
	Income	0.00
	Expenses	57.44
	Balance on Hand	583.91
<i>Repeater Account</i>	Balance on Hand	64.00
<i>Hamfest Account:</i>	Balance On Hand	1338.03
Amount Needed to Balance		1985.94
Total Amount on Hand:		
	Checking	1810.31
	Checks	20.00
	Cash	155.00
	Coins	0.63
	Total	\$1,985.94
** Itemized Expenses (Regular Account)		
	Southwestern Bell (June)	27.44
	Checking Service (Apr/May)	30.00
	Total	57.44

Peggy A. Richard, KA4UPA, Treasurer, Key City Amateur Radio Club

BPL Test Ends Prematurely

Kent West, KC5ENO

Alliant Energy was conducting a trial of Broadband-over-Power-Lines (BPL) in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Hams across the nation have decried BPL because of concerns about interference that BPL will cause with radio communications. Other radio operators, such as airline pilots, have expressed concern also. This test by Alliance Energy was cut short, partly in response to an ARRL complaint to the FCC on behalf of Jim Spencer, WOSR, who had been subject to ongoing interference from the BPL setup. The company admits that the ARRL complaint was a factor in shutting down the test, but also stated that they had met their goals of the trial ahead of schedule. Alliant Energy does not have plans to pursue BPL at this time. The full story is at <http://www2.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/06/28/2/?nc=1>

Tidbits

Kent West, KC5ENO

* Actor Marlin Brando, who passed from this life at age 80 on 1 July, was a ham. His calls were **KE6PZH** and **FO5GJ**.

* Wind-power technology has matured to the point where you can now power an average house, and feed the excess back into "the grid", for a mere \$30,000 or so. Granted, this is more than the average homeowner wants to pay, but if you spend a couple of hundred dollars on your electricity bill every month, it'd only take 12.5 years to break even. Assuming the system lasts that long, and your neighbors don't rebel at the noise

* Recently a security "flaw" was discovered in Mozilla (<http://linux-today.com/security/20040709011260PNT>). The problem is that the flaw is not in Mozilla, but is in Windows, and is merely accessed through Mozilla.

Within 24 hours of the vulnerability being reported, the Mozilla team had released a patch that works around the flaw. Not having access to the source code of Windows, the Mozilla team can't actually fix the problem; that can only be done by Microsoft.

* Big Brother is watching you shop. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is a technology which embeds tiny radio transmitters-on-a-chip in everything from books to soft drink cans to diapers. Using RFID chips, stores like Wal-Mart can better track merchandise. Like all technology, RFID can be used for good or for ill. Privacy advocates are concerned about the potential abuse of the technology in that it becomes relatively easy to track people in addition to objects using the devices.

* So much for Free Speech in Sweden. A pastor was jailed for a month for speaking against homosexuality in a sermon he preached in 2003. After his sentencing, the president of the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender rights said that "religious freedom could never be used as a reason to offend people" (http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=39328).

* Last month, Burt Rutan sent the first private craft flown by a civilian into space. It was a test flight in preparation for the X Prize, a \$10 million prize that goes to whatever team can launch a crew of three (or one pilot and two people-sized payloads) 100 kilometers up, bring them back down safely, and repeat the process with the same ship within two weeks. Although a control problem threatened the craft, named

SpaceshipOne, that bug has been fixed and now Rutan says his Scaled Composites team is ready to go for the prize. There are about 27 different teams competing for the prize.

* When entering a .com URL into the address bar of Internet Explorer, you can simply enter the main portion of the URL, such as "cnn", and then press Ctrl-Enter. IE will automatically fill in the rest of the URL, turning it into "<http://www.cnn.com>". Mozilla has the same feature, but in addition recognizes Shift-Enter for .net addresses, and Shift-Ctrl for .org addresses.

* The Mars rovers, *Spirit* and *Opportunity*, were designed to last for 90 days of crawling around on the surface of the planet Mars. However, they've nearly doubled that lifetime already, having been there six months this month, and they've been functioning so well, that if funding can be procured, it's estimated they may continue functioning into the year 2005.

Look for Digital Multilayer Disc technology to replace those CDs and DVDs you're currently using. DMD uses layers with fluorescent dye embedded in them to record the data. Designed for read-write use, these completely transparent discs can hold up to a Terabyte (that's 1000 gigs, folks) of information. But like DVD technology, and CDs before that, don't look for the technology to arrive all at once. Instead, you can expect it to trickle into mainstream use, so that evolutionary improvements get released to the market a little at a time to extend the revenue stream. Another interesting feature is that the CD-shaped medium is not necessary; DMDs can be in cube shape, or

spheres, or credit cards, etc. More info can be found at <http://www.ddatainc.com/page01.html>.

* BCARN Sunday Net - Open to all amateur radio operators - 2100 hours local time on 443.100 tone 88.5 on Sunday evenings. This net is linked up to Brownood's 146.940 repeater, which is in turn linked to Dublin. On Tuesday the 443.100 links back up to Brownwood 2100 hours for their net. You can check out the BCARN website at www.bcarn.net.

* Tired of having to constantly tune your guitar? "The Performer™" is a retrofit that replaces the bridge and tailpiece on certain models of guitar. It automatically tunes the strings at a touch of a button, or if you prefer, tunes the guitar up or down to your desired key. It even works with a capo. About the only negative with the device is the pricetag, which starts at \$3,399 (<http://www.selftuning.com/news/index.htm>).

ARRL-VE Test Session

We had thought that we would not hold another exam until fall. However, due to demand, we are going to schedule one for July 31st at 1:00 pm at Berry Lane Baptist Church. See <http://www.qsl.net/kcarc/veannou.html> for further info.

* Moller International believes it's finally about to deliver on the long-promised flying car. 28 MPG at 350 MPH. What a deal! Of course, they're not yet available. Doh! Prices are expected to start at \$300,000, dropping to \$50,000 once volume production starts. (<http://www.moller.com/skycar/>)

Field Day 2004 Pictures



J. B. Cloud, KE5BSK, works 40 meters



The 6 meter antenna



Inside the van



Congressional Pork, er, Hams



The generator

See all the pictures at:
<http://faculty.acu.edu/~westk/FieldDay2004/index.html>

Key City Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 2722
Abilene, TX 79604

First-Class
Postage Required

Forwarding Requested

First Class Mail

Newsletter Staff

Editor:

Kent West, KC5ENO

Circulation:

Peg Richard, KA4UPA

Jim Richard, K1UQI

Contributing Editors:

Whoever . . .