



# KEY CITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

June 2004

## April Meeting Highlights

*Peg Richard, KA4UPA*

1. The meeting was called to order by N5JZH at 7:03 pm on 12 April with 17 members and 2 guests present.
2. The treasurer's report was read by KA4UPA. There were no questions.
3. Old Business:
  - a) N5JZH announced that it was time to act on the resignation of K5RLA as President. As no response has been received to the letter sent requesting she reconsider, it is assumed that her resignation is final. A motion was made by KC5GZP and seconded by NZ5V to accept the resignation. Nominations will be taken in May and an election in June to fill the vacancy.
  - b) N5JZH stated that the Steamin' Wheels Bike Race went very well. There were plenty of amateurs to cover it. Thanks to all who helped make it a success.
  - c) WX5TX told us that attendance was down at Midland this year but it was a good seller's market even if it was not quite as good as in the past. Bill Lawless, W5WRL, the new frequency coordinator, is doing a good job.
4. New Business:
  - a) KA4UPA read a letter from Susan Gerred thanking the Club for their help with the Steamin' Wheels Bike Race.
  - b) KA4UPA read a message regarding FRN (FCC Registration

Number) numbers. Effective May 3rd you must have a FRN to do business with the FCC.

- c) There was a brief discussion regarding the ARRL proposal for new license structuring.
  - d) KJ5DX told about a new emergency number in use for an emergency which is not life or death emergency. Call 211 and a 211 operator will help you find the people to call to get help with your problem. Officials are attempting to make this nationwide but not all states are using it yet.
  - e) KJ5DX reported that the ARES/RACES Skywarn meeting held on March 25 was well attended. It was an operational meeting and the SOP is posted on the KCARC website under announcements<sup>1</sup>.
  - f) N5JZH reminded all that Hamfest is on May 1 and 2. We still need volunteers to help with loading and unloading and concessions.
  - g) N5JZH announced that we need to have a Field Day Chairman by the May meeting. If you are interested, please be at the May meeting.
  - h) N5JZH announced that the radio
- 1 The Standard Operating Procedure can be found using the "SKYWARN Information" link at the KCARC website, <http://www.qsl.net/kcArc>, or by going directly to the page at <http://www.qsl.net/kcArc/skywarn.htm>.

classes will start after the Hamfest. Could possibly use one of the City Recreation Buildings.

5. Having no further business, a motion was made by KA4UPA and seconded by KC5GZP that the meeting be adjourned at 7:36pm.

## May Meeting Highlights

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

The meeting was called to order by Randy Robinson, N5JZH, at 6:58pm on 10 May 2004.

Peg Richard, KA4UPA, read the minutes from the April meeting. Jake Mullins, KC5GZP, motioned to accept the minutes as read; Charles Blythe, KD5TKR, seconded.

Peg then read the Treasurer's Report, followed by a report on the Hamfest income and expenses.

Discussion turned to the upcoming Field Day, scheduled on the fourth full weekend of June, this year falling on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Randy announced this year's Field Day chairman to be Lance Tolar, KD5EFB. Lance is planning on us working as a 3A setup, with 15, 40/75, and 20 meter stations. He wants to put the 40/75 station on a wire antenna connected to a large balloon advertising the event, and he plans to use a 36-foot forklift as another banner/antenna holder, with a solar/battery setup and a "whisper quiet" diesel generator, an APRS demo

station, an ATV demo station, with the images going out live on the web, along with our running scores, involvement by the media, the Boy Scouts, Red Cross, the Meek Blood Bank, along with a 6 meter setup and a satellite station.

It was announced that the San Angelo Amateur Radio Club was to have its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> May, at 6:30pm at their clubhouse.

It was also mentioned that the Belton Hamfest would be on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

Randy then opened the floor for nominations for President in a special election to replace former President Karla Dyer (K5RLA) who had resigned. Lance Tolar, KD5EFB, was nominated by John Bogart, WX5TX; this nomination was seconded by Chris Robinson, KC5PYL. Bill Shaw, KJ5DX, then motioned that we accept Lance as president by acclamation. Wayne Dorothy, KB0JOS seconded, and Lance was elected.

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



Illustration 1: Peg Richard, KA4UPA, Heart of the Key City Amateur Radio Club, at the recent Hamfest 2004

### Key City Amateur Radio Club Income and Expense Report for Hamfest 2004 May 9, 2004

<i>Income:</i>	Pre-Registration and Tables	\$917.00
	Saturday Door	911.00
	Sunday Door	15.00
	Concession	546.00
	Total Income	<u>2389.00</u>
<i>Expenses:</i>	Civic Center Rent plus Tables and Chairs	968.00
	Postage	74.00
	Print Brochures	278.61
	Permit Fee and Mailout	597.35
	Prizes	678.14
	Concession Supplies	170.94
	Total Expenses	<u>2767.04</u>
<i>Loss to Date:</i>		378.04
	additional expected bills (estimated)	139.00
<i>Expected Loss:</i>		<u>517.04</u>

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

## Hamfest 2004

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

The Key City Amateur Radio Club's 2004 19th Annual Hamfest was conducted on Saturday and Sunday, May 1-2, 2004. As usual, it was a lot of fun. However, for the past few years we've lost money on the endeavor (estimated \$517 loss this year), and it looks like it's time to rethink how we do Hamfest. We also need a new Hamfest Chairperson for next year, as Peg Richard, KA4UPA, who has served for the past several years, is stepping down from this position. The club looks forward to your ideas.

## Heart of the KCARC

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

Peg Richard, KA4UPA (see Illustration 1), has done an *outstanding* job over the past several years in several roles for the Key City Amateur Radio Club, often with little or no recognition. She has been an excellent Treasurer, has basically run the Hamfest single-handedly, takes care of most of the red tape the club endures, monitors

the .76 repeater almost round-the-clock, makes sure that flowers and cards get sent as needed, knows almost every ham in the area, and serves as the general go-to-her person for anything club-related.

Although we don't express it often enough, Peg, we appreciate you!

## Why I use Free Software

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

Sometimes folks don't understand why I'm so adamant about using Free Software. Before addressing this question, it needs to be pointed out that by "Free", I'm not necessarily talking about software that doesn't cost anything monetarily. Rather, I'm talking about Free as in Freedom; as in software that meets the Free Software Foundation's guidelines (<http://www.fsf.org/>). Some examples of Free software have been mentioned in this newsletter before, such as Linux, Mozilla, OpenOffice.org, the GIMP, Gramps, BibleTime, etc.

With non-Free software, the only way to keep the software up with technological changes is for the manufacturer to choose to do so. If the manu-

facturer won't, or can't (say, because they went out of business) keep the software working throughout the years, it doesn't matter how important that software is to you; you'll have to abandon it and be forced to follow some other path that might not fit your plans as well. On the other hand, Free software can be supported by the "Community"; in an extreme situation, this might mean you'll have to hire your own programmers to keep the software alive, or learn to program the software yourself, but the point is, you're not at the mercy of someone else to keep your software running.

A web master's recent blog (<http://diveintomark.org/archives/2004/05/14/freedom-0>) highlights this issue. He had been using a web package for his site, that although was free of cost, was not "Free". He developed his entire site using this software, and suddenly the manufacturer of that software changed the licensing so that he now needed to spend about \$535 to keep one of his web features working. If the software had been "Free", the software could have been "forked"; the new version would be a pay-for version, and the old version could be taken up by the "Community", and he'd still be able to use the software his site depended on. As a result, he's had to redo his site using a new package, and this time, having learned his lesson, he chose "Free" software in-

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

<i>Regular Account:</i>	Balance Forward	\$473.79
	Income	185.00
	Expenses	17.44
	Balance on Hand	641.35
<i>Repeater Account</i>	Balance on Hand	64.00
<i>Hamfest Account:</i>	Balance Forward	341.11
	Income	2389.00
	Expenses	1392.08
	Balance on Hand	1338.03
Amount Needed to Balance		2048.38
Total Amount on Hand:		
	Checking	1867.75
	Checks	20.00
	Cash	155.00
	Coins	0.63
	Total	\$2,043.38
** Itemized Expenses (Regular Account)		
	Southwestern Bell (May)	17.44
	Total	17.44
	Postage March	
** Itemized Expense (Hamfest Account)		
	Prizes	678.14
	Concessions Supplies	170.94
	Civic Center Balance Due	543.00
	Total	1392.08

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



*Illustration 2: Hams, hanging out at Hamfest*

stead of merely “free” software.

Another advantage of Free software is that you're never at the mercy of the manufacturer for bug/security issues. When a bug is discovered in non-Free software, the only recourse is to wait for the manufacturer to release a patch that fixes the bug. Typically, when a bug is found, the process goes like this: you try to contact the manufacturer to report the bug; the contact person gives you the “run-around”; eventually the bug report gets to who needs it; the manufacturer denies the bug for several weeks, then admits the problem, takes another couple of weeks to fix it, and then releases the patch, which often causes an additional problem, which starts the cycle anew.

With Free software, you or your programmers can dive into the code and have a fix within hours. If you

don't have programming resources, you can usually file a bug report directly with the person responsible for the code, and because his pride is on the line, get a fix within a couple of days at most.

Sometimes Free software is necessary in order to verify the internal workings. For example, data encryption schemes developed by a scientist in one country might not be trusted by another country unless the internals of how the software works can be examined. Similarly, the software to run electronic voting machines in elections can only be trusted to honestly and reliably report election results if that software is available to be audited by interested parties.

But for me, the big issue with Free software is the ethics involved in not being pressured to pirate software. For

example, suppose that instead of buying a new computer from Dell or Gateway, etc, you decide to put together your own PC. What do you do for an operating system? Maybe you have an older version of Windows that you're legally entitled to use, but probably not. The copy of Windows 98 you bought with your old computer, being an OEM version rather than a retail version, is probably licensed only for that hardware. You feel like you should be allowed to use it on your new hardware, so you do, but strictly, you're not allowed to do this. Besides, you want the latest and greatest, so you “borrow” the Windows XP CD from a friend, and then hit the web for a crack to bypass the registration code. “What's it going to hurt, any way? Microsoft benefits by gaining more market share this way.” Sure you



*Illustration 3: The Hamfest Test Bench*

can “justify” your theft, but it's still theft. Your alternative is to buy the software. A copy of MS-Windows XP Home Edition will run you about \$100 (when you buy qualifying hardware).

Oh, you need an office suite? “Everyone” uses Microsoft Office. To avoid spending \$400+ for a retail version, you hit up your cousin who's still in college to buy you an academic version for only \$135. But again, you can only do this by violating honest ethics.

So instead of stealing an office suite, I use the free, and Free, OpenOffice.org, which is mostly MS-Office compatible, and has an open file format, so my data will never be held hostage to a forced upgrade.

Photoshop? \$700 or steal it.

Rather than steal a photo editing software package, I use the free, and Free, GNU Image Manipulation Program (the GIMP).

Further, by using non-Free software, and publishing the resulting documents, you're essentially forcing your recipients to acquire the non-Free software required for reading your documents. For example, as a school teacher, you might make a lesson presentation available as a PowerPoint show. Your students, wanting to view the presentation, are forced to buy or “borrow” a copy of PowerPoint in order to have 100% compatibility; by using Free software to begin with, you're saving your students that expense/ethical issue.

Yes, there are sometimes trade-offs to using Free software, but not having to feel guilty for using “borrowed” software is worth it to me. What's disappointing to me is when I see Christians (or other groups who supposedly adhere to high ethics and morals) who “look the other way” when it comes to using software that isn't quite legal for them to use.

Does this mean I think it's unethical to use non-Free software? No. I think it's unethical to pirate non-Free software. I also think it's preferable to use Free software over non-Free software whenever practical. Sometimes the non-Free software is the best choice.

## ARRL Test Results

*Submitted by Ron Harden, KB5DSL*

	3 April 2004 ARRL Test session	
Barry Jones	Aspermont	Technician
Greg Dustin	Voca, TX	General, K5TTY

	1 May 2004 ARRL Test Session (at the Hamfest)	
Randy Davidson	San Angelo	Technician
Helen Moore	Brady	Technician
Ronald York	Big Spring	Technician

Thanks to the VE team consisting of:

Peg Richard	Jim Richard
Ray Schultz	Wayne Floyd
Jake Mullins	Ron Harden

But most people use the non-Free software because it's the “easy” way, not the best way.

## Field Day 2004

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

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

Lance Tolar, KD5EFB, is the Field Day Chairperson, and he has a lot of good ideas for this year's event (see “May Meeting Highlights” on Page 1 of this newsletter).

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. Be sure to make plans to be a part of it.

## Club Meeting Reminder

Remember to attend the next meeting of the Key City Amateur Radio Club Monday, 14 June, at 7pm on the second floor of the Abilene Public Library.

## Tidbits

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

\* At [http://www.zzz.com.ru/index.php?area=issues&action=show\\_issue&issue\\_no=195](http://www.zzz.com.ru/index.php?area=issues&action=show_issue&issue_no=195) are some blurbs that might interest people needing glasses. This issue discusses a new invention that makes lens-making a simple 10-minute process (as opposed to a more complex process that takes “about an hour”). Another blurb mentions Phakic IOLs and INTACs, alternatives to Lasik that don't rely on permanent one-time changes to your cornea.

\* Recent research (<http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2003/0821rate.asp>) questions radioactive dating techniques for ancient rocks. Granites tested using a standard uranium-to-lead method test as being 1.5 billion years old, yet Helium-diffusion testing dates the same rocks as only 5680 (+/- 2000) years old. In similar news, radiocarbon should not exist in diamonds if they are really millions of years old (as commonly believed) because radiocarbon can't exist that long. But in a recent test, a diamond was found to contain radiocarbon, and the diamond which was previously “known” to be millions of years old, was assigned a C-14 age of < 58,000 years. Something's wrong somewhere.

## A Rant

*Kent West, KC5ENO*

I've said it a lot of times, but apparently people just don't "get it".

The viruses and malware that are causing such grief to computers users every where are essentially exclusively limited to Microsoft Windows. Mac users, BeOS users, Linux users, BSD users, simply do not have virus issues. A lot of people claim that's because Microsoft Windows is the biggest target, but no, that's not the reason. The reason is because of the architecture of Windows. This is borne out by the example of web server software (<http://www.netcraft.com>). Apache is the largest target here, with 67% of the market, but it suffers from very few exploits. Microsoft's Internet Information Services (IIS) has 21% of the market, yet is the leader for server exploits.

If you don't want viruses eating up

your data, or anti-virus software slowing down your computer, and you don't want spyware grabbing your credit card numbers when you buy something off the net (Korgo is this week's new keystroke logger), and you don't want anti-spyware software slowing down your computer even more than your anti-virus software is doing, and you don't want hijackers taking over your web browser, the answer is simple; don't run Windows. Get a Mac, and be amazed that it "Just Works". Convert your Windows box to Linux, and feel the Freedom. Switch to Solaris and be a geek.

You might think I'm telling you this because I'm concerned about your computing safety. Actually, the reason is more selfish; I'm tired of my network bandwidth being used up and my mailbox getting filled with junk mail because your Windows computer is infected. If you want to continue running Windows, take it off the network.

If you must stick with Windows and keep it on the network, at least use a different web browser than Internet Explorer (any web browser – Opera, K-Meleon, Firefox, Netscape/Mozilla), as IE is the biggest vector for malware infestation. And turn off ActiveX (or at least the auto-install feature). And get a firewall (like ZoneAlarm). And use another email client than Outlook/Outlook Express (another virus-prone application). And install and keep up-to-date some antivirus software, like McAfee, Norton, or Sophos. And install and keep up-to-date anti-malware software, like AdAware, Spybot, or Spyguard. And make sure your Administrator account has a strong password. And avoid running full-time as an Administrator-equivalent (yeah, like that's practical with the shoddy design of Windows). And don't install those cutesy screen-savers and similar toys.

Oh, forget all this. Just get a Mac.

June 2004

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KCARC Newsletter

## Key City Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 2722

Abilene, TX 79604

Forwarding Requested

First Class Mail

Newsletter Staff

*Editor:*

Kent West, KC5ENO

*Circulation:*

Peg Richard, KA4UPA

Jim Richard, K1UQI

*Contributing Editors:*

Whoever . . .