



KEY CITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

March 2004

February Meeting Highlights

Kent West, KC5ENO

- Carla Dyer (K5RLA) called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.
- Kent West (KC5ENO) then read the meeting minutes from the January meeting. Jack Butman (KB5UHM) motioned that the minutes be accepted as read, and Royce Hightower (KK5JQ) seconded.
- Peg Richard (KA4UPA) read the Treasurer's Report.
- Peg then gave a brief report on Hamfest, and reminded the club that there will be a VE test at 10:30AM the Saturday morning of Hamfest.
- Turning to old business, Carla reminded the club of the Steamin' Wheels Bike Race and Fun Ride to be conducted on Saturday, 20 March, beginning at 9AM. She also reminded the club of Skywarn, to take place at 9AM on Saturday 28 February. Bill Shaw (KJ5DX) mentioned that Tim Marshall, a top storm chaser from the Fort Worth area, will be making a presentation at Skywarn.
- Introducing new business, Carla informed the club that ideas are needed for future club meeting presentations. She also mentioned that lots of help is needed for Hamfest.
- Peg then motioned to adjourn the meeting, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:16pm.
- Several club members met at McDonald's afterwards for coffee.

Ideas Needed for Club Meeting Presentations

Kent West, KC5ENO

- At the February club meeting, club president Carla Dyer mentioned that ideas are needed for future club meeting presentations. To help start your brainstorming, here are a few pump primers.
- light-wave communication demo
 - satellite repeater demo with an HT
 - monitoring the space shuttle
 - Solar panel-->battery power demo
 - Fuel cell demo
 - Slow-scan TV (SSTV) demo
 - build a quick-n-dirty crystal receiver demo
 - How to program a Java CW generator on your Macintosh
 - etc.

12th Annual Steamin' Wheels Bike Race and Fun Ride

Kent West, KC5ENO

The twelfth annual Steamin' Wheels Bike Race and Fun Ride will be conducted on Saturday, 20th March 2004, starting at 9am. All licensed amateurs are encouraged to donate your time and use of equipment to provide communications for this yearly event. The City of Abilene has been grateful for our participation in past years, and is looking forward to working with us



again this year. For more info, see <http://www.qsl.net/kcArc/announce.html>.

Morse Adds @ Symbol

Kent West, KC5ENO

According to an article on Slashdot (<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/02/18/2350207&mode=thread>), "*The International Telecommunications Union has decided to bring Morse Code into the 21st century by adding the loved (or hated?) - at (@) symbol. Lets hope the spammers don't start sniffing 20 meters for da-dit-da-dit-dah-dit...*" According to the article, Paul Rinaldo, chief technical officer for the American Radio Relay League, says: "It's a pretty big deal... there certainly hasn't been any change [in Morse Code characters] since before World War II."

Correction:

In the January 2004 issue of this newsletter, Glen Cummins was mistakenly identified as K5GZ rather than K5GC. Our apologies to both Glen and to the real K5GZ, Jim Hammack of Pagosa Springs, CO.

Buddipole Review

Jim Richard, K1UQI

The Buddipole™ Deluxe Package is a new portable antenna system that is entirely self-contained in a nine-pound, 24 inch package. The actual antenna itself weighs less than 2 pounds; the rest is a tripod, an 8 foot telescoping mast, and a 12.5 foot feed line.

The antenna can be set up on any frequency between 40 and 6 meters, plus 2 meters and 440 MHz. The power rating of the system is 250 watts. Pictured below are the assembled system, and W3FF, Budd Drummond, showing how compact the package is.

Tuning is made simple by means of a chart that outlines which coil tap to use and how far to extend the telescoping elements for each band. An SWR bridge is not normally required. The assembly time is about 10 minutes, from closed bag to on-the-air, less with practice. This is a modular system and most parts share a 3/8 x 24 inch thread.

While the Buddipole™ is a dipole, it is not symmetrical! One high-Q coil is longer than the other. The indicated setting is rarely the same for both coils



Key City Amateur Radio Club Income and Expense Report February 9, 2004

<i>Regular Account:</i>		
Balance Forward		\$184.57
Income		400.00
Expenses		80.47
Balance on Hand		504.10
<i>Repeater Account</i>		
Balance on Hand		64.00
<i>Hamfest Account:</i>		
Balance Forward		1291.07
Expense		37.00
Balance on Hand		1254.07
Amount Needed to Balance		1,822.17
Total Amount on Hand:		
Checking		1,736.04
Cash		185.00
Coins		1.13
Total		\$1,822.17
** Itemized Expenses (Regular Account)		
Checking Service Fee (Jan)		15.00
Southwestern Bell (Feb)		28.47
Postage February		37.00
Total		80.47

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

or whips. This design contributes to the impedance matching between the Buddipole™ and the feed line, resulting in a readily obtainable SWR of 1:1 at all frequencies in the design range.

While you can build a homebrew version of the Buddipole™ for about

\$30, using parts from Radio Shack and local hardware stores, there is nothing homebrew in the materials or the performance of this commercial version of a very popular antenna. From the stainless steel 6 foot whips and the aircraft-aluminum extension arms, to the



hefty center hub, everything is made from top drawer, sturdy materials which are not normally available in retail outlets. The standard 8 foot mast features positive locking and collapses to 22 inches. The light, sturdy, aluminum tripod extends 40 inch legs and folds to 24 inches. The supplied 12.5 foot coaxial feedline includes a ferrite bead choke balun at the feed point. The Buddipole™ has its own roll-up case and the entire system comes in a 24 inch zippered and padded carrying case, with shoulder strap, and room for additional bits and pieces.

Does it work? Very well! My first contact, at 5 watts, was to a portable station in an ice fishing tent just below the Canadian border in Minnesota. Also had time to say a quick hello to W3FF, Budd, in Northern California. He is usually listening to the HF Pack main frequency of 18.157.5, while working in his shop. I've had a lot of fun on HF, some 6 meters, and really enjoyed the j-pole configuration on 2 meters and 440 MHz with excellent results. With the Buddipole™, I have a powerful, portable, antenna system that packs up and deploys at a moment's notice.

The Buddipole™ is the kind of product that epitomizes the experimenting spirit that has always been at the heart of amateur radio. Budd, W3FF, took a great basic design and continues to improve it using the latest and best materials and ideas available from industry and the members of the Buddipole™ Users Group. Is it the perfect portable antenna system? It is the closest that I have seen, and W3FF is not done yet!

And lastly, is it expensive? The Buddipole™ itself costs under \$200. The deluxe package, which also includes the 8 foot mast, the rotating arms kit, and the tripod, has a sale price of \$385, which is \$36 less than the cost of each item purchased separately. This might sound high to some, but no similar package is available with equivalent capabilities, or quality, from anyone else at any price. Also, the homebrew version can be built for about \$30 from the free plans at <http://www.qsl.net/w3ff>. Many of the

commercial parts are available at the Buddipole™ website:

<http://www.buddipole.com> for building your own. Either way, if you like portable operating, a Buddipole™ could be in your future!

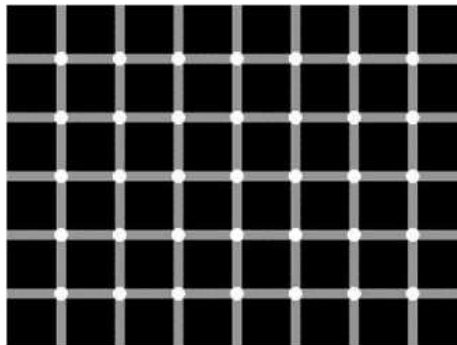
Come to the next Key City Amateur Radio Club meeting on Monday, March 8th, 7 P.M., at the Abilene Public Library, second floor meeting room, for a brief demonstration of this innovative portable antenna system.

Qualify to Count Votes in the next Presidential Election!

To see if you qualify to count the votes in the next Presidential election, count the number of white dots and the number of black dots in the box below:

White:

Black:



Skywarn A Success!

Kent West, KC5ENO

On Saturday, 28 February 2004, the annual Skywarn Training was conducted at Abilene Christian University. Included among the presenters was Jim Bryan, the City of Abilene's Emergency Manager Coordinator, Buddy McIntyre for the San Angelo branch of the National Weather Service, Captain Kathleen Campbell from the Dyess Air Force Base's weather team, Tim Marshall, nationally-renowned storm chaser out of Fort Worth (who consulted on the movie "Twister"), KTXS meteorologist Nate Johnson, and Hector Guerrero, also from the San Angelo NWS.

For the second year in a row, door

prizes, this year including a grand prize of a new television, were provided by the sponsors.

The KCARC had a sign-up list for people who are interested in becoming amateur radio operators. This list garnered about eighteen names.

Tidbits

Kent West, KC5ENO

- You can look up information on fellow hams by name or by call sign at: <http://www.qrz.com/i/names.html>
- Check out the very cool Flash presentation of space images taken by the Hubble Space Telescope: <http://wires.news.com.au/special/mm/030811-hubble.htm>
- As mentioned in the November issue of this newsletter, the web browser suite Mozilla will in the next version be broken into separate components. The web browser component was named Firebird, but because of a conflict with the name of a popular open source database product, also named Firebird, the new Gecko-based (Mozilla) web browser has been renamed to Firefox. It's a great stable browser (that makes Internet Explorer seem antiquated by comparison), but it'd be nice if the name could stabilize also.
- Mark Spencer, WA8SME, has developed "A One-Hour, No Solder Code Practice Oscillator" construction project. It's composed of a handful of common parts, which are breadboarded together by printing out the circuit design and gluing it to a wood base, then making the connections with small screws and washers to hold the wires down and make connections. Looks like a lot of fun for kids (and adults). The project details can be found at: <http://www.remote.arrl.org/news/features/2003/10/30/1/>
- Similar to the no-solder code oscillator project just mentioned, here's "An Almost-No-Solder Electronic Organ" project: <http://www.remote.arrl.org/news/features/2004/02/28/1/?nc=1>

19th Annual Hamfest is Approaching

Kent West, KC5ENO

The Key City Amateur Radio Club 2004 Hamfest will be Saturday and Sunday, May 1st and 2nd 2004 at the Abilene City Civic Center. There is no admission cost, but registration for prizes (and to help out the club) is \$8 until April 26th; after that it's \$9. Extra prize tickets are \$3 each.

Whereas Hamfest has typically been considered a ham-related event, it's really a technology event. If you have technology-related skills, toys, products, etc, you're eligible to get a table to present such to the public.

Tables with electricity are only \$8. Perhaps you've never considered getting a table at Hamfest, but you don't need to sell anything to have a table. Our Hamfest would get a big boost if "elmers" were to get tables and set up demos and instructional posters, etc. For example, someone with a little artistic ability could set up a tri-poster showing the radio spectrum, and ex-

VE Test Results

Feb. 7, 2004

David Humphreys
Marvin Johnson
Mark Owen

Extra Class
Element 1
Technician

Denton, Tx.
Anson, Tx`.
Clyde, Tx.

plain how ham radio relates to FM broadcast, or CB, or television; what shortwave is, etc. Another person with a bit of tinkering experience could set up a communication center on each end of the room, connected by a laser diode beam for two-way conversations. The radio-controlled airplane enthusiast could put pictures and videos explaining how R/C devices work (wouldn't it be cool to have an R/C balloon with a video camera floating around the room?!). Someone with the tools and skillset could have a station set up to monitor OSCAR satellite communications, and explain how to have QSOs with the space shuttle or the ISS, or how to see the ISS in the night-time sky.

But I don't have these skills. I have other skills, and I'm getting a table to

show them off. I'll be showing off computers running Linux and bragging about how my PCs don't get viruses and don't require me to reboot once a week and allow me to let someone else sit down at the computer and use their own "system" without touching mine without me having to quit my stuff first, and how I never have to pay \$98 for an upgrade to the next version of the operating system, or pay \$500 for an office suite, or \$649 for a Photoshop-like tool.

If you want to entertain the public, or educate the public, or sell technology to the public, or get your organization's name out to the public, it's hard to beat \$8.

For more info on getting a table or pre-registering for the Hamfest, see <http://www.qsl.net/kcarc/hamfest.html>

Key City Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 2722

Abilene, TX 79604

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Newsletter Staff

Editor:

Kent West, KC5ENO

Circulation:

Peg Richard, KA4UPA

Jim Richard, K1UQI

Contributing Editors:

Whoever . . .