



KEY CITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

October 2004

September Meeting Highlights

Kent West, KC5ENO

The meeting was called to order by Lance Tolar, KD5EFB, at 7:00pm on 13 September 2004.

Kent West, KC5ENO, then read the minutes from the August meeting. John Bogart, WX5TX, pointed out the correction that Gary Peterson's call sign is NZ5V, not N5ZV. Jake, KC5GZP, motioned to accept the minutes as amended; the motion was seconded by Charles Blythe, KD5TKR.

Peg Richard, KA4UPA, then read the Treasurer's Report; there were no questions.

John then gave a report on some recent interference. He listed Glen Cummins, K5GC, and Brent Morris, N5TEQ, as being the principals in finding the cause of the interference. They narrowed it down to

Club Meeting Reminder

Remember to attend the next meeting of the Key City Amateur Radio Club Monday, 11 October, at 7pm on the second floor of the Abilene Public Library.

one of three television towers. With the help of James Tilley, an engineer with Fox 15 TV, the problem was tracked down to a problem with the air conditioning in the transmitter room of the Fox 15 TV station. As the temperature changed throughout the day, it was affecting a faulty piece of equipment. Tilley's cooperative attitude was a welcome change from the defensive attitude that is often met in such a fox hunt.

Lance then proposed that the club have a picnic this Fall. After some discussion, it was decided that the club will have a picnic at 3pm (1500hrs local time, 2100hrs UTC), Saturday afternoon, 16th October. Location and other details are to be announced.

One of our newest members, Sgt. Matt Strachan, KD4DXE, from the weather division at Dyess, gave a PowerPoint-style presentation of his time on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. The presentation was very good, and was well-received.

Bill Shaw, KJ5DX, announced that those who have applied to RACES should start watching for their card; some folks have already received theirs.

John asked for volunteers to help with the upcoming Balloon Fest, scheduled for Friday and Saturday, 24th and 25th of September. Anyone wanting to help should contact John.

David Swart, KC5PPI, announced a field trip to and tour of the National Weather Service station in San Angelo. Anyone wanting to travel in a caravan should meet at the Mall of Abilene at 9:00am on Saturday, 18th September. Otherwise you should be at the NWS station at 10:30am.

John then motioned that the meeting be adjourned; the motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Afterwards, several of us met at McDonald's for snacks/supper.

Some Radio Services

Kent West, KC5ENO

Of course we're all familiar with the Amateur Radio Service. What you might not be aware of is a few other radio services that are available to "average" folks.

Citizen's Band is a radio service that was "taken" from licensed hams in 1945 and given to the general population, but it didn't be-

come popular until the 1970's when radio technology matured enough to make gear affordable to most people. Originally requiring a license and a call sign, the popularity of CB in the 1970s to beat the 55mph speed limit lead to mass usage by unlicensed operators using "handles" rather than call signs, and a special CB language evolved. This eventually lead to the dropping of the license requirement (which says something about the efficacy of ignoring laws in order to change them, or the power of the People, or something . . .).

Operating in the HF portion of the band at 11 meters (27MHz), this service is "channelized", such that the CB spectrum is divided into 40 channels. Most early CB radios in the US only had 23, but the additional 17 were added later. Also, most early CB radios were AM only, although Single Side Band was also allowed.

Most amateur radio operators have tended to eschew CB radio because of the, *cough*, less disciplined nature of CB.

More information on CB is available at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/personal/cb/>.

The **Family Radio Service** (FRS) is another of the "Citizen's Band Radio Services", as the FCC puts it. The operating mode is FM, and the frequencies are in the 462.5625 - 467.7125 MHz band, divided into 14 channels, the first seven of which are shared with the GMRS service. Effective radiated power is limited to half a watt, and the transmission range is limited to less than one mile. Licenses are not needed, and FRS radios can be used for business communications. FRS radios do not have detachable antennas.

More information on FRS is

Key City Amateur Radio Club Income and Expense Report September 13, 2004		
<i>Regular Account:</i>	Balance Forward	\$400.18
	Income	6.25
	Expenses	59.93
	Balance on Hand	346.50
<i>Repeater Account</i>	Balance on Hand	64.00
<i>Hamfest Account:</i>	Balance On Hand	850.53
Amount Needed to Balance		1261.03
Total Amount on Hand:		
	Checking	1,207.90
	Checks	0.00
	Cash	52.00
	Coins	1.13
	Total	\$1,261.03
** Itemized Expenses (Regular Account)		
	Southwestern Bell (Sept)	22.73
	Checking Service (Aug)	15.00
	Newsletter Postage (Sept)	22.20
	Total	59.93
Peggy A. Richard, KA4UPA, Treasurer, Key City Amateur Radio Club		

available at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/personal/family/>.

As mentioned above, the **General Mobile Radio Service** (GMRS) shares the first seven channels of the Family Radio Service. A license (currently \$80 for a five-year renewable license) is required. GMRS is "a land-mobile radio service available for short-distance two-way communications to facilitate the activities of an adult individual and his or her immediate family members, including a spouse, children, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, and in-laws Normally, as a GMRS system licensee, you and your family members would communicate among yourselves over the general area of your residence or during recreational group outings, such as camping or hiking."

GMRS radios generally operate

in the 1 to 5 watt range, and may have detachable antennas.

More information on the General Mobile Radio Service is available at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/personal/generalmobile/>.

The **Multi-Use Radio Service** (MURS) is another "Citizen's Band". Limited to two watts, this service allows for short-distance voice and data transmissions for personal and business use in the 151.820 to 154.600 MHz range, on a shared channel basis. No license is required.

More information on MURS is at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/personal/murs/>.

There are several other "Personal Radio Services" administered by the FCC, such as **Radio Control (R/C)**, the **218-219 MHz Radio Service**, **Low Power Radio Ser-**

vice (LPRS), **Medical Implant Communication Service (MICS)**, **Personal Locator Beacons (PLB)**, and **Wireless Medical Telemetry Service (WMTS)**.

More information on the "Personal Radio" services is available at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/personal/>.

watch on TV, on a whim they can watch every episode of the original Star Trek in the order they were broadcast ALL ON ONE WEEK-END. I wouldn't do that, true, but I also CANT do that." Most of this was made possible by open source software, and Cringely predicts it will become available to average people in about five years. The full

• By tying several telescopes across the globe together via the internet, the Arecibo Observatory and the European VLBI Network have gotten images with resolutions five times better than the Hubble Space Telescope (HST) produces.

• And you thought it was just me urging you to drop Internet Explorer in favor of Mozilla Firefox for your web browsing needs. It seems that lots of writers now have discovered Firefox. From *Forbes* (http://www.forbes.com/2004/09/29/cx_ah_0929tentech.html?partner=tentech_newsletter) to Microsoft Network's own *Slate* (<http://slate.msn.com/id/2103152/>) to *Security Focus* (<http://www.securityfocus.com/columnists/249>) to the US government's Critical Emergency Response Team (CERT) admonition to "use a different web browser" (<http://www.kb.cert.org/vuls/id/713878>), it seems that everyone is recommending that IE be dropped in favor of some other browser. Most of these writers switched because of the security problems in IE, but most were amazed at how well they liked Firefox, and have made it their browser of choice because of its speed and features.

• AT&T is testing Linux as a replacement for Windows on its 70,000 PCs. Word on the street is mixed; it's either for real, or it's a ploy by AT&T to get a cheaper price on Windows during the next round of negotiations. If AT&T switches, it's a huge loss to Microsoft, as it blazes the trail for other organizations to make the switch also. If it's just a ploy, if Microsoft gives in, other organizations will likely try the same tactic. Either way, Microsoft loses (http://linuxtoday.com/it_management/2004100501626NWDTP).

Test Results from Oct. 2 VE Test Session

John L. Brown	Technician	Rotan, TX	
Jeremy Amburgey	Technician	Abilene, TX	
Randy Duke	Extra	Throckmorton, TX	KE5BSL

When you hear them, welcome these gentlemen to the world of Amateur Radio.

Next Session is Nov 6th.

KCARC VE Team

Peg Richard, KA4UPA
Jim Richard, K1UQI
Jake Mullins, KC5ZCP
William Floyd, KK5XJ
Ron Harden VEC, KB5DSL

Tidbits

Kent West

• Bob Cringely writes about a Canadian, Andrew Greig, who installed a Wi-Fi hotspot in his house, but went further by feeding telephone, internet, and television over the link, not only to himself, but also to his neighbors. Essentially he has put together off-the-shelf tools that have allowed his whole neighborhood to disconnect from the usual providers of these services, at a substantial savings. It also allows this neighborhood access to PVR (Personal Video Recorder) technology. Concerning that, Cringely writes, "Think about it. These folks up in Canada can not only watch everything we can

story is available at <http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20040930.html>.

• This past month, *SpaceShipOne* made history by becoming the first private rocket ship to enter space, return to earth, and repeat the process again within a two-week period, winning the team the \$10 million *Ansari X Prize*. Now Richard Branson of Virgin Group has already made negotiations with the owners of *SpaceShipOne* to begin taking tourists into space at a price of about \$100,000 per seat. 7-UP, a sponsor of *SpaceShipOne*, has announced plans to offer a free ride as a winning bottle-top prize. There are plans to make the *Ansari X Prize* an annual event, in order to spur more advances in space travel.

Formula One Duathlon

Kent West, KC5ENO

Some months ago, the Convention and Visitor Bureau of Abilene requested that the Key City Amateur Radio Club provide communications for the upcoming Formula One Duathlon, to be held at 9am on Sunday, 24th October 2004. This race of professional marathoners will have racers running, then biking, then running, then biking, and then running once more. It will be conducted in the area of the Expo Center, and is sponsored by some big names like Gatorade. If you wish to help in this communication effort, be sure to be at the club meeting this Monday night at 7pm at the Abilene Public Library, second floor, in downtown Abilene.

An Outing

Kent West, KC5ENO

Last month, Lance Tolar (KD5EFB), Stephen Sheasby (KD5DRM), and I went on an outing with several other guys from church. We went to a private ranch about an hour east of Abilene. Beautiful country. A large private lake; lots of hills; greenery, animals. Some of the guys brought their four-wheelers. Although I used to ride a dirt-bike as a teen, and a street motorcycle a little later, I had never been on a four-wheeler. What fun! So that's what humans were created for! We hams had our handi-talkies with us, and at one point Lance hollered at me over simplex while I was out riding. He was back at the camp, and informed me that supper was ready

Club picnic, Saturday, 16th October. Come to the club meeting this Monday for more details.

(lots of fish were caught, be we had hamburgers – still, very yummy). Nevertheless, I was having so much fun on the four-wheeler that I nearly gave up supper to keep riding. For those who know I never miss a meal, that should convey some significance as to how fun the bikes were. It was really nice to be able to communicate with each other via ham radio over the 1500 acres on which we were playing. Next time, Lance thinks he'll take an HF rig out with him. That'll provide an intro to ham radio for the other guys, and provide us lots of fun.

Key City Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

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