



The W5ES BULLETIN

The El Paso Amateur Radio Club

Editor Clay Emert, K5TRW

February 2009

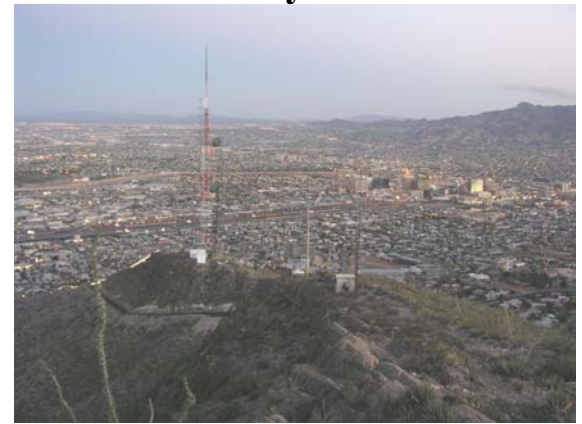


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Presidents Corner

Looking back on 2008

The member's at W5ES always step up to the plate when there is a task to do. Dale, KD5YGB and Larry, KD5BDY are at W5ES every Sunday morning on ten meters working all El Paso. Some Sundays there are no contacts made but they never give up and there is Bill, K5WAE, Mike-W7ANA and some other hams in El Paso, who will make a call to W5ES and let Dale and Larry know they are not alone.

Clay, K5TRW and Roland, K5CW had Technician Classes and classes for those hams who were upgrading to General or Extra.

The most fun was to dismantle the 50 year old wind mill tower at Tex' W5BQU and it was not easy, it took 2 days to do it, just ask Clay, K5TRW, Bernie, KD5QHV, Tom, KE5OIB, Doug, N9DR, Mark-KE5OHZ, Martin, WB5LJO, Doug, AE5HE and Artis-KD5KFY. Mary-KA5EWJ supplied the food and that kept everybody happy and working. We were able to dismantle the wind mill tower using a Genie with a bucket which would extend 65 feet and it was fun. KTSM called Clay, K5TRW and informed him they wanted to donate all of their analog equipment to W5ES to make room for the digital equipment. Clay, K5TRW, Bernie, KD5QHV, Tom, KE5OIB and Artis, KD5KFY loaded the equipment onto two small flat bed trailers and that was a 8 hour job but fun.

Preparing for field day was a fun day with everybody there and putting up the antenna and checking out the generators. Linda, KE5BQK, Mary, KA5EWJ and Mark KE5OHZ supplied the food. There were a lot of contacts made and everybody that worked those two days gained weight, the food was delicious.

Every fourth Friday of the month there is a buffet at W5ES and the public is invited and there will be a lot of food. If you are going to come do not eat before you come, there will be a lot of food. Linda, KE5BQK will bring 3 or 4 dish's of food, Mary, KA5EWJ will bring 2 or 3 dish's and Nadine, KA5ZLX will bring 2 or 3 dish's and this is why you do not eat before you come to the buffet. .

2008 was a good year for W5ES and the member's made it happen.

73

Artis Wright, KD5KFY



The Editors Rant

It isn't very often that I get upset over anything. I usually like to be laid back and not make any waves. However I am upset now.

During our last meeting in January I brought up the fact that we are in need more planning for the events that are scheduled at the club. In fact I have brought this up at the last several meetings.

In order for me to include a listing of these events in this newsletter I must know in advance. If I don't know about it there is little I can do to inform you the reader of the events before they happen.

I intend on asking the planners of the club prior to the Tech Meeting in January just what is planned for the February get together.

If I do not receive an adequate answer then there will not be a calendar published with this Bulletin.

As long as I am up here on this soapbox I might as well get a few more things of my chest while I am at it.

The idea that just paying your dues will allow the club to prosper is totally inaccurate. It takes the participation of the club members to make a club continue to function. I have heard that some think that the club is going under. If this is the reason for not attending the meetings then you can rest assured that you non-participation may will just accomplish that.

The Trustees accepted a job when they agreed to become an officer. To the best of my knowledge they have not had a meeting to discuss the future of the organization since July when the budget was made. In fact most of them have not even bothered to attend a scheduled meeting, have you?

I was talking to one of our members about this just now and it came to mind what I heard about a club in San Antonio. It seemed that the members were not attending any meetings. Well, only a few were and they decided to close the club down and as they were the only ones present, they also made a motion to sell the property and give it all too those present. No one made a protest and the deed was done. The club property was sold to the state of Texas for a sum which only enriched the pockets of the members who made the meetings. The property now sits under a freeway interchange and the group that got off with the funds are no where to be found.

I am not advocating that anything like this happen but just think about it. If you don't go to the meetings then you don't know what is going to happen.

Clay K5TRW, Editor

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EC Bulletin

WL2K Update

In January the El Paso County Winlink team worked on a couple of improvements to the RMS stations in El Paso County. The first was the addition of RMS Relay, a store and forwarding feature and the second was to introduce the use of KA-NODES.



In the previous configuration if the RMS lost its Telnet connection it would not allow a station to connect. That was bad because if there was email to be sent by the Paclink stations they would have to wait until the RMS regained its Telnet connection. Or the Paclink station would have to use the Pactor channel. Now with the addition of RMS Relay the RMS will go ahead and receive the email from the Paclink station and store it until the Telnet connection is restored. Then the RMS will automatically forward the email to its intended recipients.

The second feature that was looked at was how we could keep the email flowing if an RMS station loses its Telnet connection or if an RMS goes down do the component failure. Since the possibility of temporarily losing Internet connection at one of the RMS stations is real we should to have an alternate method of re-routing the email to another RMS that does have its Telnet connection. Since digipeating is an inefficient method of connecting to a distant station we are taking advantage of a feature that is built in to the Kantronics TNC. KA-Node is a more efficient way of connecting to a distant station. Digipeating requires end-to-end acknowledgments of frames which will slow the entire system down and cause retransmissions of packets if a frame is not received. If there are any problems with a message using KA-Node the two TNCs involved will correct the problem.

The other feature provided with KA-Node is the cross-connect (xconnect) feature. Only the Kantronics TNCs with multiple ports such as the KPC-9612+ or the KAM XL™ have this feature. This allows a station that is connected to one port to cross-connect to another station on another port.

KA-Node and XCONNECT is accomplished by inserting a script in the Packet TNC Channels page in the Paclink client software. The script will over ride the callsign entered in the Remote Callsign box.

KA-Nodes will give us the opportunity for a more flexible network. We can divide the county into LAN's

(East, Northeast, and Central) and then connect the LAN's via a backbone on UHF. Now an operator will be able to connect to an RMS station in any part of the county and not have to change frequencies. An operator will be able to get the email message into the Internet from within the county and possibly not have to use HF radio. We can have an RMS down and still move the email in a timely manor.

Questions and comments about this article are welcome and encouraged. Send an email to the address shown below. In the SUBJECT: line be sure to enter “//WL2K EC BULLITEN” (without quotes).

Lew Maxwell, KB5HPT
ARRL Emergency Coordinator, El Paso County
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The 2009 Technician Class Course is well under way at the LDS Church located at Redd Rd and Reseler. There are 25 students made up of adults and children. Once again with the support of W5ES, Clay Emert, K5TRW, and Roland Mata, K5CW, are the main instructors. Instruction is also being supported by David Null, W5CSM. Lew Maxwell, KB5HPT, the El Paso County Emergency Coordinator is supporting the course by presenting amateur radio emergency services overview to the students.

Clay is the main instructor with Roland and Dave providing color commentary and information during the course keeping the students on their toes. A written exam is administered every week so that students and instructors alike can gauge progress. This course has been a bit more challenging as most of the students have little or no electronics experience.

The 2009 Technician Class Course will be completed on February 21st, 2009. Once the students from the LDS Church achieve their Tech licenses they will be quickly moving on to emergency communications under the support and supervision of Lew Maxwell, KB5HPT. The ultimate goal of the LDS Church students is to establish an emergency communications system for their church families here in El Paso County.

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CHARLIE'S WHISTLE

By

Bob Beaudet, W1YRC

One of the club's newest members asked a question during a recent meeting. The same question was asked before by others but as is true with so many topics, they need to be revisited from time to time in order to satisfy the new hams who weren't around to learn the answer to these frequently asked questions previously. Some invariable truths and mysteries of the ages never get handed down to the next generation. Some things simply must be rediscovered by new operators for themselves.

Thinking he was revealing a profound observation, the club's newest QRPer* stated, “We have some big DXers around the club like Charlie and Mike and we have some big contesters around like Steve, Joe and Mert over there at the coffee pot. They all have big towers, big antennas, can run lots of power, have well stocked stations, are all very skilled operators who can easily contact DX stations when most us think the band is dead but aren't on the air at the same time. On the surface, I can't tell these folks apart. It seems to me that they could all work together, DXers and contest folks. But, it seems that these folks aren't interested in the same things even though they seem to be the same sort of guys. Does that make any sense?” Some members looked at one another, probably to see who would try to answer this newly DX immersed ham. They've heard it before and of course, some aren't DXers and don't care what the answer might be. But our old friend Mike, the flea market Collins owner, isn't the least bit shy and knew that we'd been here before even though this new fellow hadn't. So, he didn't want to spend a lot of time answering something that was obvious to many members. He stood and said, “I know that you aren't either one; DXer or contester, are you?” The QRPer shook his head but said that he'd like to be both a DXer and a contester. Mike replied, “That's very good. Many good operators are both but invariably one or the other comes up to the top and becomes dominant over the other. Some guys like our friend Charlie over here will make a hundred contacts in a DX contest even though he surely is not a contester, just to help the club's team entry. He'll verify that.”

Then, Charlie raised his hand to say something. “I'm sorry but I forgot your name, what is it please?” The QRPer said that his name was Mitch. “OK Mitch, simple plain DXers like me and contesters like Mert and Joe over there who participate in DX contests have a great deal in common. In fact, those two guys are both on the DXCC Honor Roll; even though they'll tell you that

they're just testers. I guess it's just a difference in the way that a ham views himself. Now, the same cannot be said of a pure tester. That ham loves the competition of the contest. It might be all on VHF bands or stateside contacts such as Sweepstakes. As a DXer, the idea of sitting in a chair for many hours logging a few thousand W and K contacts is more than I could stand.

Conversely, a tester would wrinkle his nose over a DXer some times spending hours, calling just one single DX station until he eventually logs him. Spending that much time just to log one call sign is totally disastrous and insane to a tester, who wins or loses a contest by whether or not he can make 6, 8, 12 or more different contacts per minute and sustain that pace for hours and hours on end. He calls that the Q rate and the higher it is, the better. Am I getting through, Mitch?"

Mitch nodded and said he was starting to understand. Another club member wanted to add something. "Hi Mitch" I'm Louie. I'm a DXer like Charlie even though I'm not in his league. I still need about 50 entities." Charlie quickly broke in, "Mitch, don't let him kid you. That means that his DXCC score is around 285, a very respectable total, indeed." Louie continued, "Well OK. That's right but I wanted to tell you that HF DXers will often take part in the many DX contests during the year even though they have absolutely no desire to turn in a score or even keep score. But, they'll keep a good log because contests provide an opportunity to DXers for working DX on a new band or mode because it brings out DX stations that aren't ever active except in a contest. DXers looking to fill-in the blank spaces on their need list can make big progress by taking part in the CQ World Wide, WPX or any of the other big contests. So, to answer your question, a DX operator like Charlie could go over to the contest station owned by Joe, sit in the operator's chair and work all the DX he wanted. Joe could go over to Charlie's place on DX Hill and win a contest from there. Except for some special logging and control programs that each uses at home, there would be no difference to them operating from the other guy's station. They're all top stations with very effective antenna systems. The biggest difference is in the heads of the operators. What their motive was to build the powerful stations that they own and operate is what dictates what it will be used to do."

Another hand went up. "I was the new member who asked this same question about two years ago. Since then, I've made DXCC and placed in the top 10% of the section in a few contests. I really like DXing and contesting equally. I don't really think that I'll pick either one over the other but I can easily see what these top operators are saying. They're probably right and from a practical sense, they're probably suggesting that we go one way or the other just for our own well being. Between chasing the latest DXpedition and preparing for the next contest, I'm in the shack every morning before work and every night after work. My wife calls me the stranger she married. But she's studying to get her ticket now so we have a contest right in the shack just to see who gets to operate."

This last fellow invited the one who asked the original question to get together with him after the meeting and he'd explain a few things he has found out that might help.

The president had simply been sitting back, sipping his coffee; finishing some pie and watching this exchange take place across the meeting floor. Finally when it calmed down, he said "Well, if any guest or new member needed to see why we come to club meetings, he just witnessed a live unrehearsed demonstration of the value of our club working together to help a new ham. This couldn't have taken place without the participation of many different members from different seniority levels. Everyone profits, including spectators, many of whom may have wondered about the same things that this brave new member stood up and asked." Mike looked at Charlie and nodded. The club's DX and contest trust was in agreement. Club membership brings many different views together and by discussing them together, consensus and synergy, often a better method or conclusion can be reached than anyone ever could by simply discussing with a friend or stranger on the air or by e mail. Support your club and raise your hand during meetings. Don't sit there as though the meeting is a performance put on by the local drama club. You must take part and participate. It's your club and your meeting. It's why you pay dues and support it. Take part in it. Ask questions and offer suggestions. Start at the next meeting.

**QRPer is a commonly used reference, created by Hugh Cassidy WA6AUD (SK), editor of the West Coast DX Bulletin in the 70s. QRP means low power, usually less than 5 watts. QRPer, when used by Cass referred to any newbie DXer who was still in his beginning and learning phase*

Excerpts from “TELL A STORY FOR YOUR FRIENDS”

By Bob Beaudet, W1YRC

Haven't you ever told your friends about how you strung a wire through a tree? Or over morning coffee with your weekly club group, ever described to friends about installing a run of coax under your car floor mats for your mobile radio? You must have told bedtime stories to your children or grandchildren without simply reading from a book haven't you? Certainly, if you're a ham you must have rag chewed with someone on the air about your dog or painting your shed or some other important thing.

OK then, you're all more than qualified to tell a story here on these newsletter pages to your fellow club members. Honestly, it takes no greater an amount of skill than what you've already demonstrated that you have. I can hear the club newsletter editors all cheering right now because

they're always looking for new material to fill their pages. You can solve the problem and enjoy a rewarding experience in the process.

What? You don't think that you write well? Trust me, none of us are competition for Tom Clancy or JK Rowling but neither of these folks considered themselves to be writers either. The author of Hunt for Red October, Tom Clancy, was an obscure insurance broker before he ever tried to write anything of substance. The Harry Potter author, JK Rowling wrote simple stories about animals and a bee as a child. Neither ever envisioned becoming such famous authors.

They enjoyed telling stories and followed their natural inclination to document their words to paper and share them with others. Not to compare ourselves to famous authors like Clancy or Rowling, we all can tell a story. You don't need any special talent to write an interesting story. You need to have a story to tell. If you don't feel confident with writing skills or your punctuation, spelling, etc., please don't let that get in your way.

73, Bob

February 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz	2	3	4	5	6 Regular Meeting K5WPH 7:PM	7 New Technician Class starts at 12:00 PM
8 WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz	9	10 EL PASO GOLD PROSPECTORS 6 :00 PM 2100 San Diego	11	12	13 Regular Meeting W5ES 8PM	14 No Host Ham Breakfast at Tejas Café on Dyer
15 WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz	16	17	18	19	20 K5WPH Meeting	21 11:30 AM QCWA Luncheon / Meeting at Furr's In Sunrise Center Meeting 12:30 PM
22 WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz	23	24	25	26 6:00 PM El Paso Prospectors 2100 San Diego	27 W5ES Tech-night Burgers & Brats	28

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