

Communicator

Volume 3 Issue 4

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This Month in the Club

This month has been a very exciting and busy month. We had the valley rally and Camporee all within a 2 week span. The valley rally went over well from what I understand. I didn't hear if someone was able to pull a fire alarm or not, but I'm assuming since nobody said otherwise that no one did. If that is true, then that will be the first time since I can remember that that didn't happen, so, everyone that went, give yourselves a big pat on the back!!

Camporee, now that is a different story all together, but all-in-all it went really well. We had around 12 emergencies, 8 of which were medical emergencies. We had one snake bit, about 4 dehydrations, 2 twisted ankles and 1 person just got pretty sick. I think, and I'm sure that all the senior TAEC Staff would agree with me, that everyone work exceptionally hard and helped make the Camporee security detail a huge success. We got a lot of comments and some good scores from the end of Camporee questionnaire that was given to each club. There were a few clubs that didn't like what we did but for the most part it went great.

We got excellent comments of the Senior Camporee staff, especially when it came to our response times to the emergencies. One comment was made during the debriefing that this person was amazed at one of our emergencies. When PWQ called for help at the snake exhibit on Sabbath afternoon and within 5 minutes we had an addition 4-5 people there, it really amazed this person. I don't have any doubt that we will be asked to do security again at next year's Camporee, wherever that may be. If we grow again next year like we did this year, we will be at a disadvantage again because we will have to either go some place else or use the other camp ground across the lake. If that happens, oh boy are we going to have fun.

So far, I think that we have had a great year and I think that we are going to have a great rest of the year. With Field day, 4th of July parade, Union Camporee and Christmas Parade. We are going to be busy, but not as busy as the first half of the year.

See y'all at this months club meeting. Remember it is at 7PM this month.

Curtis Mohr, KC5PWP
Newsletter Editor

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Reminders

I'm Looking for articles for the newsletter. If you are interested in writing an article, please email me at kc5pwp@flash.net and I will put it in the newsletter.

The Next Club Meeting is on May 20th

The Next *Communicator* deadline is May 13th

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Birthdays

March

Andrea Moses - March 10

April

If I missed anyone's birthday's I apologize. If you have not sent you your birthday information, please send it to me as soon as possible.

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Secretary's Report

March 25, 2001

TAEC club meeting was called to order at 6:13 by Gerald Mohr, president--eighteen people attended.

Desmond Freeman offered opening prayer and presented a short devotional.

The minutes of the February 18 meeting were read. Curtis Mohr made a motion to accept, and Ray Alway seconded, the motion was carried.

The treasurer's report was read by Jean Alway. Jeremy Short made a motion to accept the report, Curtis Mohr seconded, and it was carried.

Discussion of a club invitation to provide security at the Union Pathfinder Camporee, October 4-6, in Wewoka Woods, Oklahoma, involving 2000 Pathfinders resumed after being tabled in February due to low club attendance. A majority of members present committed themselves. David Tucker made a motion to accept the club invitation, Curtis Mohr seconded, and it was carried.

Gerald Mohr announced that Joe Watts had given the go ahead to purchase a \$318.00 Eight Channel Voter plus accessories totalling @ \$400-\$425.00. Carl Westcott then explained how the Voter works and assured us that it will help us communicate with clarity, it can be linked with telephone, satellite, or microwave, and it will allow us to communicate more economically by allowing us to use low power on our radios and conserve energy of our batteries. The plan is to have the new system in place by camporee.

Members signed up tent or RV sites at the Pathfinder Camporee, April 12-15, in Summerville.

Volunteers for the Valley Rally, March 30-31, will leave at 5:00 a.m. Friday. (Two more people needed.)

The Keene Rally, May 12, is a one day event and all members are needed. Jean Alway will serve as our club medical personal requested at all conference events. Dr. and Dr. Miller will be the doctors on call.

June 2 is the one-day Georgetown Rally. Members attending need to leave by 6:30 a.m. to arrive by 8:30. Ten people are need to help until @ 4:30 p.m.

Motion was made by David Tucker to move the next meeting to April 22 (the fourth Sunday) at 7:00 p.m. due to Camporee. Charlene McClean seconded the motion, and it was carried.

Gerald Mohr discussed the new Missing Person Procedure requested by the Texas Conference, which is to be in place at area rallies.

TAEC Net Procedures were passed out, and Curtis explained them.

Gerald Mohr informed us of a pirate attack on a boat off the coast of Venezuela in which amateur radio operators called for help to rescue the driver of the boat. Just one year earlier amateur radio operators also helped out in a similar pirate attack on a young boy's boat.

Field Day is scheduled for June 23-24. Members signed up to head up committees. Curtis Mohr made a motion for the club to order Field Day pins, Desmond Freeman seconded, and the motion was carried.

Charlene McLean made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08, it was seconded by Violet Mohr and carried.

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Treasurer' s Report

No Activity to report

Checking Account Balance: \$466.06

Petty Cash: \$102.79

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ARRL Excerpts

==>TRINIDAD HAM PROVIDES NEW DETAILS OF PIRATE SHOOTING

A Swedish sailboat skipper, shot when pirates accosted his vessel March 20 off the coast of Venezuela, remains hospitalized in Trinidad. The victim has been identified as Bo Altheden, SM7XBH, of Bjärred, Sweden. Hams on the Maritime Mobile Service Net assisted Altheden and his wife, ViVi-Maj Miren, after Miren put out a call for help on 20 meters.

One of the hams who assisted in coordinating the rescue, Eric Mackie, 9Z4CP, of Trinidad, met late last week with

Miren aboard the couple's vessel in Trinidad and was able to learn additional details about what happened. According to what Miren told Mackie, the couple was en route to Trinidad and Tobago and having lunch around 12:30 PM Atlantic Standard Time when their 44-foot-ketch Lorna was approached by six men in a fishing boat. "The vessel approached from behind, pulled alongside and Bo went out on deck to see what they wanted," Mackie related. "They asked for cigarettes, and Bo said they did not smoke."

Sensing trouble, Altheden started back toward the helm with the intention of pulling away from the other vessel--a fishing boat. But as he turned away, the intruders shot him once in the back. Miren told Mackie that the bullet wound caused considerable internal damage and bleeding. At that point, the pirates boarded the Lorna and helped themselves to what was on board.

According to Mackie, the pirates' booty amounted to less than \$20 in cash and a few miscellaneous items. Before leaving, the pirates destroyed two VHF radios but missed the HF radio--an SGC SG-2020. Miren fired up the transceiver and found her way to 20 meters, where she located the Maritime Mobile Service Net on 14.300 MHz. Her calls for help eventually were heard, although some on frequency later said they'd worried that her pleas might be overlooked. Mackie and others broke in to alert the Net to her calls--made nearly three hours after the shooting.

Mackie also was able to contact the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, which came on frequency to speak with the Lorna directly, he said. As it worked out, vessels from the Venezuelan Navy and the Trinidadian Coast Guard arrived on scene at approximately the same time. While a medical team from Trinidad was able to board the Lorna, it was decided to wait until the vessel was in calmer waters before attempting to transfer Altheden to the

Coast Guard vessel. Altheden remains in critical, but stable, condition at St Clair Medical Center, a private hospital set up to deal with trauma cases.

The shooting was an eerie reminder of a similar pirate attack one year ago in the Caribbean. In that incident, March 28, 2000, armed marauders shot young Willem van Tuijl from The Netherlands, who was sailing with his parents at the time.

==>FCC CONTACTS UTILITY IN HAM INTERFERENCE CASE

The FCC has written Cumberland Electric Membership Cooperative of Clarksville, Tennessee, in a case of suspected power-line interference to an Amateur Radio operator. ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI, has been working with the amateur, Paul Fulk Jr, N8ITF, of Springfield, Tennessee.

Fulk first complained to Cumberland two years ago and is still trying to get the situation resolved. The FCC now has put the ball back squarely into the utility's court. A Cumberland official has told ARRL that the utility will fix the problem if it's at fault.

In a March 20 letter to Cumberland, Consumer Center Deputy Chief Sharon Bowers of the FCC's Consumer Information Bureau advised the utility to "locate the source of interference caused by its equipment and make necessary corrections within a reasonable time." According to the FCC, after Cumberland's efforts to take care of the interference failed, the utility told Fulk that if he or an ARRL representative could locate the problem, Cumberland would fix it.

Bowers, however, told Cumberland that in cases of power-line interference "it is not possible for non-utility company people to safely perform all of the tests necessary to identify the source of the interference." And the FCC reminded Cumberland that Commission rules require the operator of the device radiating interference to locate and eliminate the interference.

Fulk first contacted Cumberland Electric Membership Cooperative in the spring of 1999 to complain of RF noise on his C-band television receiver, his 220 and 440 MHz repeaters, and his HF receiver. The utility replaced a distribution transformer and three broken insulators. It also discovered a noisy and poorly grounded cable-TV power supply, and it recommended that Fulk put insulators on his tower guy wires and improve his tower grounding.

The RF noise continued. Last spring, Fulk contacted ARRL for assistance. Hare, in turn, contacted the utility--as

well as ARRL Tennessee Section Manager O.D. Keaton, WA4GLS. Keaton visited Fulk and reported his own observations to ARRL.

Cumberland forwarded a copy of the 1999 site visit, stating that the noise was still present despite the repairs and concluding that "all known electric utility sources of common electrical interference have been detected and corrected." Fulk disagreed and asked the utility to continue its efforts to eliminate the noise. He also asked the FCC for assistance.

In its letter to the utility the FCC raised the specter of violations and fines, but for now, the FCC said, it would prefer for the parties to resolve the problem "without FCC intervention." The FCC told Cumberland to advise Fulk within 30 days of the steps it's taking to correct the reported interference.

The ARRL Technical Information Service offers additional information on RFI and power-line interference, <http://www.ARRL.org/tis/info/rfi-elect.html>.

Amateurs suffering from interference believed to be emanating from power-generation or transmission facilities may contact Ed Hare, W1RFI, rfi@arrrl.org .

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==>HOPEFUL SPACE TOURIST TITO IS NOW KG6FZX

Wealthy US businessman Dennis Tito, who hopes to be the first space tourist aboard the International Space Station, now is an Amateur Radio operator. Tito, 60, has been in Russia training to go into space.

Last weekend a volunteer examination session was set up for Tito in Russia and he passed the Technician exam. The FCC issued Tito the call sign KG6FZX April 11. It's not clear at this point how Tito plans to use Amateur Radio aboard the ISS.

Press accounts say Russia has given Tito the go ahead to visit the ISS as part of a three-man team that will blast off April 28 on a 10-day mission. Tito reportedly is paying the cash-strapped Russian space program some \$20 million for the privilege of being the first space tourist. Accompanying Tito into space will be Talgat Musabayev as

team commander, and Yuri Baturin as onboard engineer. Tito reportedly will handle communications systems during the flight.

Tito, the founder of a California investment firm, studied aerospace engineering in college and later worked for five years at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab. He told a news conference that he's excited about the prospect of going into space and he's looking forward to the experience. Tito had hoped to visit the Russian Mir space station, but those plans had to be scrapped when the Russians decided that it was time to deorbit the aged spacecraft.

The prospect of Tito's visit aboard the ISS has generated some tension between the US and Russian space agencies. NASA chief Dan Goldin has suggested that Tito's planned visit this month would be a disruption to the Expedition 2 crew during a complex mission. Russia's space agency director general Yuri Koptev said the mission will go forward. He said Russia does not need permission from its international partners to fly specific individuals to the space station.

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In Brief

World Amateur Radio Day set for April 18: The Administrative Council of the International Amateur Radio Union has selected the theme "Providing Disaster Communications: Amateur Radio in the 21st Century" for World Amateur Radio Day, April 18, 2001. IARU has been the watchdog and spokesman for the world Amateur Radio community since its founding in Paris, France, in 1925. ARRL co-founder Hiram Percy Maxim, 1AW, was its first president.

Wisconsin declares Amateur Radio Operator Recognition Day: Wisconsin Gov Scott McCallum has signed a proclamation declaring April 19 as Amateur Radio Operator Recognition Day in Wisconsin. The proclamation cites Amateur Radio's role in providing emergency communication "at no cost to Wisconsin taxpayers" and singles out RACES, ARES and SKYWARN, as well as the clubs throughout the state that provide Amateur Radio training and school programs. Included as well was Amateur Radio's support for the annual run of the Great Circus Train.--Mack Brophy, N9NTB

■ Spectrum Protection Act bill attracting cosponsors: The Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act of 2001 has begun attracting cosponsors in the US House and Senate on both sides of the aisle. ARRL Legislative and Public Affairs Manager Steve Mansfield, N1MZA, reports that the House bill, H.R. 817, already has six cosponsors, including Reps John Baldacci of Maine; Dan Burton of Indiana; Johnny Isakson of Georgia; Walter B. Jones Jr and Mike McIntyre of North Carolina, and Patrick J. Tiberi of Ohio. The identical Senate bill, S. 549, now has three cosponsors-- Sens Daniel Akaka of Hawaii, Susan Collins of Maine, and Jesse Helms of North Carolina. If approved by both chambers and signed by Pres George W. Bush, the Spectrum Protection Act would require the FCC to provide equivalent replacement spectrum should it ever reallocate primary Amateur Radio spectrum to another service. The same requirement would apply if the FCC acted to diminish any secondary amateur allocations or made additional allocations in ham bands that diminish their utility.

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Calendar of Events

Apr 14 Belton Ham Expo- Mike LeFan, WA5EQQ
www.tarc.org hamexpo@tarc.org

Apr 22 TAEC Club Meeting @ **7:00**

May 11&12 Keene Rally

May 13 TAEC *Communicator* deadline. Please email all entries to kc5pwp@flash.net or kc5pwp@yahoo.com.

June 2 Georgetown Rally

July 4 4th of July Parade

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Important Websites

TAEC Web site
<http://taec.cjb.net>

The KC5PWQ Web Site

<http://vip.hpnc.com/~geraldm/>

The KC5PWP Web Site

<http://kc5pwp2.cjb.net/>

Official Austin Ham Home on the web (ARO & AARC)

<http://www.repeater.org>

ARES information can be found at:

Main: <http://www.tcares.org>

Backup: <http://www.sss.org/~ares>

Newsline, PO Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066

The webpage address is:

<http://www.arnewsline.org>

The e-mail address is:

newsline@ix.netcom.com

The Texas VHF-FM Society

<http://www.txvhffm.org>

Take practice ham tests on the web. A few locations are:

<http://www.hamtest.com>

FCC's Universal License System

<http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls>

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