



# GRAYSON COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NEWS

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NOVEMBER 2015

WWW.GRAYSONCOUNTYARC.COM

VOL. 21, No. 11

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## THE PRESIDENT'S QSO

Howdy everyone,

The only club activity this coming month will be our annual Christmas dinner, which will be held on Friday, December 11 starting at 6:30 PM at the Grayson County Courthouse, 2nd floor assembly room. I hope that you'll be able to attend. If you can, please bring something to share with everyone. It can be a side dish, salad, vegetable, desert, bread, drinks, etc. We'll be cooking turkey and ham for everyone. Also, please bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to Toys 4 Tots. The club is donating \$100.00, but your additional donation will be greatly appreciated.

At our last meeting the club voted to purchase some additional rope and hardware that we'll use to help us safely do tower work in the future. After our last tower take down project in Pottsboro I felt it necessary and mandatory to request this expenditure.

Club officers for next year were also elected during our last meeting. Please welcome and thank...

Sheila Sammons KF5TDP, Treasurer  
Stacy Branam W5ORD, Secretary  
James Frank KW5CW, Vice President  
& Lee Sly N5SLY, President

Also, all appointed positions will remain the same next year...

Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW, Activity Director  
Rick Simmons K5ECX, Trustee  
Lee Sly N5SLY, QSL Manager  
Mike Bernier KF5NPM, Newsletter Editor  
Ben Sly KF5OEB, Webmaster

As your president for next year my goal will be to provide additional opportunities for everyone to experience different aspects of ham radio. I want our club to do more to work one on one with those that are interested so you'll have a better understanding of different modes and how they work, different activities you can be involved with and all the different aspects of amateur radio. This is a work in progress right now for me/us. I would welcome any input you may have. My hope is that it will help you find something that you really like and enjoy doing in amateur radio.

I want to wish each of you a very Happy Thanksgiving and I look forward to seeing you at the Christmas dinner in December.

Thanks everyone & 73,

Lee - N5SLY  
[lee.n5sly@gmail.com](mailto:lee.n5sly@gmail.com)

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## CLUB INFORMATION

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### OFFICERS

President:	Lee Sly N5SLY
Vice President:	Trevor Reed KG5BFI
Secretary:	Stacy Branam W5ORD
Treasurer:	Sheila Sammons KF5TDP
Activity Director:	Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW
Trustee:	Rick Simmons K5ECX

### MAILING ADDRESS

Grayson County Amateur Radio Club  
P.O. Box 642  
Sherman, Texas 75091

### NEWSLETTER

Published:	Monthly via e-mail
Editor:	Michael Bernier KF5NPM
To Submit News or to Add/Remove from E-Mail List:	Send E-Mail to <a href="mailto:KF5NPM@GMAIL.COM">KF5NPM@GMAIL.COM</a>
Submission Deadline:	12 midnight on the Sunday following each monthly meeting

### MEETINGS

When:	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month
Time:	7:00pm (1900 hours)
Location:	Grayson County Courthouse 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Assembly Room 100 W. Houston Street Sherman, TX 75090
GPS:	33.38.18N, 96.36.59W

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual:	\$20.00/yr
Family:	\$30.00/yr
Associate (non-Ham):	\$15.00/yr

**Memberships are from January 1 – December 31**

### WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Address:	<a href="http://www.graysoncountyar.com">www.graysoncountyar.com</a>
Webmaster:	Ben Sly KF5OEB
Facebook	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/K5GCC">www.facebook.com/groups/K5GCC</a>
Page:	

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### DUES AND DONATIONS

Membership dues are payable upon joining and renew on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Donations to support the club are always welcome. Dues and donations may be paid by cash or check at any monthly GCARC meeting and by mail, or by using a credit or debit card online at the GCARC website.

### GCARC, ARES, AND SKYWARN PATCHES

GCARC club patches are available and may be purchased at each club meeting; cost is \$5.00 each. These are round patches with the club logo, and are great for wearing on vests and other non-club clothing, placing on equipment bags, go-kits, etc.

ARES and SKYWARN patches may also be purchased at each club meeting; cost is \$4.00 each. If you choose to wear patches on your club shirt or jacket, we recommend ARES members place the ARES patch first on the right shoulder and any other patch (SKYWARN, RACES, CERT, etc.) should go below it. Since some members have tactical shirts with pen pockets on the left sleeve we do not recommend placing any patches on that side.

### CLUB CLOTHING ORDERS

Several times each year, members have the opportunity to purchase club-related clothing (shirts, caps, jackets, etc.). These items have the GCARC logo and the member's name and callsign embroidered on them. An order form with instructions will be included in the newsletter each time orders are being taken.

*"It shall be our purpose to further the exchange of information and cooperation between members, to promote radio knowledge, fraternalism and individual operating efficiency, and to so conduct club programs and activities as to advance the general interest and welfare of Amateur Radio in the community."*

From the GCARC Constitution

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## GCARC MEETING MINUTES

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### GCARC Meeting, November 20, 2015

Meeting called to order 7:01, 20 members present

Minutes from October meeting/Treasurer's Report reviewed and approved

Old Business:

None

New Business:

- The last tower take down was a little scary, it was very wobbly and old. Lee Sly N5SLY asked for approval to purchase 300' of rope and carabiners to help secure towers in the future before climbing. This was approved by the members present. The rope will be purchased through Ham Radio Outlet at a cost of \$24.95/100 ft.
- Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW requested an external speaker be purchased for the club's radio box since the radio's built-in speaker is muffled inside the box. This was also motioned and approved.
- Christmas Dinner:
  - The club's Christmas Dinner will be December 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30. Doors will open at 6:00. Dan Barnes AG5AZ will buy and smoke the turkey and ham, the club will reimburse his costs. A sign-up sheet for sides was passed around. We will try to get it out in an email as well.
  - The club will donate \$100.00 to Toys for Tots, but everybody that attends the dinner is asked to bring a new, unwrapped gift to donate as well.
  - **THE DINNER WILL BE OUR CLUB MEETING FOR DECEMBER. THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE IN JANUARY.**
- Officer Elections:
  - The election of club officers for next year took place as well. There were no spaces in contention so the nominees were voted in:
    - Stacy Branam W5ORD – Secretary
    - Shelia Sammons KF5TDP – Treasurer
    - James Frank KW5CW – Vice President (Trevor Reed KG5BFI did not run for re-election)
    - Lee Sly N5SLY – President
  - Appointed Positions
    - Rick Simmons K5ECX – Trustee
    - Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW – Activities Director
    - Lee Sly N5SLY – QSL “Card Wrangler” (Manager)
    - Mike Bernier KF5NPM – Newsletter Editor
    - Ben Sly KF5OEB – Webmaster
- At the January meeting Sheila KF5TDP will have the budget ready to go over for review as well as what activities we have planned for next year.
- We still need net control operators for Sunday night GCARC information nets. Please contact Lee N5SLY if you are interested. It is very simple and there is a script!
- Rick K5ECX updated us on ARES activities.
  - December 13<sup>th</sup> will be the Santa Net
  - There will be a 70 cm repeater installed on the water tower in Whitesboro. Funding has been received, Shipman Communications will do the work, and they should be getting a frequency soon. The repeater should be up by the first of the year. Some equipment changes will need to be made to make the use of this repeater and the 2 m repeaters sooth during weather emergencies, etc. They will be working on this.
- Lee N5SLY gave an informative presentation “I Got My License, Now What?” He reviewed some of the basics and options hams have to get involved in different aspects of the hobby. He has some goals for the coming year:
  - When we do special events, get the special call sign for an extended period so club members can try to make additional contacts from home, not just limiting the activity to one Saturday.
  - He would like to run these extended special events like an open house so folks can see what kind of options there are – phone digital, CW, and try some different modes out to see if they might be interested in pursuing them farther.

The meeting closed at 8:00.

Next Meeting will be the annual Christmas Dinner 6:30pm on Friday, December 11, 2015, in the Grayson County Courthouse 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Assembly Room, Sherman TX.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy Branam W5ORD  
GCARC Secretary

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## GCARC TREASURER'S REPORT

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### Bank Balance as of 11.20.15 Club Meeting

Operating Fund Beginning Bal	1213.96
Funds Received from dues	0.00

Less expenses	
Office Supplies	32.45

Operating Fund Balance	<u>1181.51</u>
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\*\*54 Members YTD

Available Equipment Funds	198.56
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Funds Received	
Less expenditures	

Equipment Fund Balance	<u>198.56</u>
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Ending Bank Balance as of November 20, 2015	<u>1380.07</u>
Club Meeting	

### OPERATING BUDGET

Mail Box	Paid
Perrin Special Events	Paid
ARRL Field Day / RRBW- Food	Paid
Red R B W (Perrin Museum)	Paid
RR Bridge War Cards	Paid
Denison Main Str Festival	Paid
Christmas Dinner	75.00

### Donations to Fund Raisers

RR Bike Rally (Kiwanis)	Paid
Marine Corps League (Toys For Tots)	0.00

Total	75.00
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### EQUIPMENT NEEDS

	0.00
	0.00

Amount Budgeted	<u>0.00</u>
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Sheila Sammons KF5TDP  
GCARC Treasurer

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## CLUB MEETINGS, LOCAL ACTIVITIES, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

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### Club Meetings

#### **Grayson County Amateur Radio Club (GCARC)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Friday at 7:00pm (December meeting will be the annual Christmas Dinner on the 11<sup>th</sup>)  
Grayson County Courthouse 2<sup>nd</sup> floor assembly room, 100 West Houston Street, Sherman TX  
<http://www.k5gcc.org>

#### **Cooke County Amateur Radio Club (CCARC)**

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:00pm  
Cooke County Library, 200 S. Weaver Street, Gainesville TX  
<http://www.gainesvillehamfest.org/club.htm>

#### **Durant Amateur Repeater Association (DARA)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00pm  
Bryan County Emergency Management, 2808 Enterprise Drive, Durant OK  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Durant-Amateur-Repeater-Association-Ham-Radio/292030700959672>

#### **Fannin County Amateur Radio Club (FCARC)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday at 9:00am  
First Presbyterian Church, 818 North Main Street, Bonham TX  
<http://www.k5frc.org>

#### **McKinney Amateur Radio Club (MARC)**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00pm  
Spring Creek Barbecue, 1993 North Central Expressway, McKinney TX  
<http://www.mckinneyarc.org>

#### **Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) Chapter 41**

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday at 11:00am  
Midway Point Restaurant, 12801 Midway Road, Dallas TX  
<http://www.texasqcwa41.org>

### **ARES® / SKYWARN®**

#### **Grayson County ARES® Training**

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each odd-numbered month (Jan / Mar / May / Jul / Sep / Nov) at 7:00pm  
Sherman Municipal Airport Terminal Building, 1200 S. Dewey Ave., Sherman TX  
<http://www.tecoares.org>

### **Ragchewing & Other Informal Meetings**

#### **Ham Talk at The Java Stop**

Every Saturday 11:00am-2:00pm  
The Java Stop Café, 5700 North FM 1417, Sherman TX  
<http://www.facebook.com/thejavastop>

### **GCARC Events**

#### **GCARC Christmas Dinner**

December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 6:30pm  
Grayson County Courthouse 2<sup>nd</sup> floor assembly room, 100 West Houston Street, Sherman TX  
Meats provided; attendees are asked to bring a side dish to share  
Also collecting new unwrapped toys for Toys 4 Tots

### **VE Testing Sessions**

#### **Texoma VE Team – Bi-Monthly Testing**

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each even-numbered month (Feb / Apr / Jun / Aug / Oct / Dec) at 7:00pm  
Grayson College Center For Workplace Learning, Seminar Room C, 6101 Grayson Drive, Denison TX  
Contact: Moe NT7C (903) 564-7115 or [nt7c@ar1.net](mailto:nt7c@ar1.net)

#### **Durant Amateur Repeater Association – Monthly Testing**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 8:00pm (following the DARA monthly meeting)  
Bryan County Emergency Management, 2808 Enterprise Drive, Durant OK  
Contact: Jim K5BNK ([jharmon@netcommander.com](mailto:jharmon@netcommander.com))

### **Texoma Amateur Radio Association – Monthly Testing**

**(NOTE: No testing sessions are scheduled for the remainder of 2015. Sessions will resume in the Spring of 2016.)**

The Java Stop Café, 5700 North FM 1417, Sherman TX

Contact: Dave K5YM (281) 743-7478

### **Fannin County Amateur Radio Club – Appointment-Only Testing**

First Presbyterian Church, 818 North Main Street, Bonham TX

Contact David WA0URJ ([wa0urj@yahoo.com](mailto:wa0urj@yahoo.com)) to schedule a session

## **Hamfests**

### **Cowtown Hamfest**

January 15-16, 2016 (Friday 3:00pm-7:00pm, Saturday 7:00am-3:00pm)

VE Testing Friday and Saturday (times not published yet)

Forest Hill Civic & Convention Center, 6901 Wichita Street, Forest Hill TX

Talk-In: 147.280 (110.9 PL)

Public Contact: David Forbes KC5UYR (817) 925-5126 or [kc5uyr@compuserve.com](mailto:kc5uyr@compuserve.com)

Website: <http://cowtownhamfest.com>

### **Irving ARC Hamfest**

March 5, 2016

Bethca Bingo Hall, 2420 W Irving Blvd, Irving TX

Talk-In: 146.720 (110.9 PL)

Public Contact: Ken Hansen N2VIP (609) 510-3068 or [n2vip@arrrl.net](mailto:n2vip@arrrl.net)

Website: [www.irvingarc.org](http://www.irvingarc.org)

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## **CW CORNER**

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It's already been over a month since the first basic CW class ended. Has anyone practiced since then, or made any CW contacts? Most likely not, but the basic class only provided you the very basics, as to what makes up each letter of the alphabet. I hastily pushed each of the participants into learning each letter of the alphabet. The class by no means is the only answer to gain skills with CW. The saying 'practice makes perfect' is very true when it comes to CW. It takes determination in learning the code. Prior to the rules negating the need for CW in license classes, ham radio operators were forced to learn the code if they wanted to gain privileges on the low bands - 160 through 10 meters. The Novice class license with a 5 WPM requirement is now gone forever.

Since the first CW class of the GCARC, I've talked to many people interested in CW outside of our club who are interested in learning the code. Our club has the chance to make new friends, and even acquire new members, all because of a long lost mode of operation, known as CW. Now is not the time to stop learning. In the near future, I plan to initiate an Intermediate class for CW; and if people really want to move forward, then there will be an Advanced class for those who want more than just making contacts on the air such as contesting, and in this class you can and will learn the tricks of the trade. A decision must be made to either hold another basic class, or to advance to the intermediate class, and I hope to get that answer at the December meeting.

The Basic class primarily introduced you to the characters of the alphabet and the numbers 0 through 9.

The Intermediate class will consist of the following, if I can get a minimum of 8-10 students who are serious about learning CW to attend the class, and you must commit to attend regularly:

1st - A prerequisite of taking the prior basic class, or confirmation in the form of a short test that you know the letters of the alphabet and the numbers 0 through 9.

2nd - There will be practice sessions each week that will advance in speed and difficulty as each class passes. There will be practice tests for this next class, unlike the Basic class not requiring tests. This will be a way that I can judge in real time how each student is progressing, and if he or she needs help, I can and will provide it, as long as the student wants my help.

3rd - When the class ends, which should take about 8 weeks, guess what? Yes, another certificate. The basic requirement for the certificate will be that you can only miss 1 class. It is understandable that sometimes things come up and you cannot attend. If you miss more than one, all you have to do is take my short test and prove your skills to date, and I'll make a determination if you can go forward to continue to qualify for the certificate.

4th - Periodic testing of skills obtained in the class, either at the end of each class, or at the beginning of the next class before lessons continue for the current session.

I would like to get a census at the next regular meeting to see if we can schedule people to attend either another Basic or a new Advanced class. We had a dozen people push forward and acquire the CW certificate for the first Basic class, and it was a lot of fun.

The CQ Worldwide CW Contest came and went, and I had a lot of fun. I wished some of our club members could have participated. I'm hoping to share contesting with others in the club that would like to see what CW contesting is all about. Maybe some of us can get ready to at least work the upcoming Field Day on CW next year. If the club stirs up interest in CW at the GCARC Field Day next year, that would make me mighty proud.

Also, before I forget, I was nominated and gladly accepted the position of club Vice President starting in January. I just wanted to thank everyone in the club that voted for me. My goal for the upcoming year is to help increase membership in our club along with helping our president help others become active in a way that suits them best. Lee and I will work together to help you achieve your interests. Let's try to share our interests with others. Believe it or not, others outside of our club have shown interest in learning CW and have been waiting for an opportunity to learn CW. If people are interested in another Basic class, I would be happy to teach it. If more people want to take the new intermediate class course, we can hold that too. The only days I can teach would be either on Friday night, Saturdays, Sunday or every other week on Monday.

Let's think about what we would like to do as a club in the new year. Lee knows he has my total backing when it comes to promoting our club. With that, I hope everyone had a very happy Thanksgiving, and now it's time to get out the Christmas lights and continue to celebrate into the New Year. After that, it's back to getting on a diet, and of course, playing with more CW.

73 and Holiday Cheers to Everyone,  
James - KW5CW

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## **BECOME AN AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR**

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The Technician Class License is the current 'entry level' license into Amateur Radio. The program we utilize is a two day class. The first day is one-half day where Amateur Radio and the exam process is explained. Study guides and question pools are made available to students and then there is a review of every problem involving mathematics, schematic drawings, and some other topics.

The student then has two to three weeks to review the study materials. Returning for a second time the review class goes over what you should have learned in your study of the material and a sampling of the questions. This review takes a full day and upon completion the exam for license is administered.

There is no cost for the class, but the exam does have a \$15 fee, payable at the time of the test.

The class is held at the Grayson College main campus, in the Center for Workplace Learning (CWL), in Seminar Room C. The next scheduled dates are:

February 27, 2016 – 8:30 am until 12:30 pm and  
March 19, 2016 – 8:30 am until 5:30 pm



The study guide and question pool material will be emailed to everyone on the mailing list prior to the class.

Please contact Moe Knight at [NT7C@ARRL.NET](mailto:NT7C@ARRL.NET) to reserve your place in the class and get added to the mailing list for this event.

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## CLUB ACTIVITIES

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### **Tower Removal – November 7, 2015**

The club was asked to remove an old tower for a local resident; in return, the club could keep the tower to use as we saw fit. The project provided some tense moments as the tower itself was old and unstable, but in the end no one was hurt. It did lead to the club deciding to obtain additional ropes and carabiners to use as temporary guy lines during future tower removals. Climber: Ben KF5OEB. Ground Crew: Lee N5SLY, Dan AG5AZ, and Marvin KG5GMA.









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## SWAP MEET

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*(Disclaimer: This section is provided for hams to list items they wish to buy, sell, or trade. GCARC will not be responsible for the accuracy or completeness of any descriptions, will not guarantee any items function as described, and will not participate in any transactions. The individual buyer and seller are responsible for all discussions, negotiations, and resolving of differences.)*

*To submit items to be listed, send the information in an e-mail to the GCARC Newsletter Editor at [kf5npm@gmail.com](mailto:kf5npm@gmail.com). Photographs are encouraged. There is no charge for listings, and you do not need to be a member of GCARC to participate.*

### **FOR SALE: Yaesu FT-950**

Yaesu FT-950 in excellent condition. Includes original box, manual, stock mic, & power cord.  
Asking \$925.00. Local pick up in the Sherman area or I will deliver to DFW area.

Contact: David Reeder WA0URJ

Phone: (972) 658-6773

E-Mail: [wa0urj@yahoo.com](mailto:wa0urj@yahoo.com)

### **FOR SALE AS IS: Assorted Electronics/Test Equipment**

The following items were donated to GCARC and are in need of a new home. No set price per piece – make us an offer!

- Heathkit RF Signal Generator
- Square Wave Generator Model 71
- Broel & Kjoer Voltmeter
- Sierra Electronic Corp. Carrier Frequency Voltmeter 104A
- Polytechnic Research Heterodyne Frequency Meter Type 504

**NOTE: These have not been tested and are offered “as is” with no refunds.**

Contact: Lee Sly N5SLY

E-mail: [lee.n5sly@gmail.com](mailto:lee.n5sly@gmail.com)



## FOR SALE: Computer and Radio Station Desk

Desk is light oak, 62" w x 33" d with glass panel to see monitor from below. Power distribution panel included. Hutch is white pine stained to match the desk, 60" w x 42" h with adjustable shelves. Desk can be disassembled for transportation and reassembled easily.

Asking \$400 for the set.  
Radios not included.  
Contact: Bill KK5RW  
Phone: (281) 217-9942  
E-Mail:  
[3bewens@gmail.com](mailto:3bewens@gmail.com)



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## HELPING HAMS

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The idea behind Helping Hams is simple – all hams need a little help sometimes, but they might not know who can help them. Our club has many talented members, with some better at certain jobs than others. What we hope to do here is match up hams needing help with other hams who have the skills to help them. Working together, we can all help our fellow hams and encourage them to continue pursuing their interests in this wonderful hobby.

The currently-requested needs are listed below. If you have a need, or know of a ham with a need, or if you or someone you know can help, contact our newsletter editor by sending an e-mail to [kf5npm@gmail.com](mailto:kf5npm@gmail.com). Be sure to include the following: 1) Who needs the help and how to contact them; 2) What needs to be done; 3) When can someone come out to do the work; and 4) Where is the location of the work that needs to be done. **You don't have to be a member of GCARC to ask for help or make an offer to help.** We're all in this together – that's what the hobby is all about!

### Current Requests:

Bennie K5DIZ	Antenna install	Sherman
Mike KF5NPM	Antenna installs (2), grounding cables, and lightning arrestors. Also HF antenna adjustments. Note: steep roof.	Denison
Bob W5DSA	Needs help with a rotator on a 100' tower. Will probably be scheduled for the spring	Denison

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## NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF AMATEUR RADIO

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### Revamped FCC Website Expected to Debut on December 10th

The FCC has announced that its large-scale website redesign will be completed by December 10. The switch to the new site is set to begin on December 10 at 0100 UTC and will be completed about 4 hours later.

“While the transition to the revamped site is expected to be completed almost instantaneously, there will be an ongoing process following this transition that will continue to involve user feedback, fixes by the FCC’s Information Technology team, and content updates by policy bureaus and offices,” the FCC said in a November 24 [Public Notice](#).

The FCC said the new website has been designed to provide “better functionality, an improved design, and better searchability and navigability.” Earlier this year the Commission’s IT Department opened a [beta-test version](#) of the site and has been gathering [user comments](#).

“Extensive user research revealed how the FCC could improve the website’s information architecture to make content easier to find,” the *Public Notice* said. The FCC said its new website has been designed to operate on tablet and mobile device browsers with the display optimization based upon the device. The site utilizes a “toggle” navigation that allows visitors to browse either by “Category” or “Bureau and Office.”

When the new site comes online, the familiar current FCC website will no longer be available. The FCC said web pages and files on [transition.fcc.gov](http://transition.fcc.gov) that have not already migrated to the new site will remain available, and existing bookmarks will be redirected to the appropriate content on the new site. While the Commission has already upgraded some of its interactive systems, including the Consumer Help Center, and is working toward improvements on similar systems, including the Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS), these systems will not be directly impacted by the December 10 migration.

“This migration will impact the look and functionality of web pages that are coded in HTML and managed through a content management system, such as the homepage and individual bureau pages,” the FCC *Public Notice* said. The FCC said the change to a new website design was, in part, driven by a need to start using a more modern, open-source content management system to upgrade the site’s look and architecture, and to transition to a system that is compatible with the latest website innovations.

- Originally published online at [ARRL.org](http://ARRL.org)

## **World Radiocommunication Conference Approves Global 60 Meter Allocation**

The Plenary Meeting of the 2015 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-15) in Geneva has approved an allocation of 5351.5-5366.5 kHz to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis with a power limit of 15 W effective isotropic radiated power (EIRP). The November 18 decision was adopted on two back-to-back readings. Some Region 2 countries, but not the U.S., will be permitted up to 25 W EIRP. With this action, and despite conditions that are more restrictive than had been hoped at the start of the Conference, the Amateur Service has obtained its first new global HF allocation since 1979. The new band will not become available until and unless the FCC adopts the Acts of the Conference and establishes operating rules. Until then, the five discrete channels will remain in place.

- Originally published online at [ARRL.org](http://ARRL.org)

## **Amateur Radio Provides Communication for Oklahoma Veterans Day Parade**

Midwest City, OK’s fourth annual Veterans Day Parade for 2015 was a success, due in part to the communication support that Mid-Del Amateur Radio Club ([MDARC](http://MDARC.org)) volunteers provided. Amateur Radio met communication needs at multiple staging areas, along the parade route, at the incident command post, and for the reviewing stand. Working closely with the City of Midwest City Emergency Management Office Communications Coordinator and the Midwest City police and fire departments, the ham volunteers were able to cover the large area and a parade route of about 2 miles. The Midwest City Communications Coordinator is Scott Walsh, N5NYS. The event featured a flyover by the War Birds, a vintage World War II aircraft group from Tulsa. Heading up the team of 17 volunteers was Donald Ohse, W5DRO, whose experience includes working with the city and the Oklahoma County Sheriff’s Office as a volunteer.

“By using Amateur Radio, we were able to provide communications and resources that could commit to many areas that normally would not have been covered due to manpower constraints,” Ohse said. “For the past 3 years, we have been providing a radio amateur at the reviewing stand, where the emcee for the event is located, and we also place a spotter about 200 yards from the reviewing stand to communicate back to the reviewing stand if a parade participant is out of order,” he noted. “This was very helpful, so the emcee would not announce the wrong entry.”

Ohse said the parade’s multiple staging areas presented another challenge. Using several simplex frequencies, the ham volunteers were able to reduce radio traffic on the main public safety net frequency, leaving it available for more

important uses. Volunteers working the staging areas must have dual-band radios, so they can monitor the public safety net while communicating within their assigned staging areas. Plans for next year include the use of Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) within the parade route, giving the incident command post a near real-time status of the parade route as it interfaces with traffic and transit for the parade participants.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

## **Hawaii Launch of Satellites Carrying Amateur Radio Payloads Fails**

The November 4 inaugural launch of an experimental US military vehicle carrying several satellites with Amateur Radio payloads into orbit failed in mid-flight shortly after taking off at 0345 UTC from Hawaii. The experimental Super Strypi launch vehicle, carrying a collection of small satellites into orbit as part of the ORS-4 mission for the Department of Defense, was fired from a truss-mounted rail system from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, off Barking Sands on Kauai. According to [www.SpaceFlightNow.com](http://www.SpaceFlightNow.com), the Super Strypi rocket is designed for low-cost, quick-reaction satellite launches. Destroyed in the demonstration flight were 13 small research spacecraft clustered on the mission for NASA researchers and university students.

None of the satellites carried Amateur Radio transponders, but several were equipped to transmit beacon signals and telemetry on 2 meter, 70 centimeter, and 13 centimeter amateur frequencies. The satellites lost included Argus, EDSN, HawaiiSat-1, ORS-Squared, PrintSat, STACEM, STU-1, and Supernova-Beta. PrintSat carried a 3D printed structure and was designed to measure the performance of the material over the course of its 3 year mission.

SpaceFlightNow.com said the experimental launcher apparently lost control and broke up downrange from the launch site. The November 4 maiden flight took place following several delays. The test flight was one of two planned demonstrations of the launcher.

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## **Amateur Radio Parity Act Passes Senate Committee, Gains Cosponsors**

The Amateur Radio Parity Act (S. 1685) has been endorsed by the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. In the voice vote on November 18, two Senators – Bill Nelson (D-FL) and Brian Schatz (D-HI) – asked to be recorded as voting “no.” The Committee held an executive session to consider the various legislative measures and nominations.

“Our work is not finished on the Senate side of Capitol Hill, although this is a huge step forward,” said ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN. She urged ARRL members to continue to write, call and e-mail their Senators about S. 1685 to build up its support for the future. “We know that members’ response to the call for a communications blast last week made all the difference for some Senators on the committee.”

S. 1685 picked up another Senate cosponsor on November 18, when Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS), who sits on the Commerce Committee, has signed aboard the bill. “ARRL members in Kansas should contact his office to say thanks,” President Craigie said. “Having an additional cosponsor who’s on the Committee is especially good news.”

On November 5, Senator Al Franken (D-MN) signed on as the second cosponsor of S. 1685. That legislation and its US House twin, H.R. 1301, call on the FCC to extend the limited federal pre-emption of PRB-1 to cover private land-use restrictions such as deed covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs). If the legislation becomes law, radio amateurs living in antenna-restricted communities would have the opportunity to negotiate with homeowners associations to install an antenna that reasonably accommodates Amateur Radio communication. H.R. 1301 has 114 cosponsors as of November 18.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

## ARRL Reiterates Call for FCC to Make Historical Licensee Data Available

At the request of the FCC, the ARRL on November 13 filed supplemental comments urging the Commission to continue to make available via the Universal Licensing System ([ULS](#)) historical Amateur Radio license information not associated with a current licensee or a pending application. The League filed its initial [comments](#) in the proceeding, WT Docket 15-81, last June. In its earlier comments, the ARRL argued that historical license data not associated with a current license is a primary means for volunteer examiner coordinators (VECs) to research the validity of exam credit on the basis of a license once held by the candidate. ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, who filed the supplemental comments on November 13, said the Commission now wanted to know how many applicants were taking advantage of lifetime examination credit, which went into effect in the summer of 2014.

ARRL told the FCC that its VEC currently transmits an average of five applications with expired license credits each week, and has handled some 300 such applications since July 2014. The W5YI VEC told ARRL that it relies heavily on historical license information too. ARRL argued that the number could grow, as word of the expanded opportunity for exam element credit continues to spread.

“The Commission, having obligated VECs to validate claims of former licensee status and the data associated therewith cannot fairly take away a key resource for objectively evaluating the validity of applicants’ claims and documentation,” the League said in its supplemental comments. “To do so decreases substantially the ability of VECs to maintain the historically high degree of integrity of the Amateur Radio licensing process. Since the Commission clearly has no intention of assuming any of the burden of the validation process – and is ill equipped to do so in any case – the proposal is both unfair and illogical.”

ARRL said that researching expired license credit is just one of several instances in which VECs might need to access historical license data. Other possibilities, the League said, could include using historical data to validate a candidate’s identification, and to research exam credit for pre-1987 Technician licenses.

The League concluded by again asking the FCC to continue to make available historical license data at least to VECs, if not the general public.

- Originally published online at [ARRL.org](#)

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## LOCAL RADIO NETS

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### Daily

#### **Texas Slow Net (CW only)**

Daily 7:45pm CT on 3.570MHz.

This is a training net for operators interested in building proficiency in CW and learning about handling procedures for CW traffic nets.

### Weekly

#### **Durant ARA Weekly Net**

Tuesdays 7:00pm CT on the 147.390+ (118.8 PL) repeater.

No net on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month due to the DARA monthly meeting.

#### **Fannin County ARC Weekly Net**

Tuesdays 8:00pm CT on the 145.130– (no PL) repeater.

This is an informal information net.

#### **McKinney 6 meter AM Net**

Wednesdays 10:00pm CT on 50.400MHz

#### **Ladies Net**

Thursdays 7:00pm CT on the 147.000+ (100.0 PL) repeater.

Net Control: Linda KE5YUC

#### **McKinney ARC Info Net**

Sundays 8:00pm CT on the 146.740– (110.9 PL) repeater.



## Semi-Monthly

### **Grayson County ARC Information Net**

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 8:00pm CT on the 147.000+ (100.0 PL) repeater.

This is an informal information net and buy/sell/swap net.

### **Grayson County ARES Net**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 8:00pm CT on the 147.000+ (100.0 PL) repeater.

This is a directed information net used for training.

### **RACES Command Net Check**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 2:00pm CT on 7.255 MHz LSB

This is a RACES Command Net check for statewide RACES Command Net members ONLY. All other Amateur stations are welcome to listen, but DO NOT check in!

## Monthly

### **Scout Ham Net**

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday at 8:00pm CT on the 147.000+ (100.0 PL) repeater.

This net is for all active Scouts, Adult Leaders, and Merit Badge Counselors who are Amateur Radio operators.

### **North Texas ARES HF Net**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 8:30pm CT on 3.860 MHz LSB

This is an information net open to all ARES members in the ARRL North Texas (NTX) Section.

### **McKinney ARES Net**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday at 9:00pm CT on the 146.740- (110.9 PL) repeater.

## Other

### **5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ragchews**

March 29, May 31, August 30, and November 29 at 8:00pm CT on the 147.000+ (100.0 PL) repeater.

Net Control: Trevor Reed KG5BFI

Send additions/changes/corrections for the net schedule and/or repeater information to [KF5NPM@gmail.com](mailto:KF5NPM@gmail.com)

## **AREA REPEATERS**

<b>Sherman TX</b>	147.000+ MHz (100.0 PL) 147.280+ MHz (107.2 PL) 444.750+ MHz (100.0 PL)	W5RVT W5COP W5RVT	<b>Gainesville TX</b>	147.340+ MHz (100.0 PL)	WB5FHI
<b>Allen TX</b>	145.350- MHz (100.0 PL)	N5GI	<del><b>Kingston OK</b></del>	<del>146.985- MHz (103.5 PL)</del> (currently out of service)	<del>K5BOG</del>
<b>Bonham TX</b>	145.470- MHz (100.0 PL) 147.200+ MHz (100.0 PL) 443.750+ MHz (100.0 PL)	K5FRC K5FRC K5FRC	<b>McKinney TX</b>	146.740- MHz (110.9 PL)	W5MRC
<b>Denison TX</b>	145.330- MHz (100.0 PL)	W5DWH	<b>Melissa TX</b>	443.200+ MHz (100.0 PL)	W5MRA
<b>Durant OK</b>	147.390+ MHz (118.8 PL) <del>147.255+ MHz (114.8 PL)</del> (currently out of service)	K5KIE K5CGE	<b>Paris TX</b>	146.760- MHz (203.5 PL)	WB5RDD
			<b>Rosston TX</b>	145.490- MHz (85.4 PL)	WD5U
			<b>Van Alstyne TX</b>	443.800+ MHz (103.5 PL)	W5VAL
			<b>Grayson County ARES</b>	441.375+ MHz (67.0 PL) (emergencies/training only)	WC5GC

### Sparks, Crackles, and Other Random Thoughts

By Rick Simmons K5ECX

Grayson County ARRL EC

#### Are We Focused?

Hi Gang,

Last week's weather events reminded me of some practices from the past. We have had a problem with hearing our friends at the NWS on Echolink during SKYWARN ops. Wade has pulled his and several other people's hair out trying to determine why we can't get the audio up any more. Finally by working with the ops at the NWS we think it has been fixed, as last week we could hear them much better. It has to do with how they access the system with their equipment to reach us up here. Due to the number of counties (links) they have to listen to, it's not one simple Echolink connection. Wade can explain it much better and after working with Mike down in Ft. Worth, it's now easier to hear them.



That got me to thinking about listening, and then there was the article in the ARRL ARES e-newsletter that hit the issue head on. So I'll quote several portions:

*"In the days where every ship of credibility carried a Morse code set, the radio operator was required to maintain radio silence on the international distress frequency of 500 KHz for a three minute interval, at 15 and 45 minutes of every hour. As radiotelephone came into being, a 3 minute watch was maintained at 0 and 30 minutes. If the disaster your vessel encountered fit within the 30 minute schedule, your weak, plaintive CQD (later SOS) had a good chance of being heard amidst all the commercial traffic and noise."* This was back in the early days of radio use. They all stopped to listen and give a weak signal the chance to be heard. ....HMMMM....

We try to allow a little time between squelch tails on our repeater for the NWS to have chance to get in. It takes a few extra seconds for the system to get their transmissions to reach us. It's really important sometimes as they are focused on several conversations in the NWS office during these events. Hearing certain buzzwords draws their attention: rotation, wall cloud, funnel etc. Listen a few minutes before you check in, and pause before you make your report; there might be something going on you didn't hear.

While we are out spotting, I want to suggest keeping the distractions down to a minimum. Maintaining focus on our operation is vital to safety. You may not hear a lot of chatter sometimes and that's good; as we have said before a quiet net is great because it means no one is getting abused by the weather. But when there are transmissions, listen; the call might be for you, or it might help you understand what's going on with the system we are watching. The author of the article I read was discussing operations at a public service event but you can see how it would apply to us:

*"The output problem - the ability to receive the repeater output in the field - is rarely that the (stronger) repeater transmission cannot be heard. It's simply that the operator is not focused, not listening for the call. The operator is chatting with friends, tired and glazed, or listening to other communications. One volunteer insisted that he bring along another radio so he might "listen in on public safety." "That's nice," I replied, "but it's not in our job description." I feared that, while lost to more exciting radio banter, my volunteer would lose awareness - of our situation and responsibility - which are so necessary to maintain. I was right. He was often difficult to reach and generally ineffective. Hopefully it was a lesson learned.*

*Sure, our work can sometimes involve simply waiting for that one call, and this can be boring. But think of how interesting we can make our listening watch when we form a picture in our mind of what's happening at the event overall,*

*and what has happened in the past, to grasp that we perform a life or death function. 100% focus on our duty and assignment is critical to our “client” event officials being able to secure the public’s safety as best they can, at the rest stop, intersection, or Red Cross facility to which we are assigned.*

*Maintaining that strict listening watch repeatedly overcomes the limitations inherent in our technical communications method, promotes situational awareness, improves our effectiveness to the teams we support, and in the end is a discipline that keeps us focused on the reason we’re standing underneath that silly orange hat in the first place: to provide instant, reliable communications.*

*So maintain that strict listening watch. Your performance and overall satisfaction, and public safety at the next public service event will be all the better for it.” -- Mark Richards, K1MGY*

Now I ask you to maintain a strict listening watch, no extra radio(s), no Twitter, and no Facebook posts of the storm; save that for later. Go back to our training, learn what to report and the procedures we are asking everyone to follow. Your awareness of the developing weather may affect your location, how you operate there, which direction to watch, and how to plan for leaving that location; or if you’re at home, to seek cover. It’s for safety’s sake, yours and the public’s, and allows everyone to work on the situation at hand.

Thanks for your service to our community, you are making a difference!

73 and Happy Thanksgiving

Rick

K5ECX

