



# AARCOVER

## Bulletin of Austin Amateur Radio Clubs

Austin Amateur Radio Club

Austin Amateur Television Club

Austin Repeater Organization

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Issue 10-2006

### It's Baaaack!

ARLS007 SuitSat-1 (AO-54), re-enters Earth's atmosphere

SuitSat-1 (AO-54) is history. The surplus Russian Orlan spacesuit turned satellite re-entered and burned up in Earth's atmosphere Thursday, September 7, at 1600 UTC some 1400 km south-southwest of Western Australia. The announcement came September 8 from Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO. SuitSat-1 became one of the greatest public relations vehicles for Amateur Radio in years. Bauer expressed thanks to "all who made SuitSat-1 the phenomenal event that it was." Launched February 3 during a spacewalk from the ISS, SuitSat-1 was heard around the world, although at a much weaker signal strength than anticipated.

"Your hard work and dedication paid off," Bauer continued. "In just three weeks the SuitSat team developed and delivered a safe satellite system that has gained the confidence of the international space agencies." Bauer also noted the "unprecedented press coverage" that included more than 9 million hits on the SuitSat-1 Web site, [www.suitsat.org](http://www.suitsat.org), during February alone as well as several prominent mentions in the general news media.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Periodic Events

Sun	7:30 p.m.	Travis ARES net	147.36 MHz + (131.8)
Sun	8:00 p.m.	Travis ARES Packet	145.73 MHz -
Sun	8:00 p.m.	Williamson ARES net	146.64 MHz - (162.2)
Sun	9:00 p.m.	ARO Swapnet	146.94 MHz -
Sun	(After Swapnet)	Newsline	146.94 MHz -
Mon	6:45 p.m.	Hays ARES net	147.10 MHz -
Tues.	8:00 p.m.	Bastrop ARES Net	443.750+ (114.80)
Wed	8:00 p.m.	Code Practice	146.94 MHz -
Wed	11:30 a.m.-1p.m.	Ham Social Luncheon, Jim's at 183 & Burnet Rd.	837-1119
<b>Thu</b>	<b>9:00 p.m.</b>	<b>2m SSB Net</b>	<b>144.250 (USB)</b>
Thu	11:30 a.m. - 12:30p.m.	Lunch, Waterloo Ice House	444.1 MHz+
<b>Fri</b>	<b>8:00 p.m.</b>	<b>6m SSB Net</b>	<b>50.230(texasvhf.org/)</b>
Sat	7:00 - 8:30a.m.	Breakfast, Waterloo Ice House, 8600 Burnet	444.1 MHz +
Sat	9:00 a.m.	Chapter 67 QCWA QSO Net.	3.920 MHz LSB
Daily	6:30 p.m.	Central Texas Traffic Net	147.14MHz+

"Students around the world had the opportunity to participate in a seven-month 'school spacewalk' with the artwork, pictures, signatures and voices onboard," Bauer pointed out. "And the 'super-sleuth' ham radio operator extraordinaires were able to pull a significant amount of data from the satellite, despite its low signal strength."

After SuitSat-1's VHF ham radio payload stopped transmitting earlier this year, AMSAT initiated a "Chicken Little Contest," for participants to guess when SuitSat-1 would deorbit. Winners and more information are on the AMSAT Web site, [www.amsat.org/amsat-new/ariss/suitsatContest.php](http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/ariss/suitsatContest.php).

Bauer said plans for a potential SuitSat-2 will be a discussion topic at the AMSAT/ARISS joint meeting in October. ■

**The ARRL Letter**  
**Vol. 25, No. 38**  
**September 22, 2006**

Field Day 2006 "logs received" list now available: The complete list of logs received for ARRL Field Day 2006 has been posted on the League Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/claimed/repynnAQ.html>>. It includes all electronic, paper and Web applet submissions. Report any errors or omissions to ARRL Contest Branch Manager Tom Hogerty, KC1J <[contests@arrl.org](mailto:contests@arrl.org)>. If you submitted electronically, have your receipt available. The Contest Soapbox <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/>> includes comments and photographs posted by Field Day 2006 participants (and other operating events). You may post stories and photos from your operation too!



**Ham Radio Volunteer Exam Results**

**ARRL VEC** – The following are the results of the ARRL VE test session held in the LCRA Colorado Room on September 9th, 2006:

**Technician Class Licenses Processed**

Shelby D. Gregory, KE5KKA Charles M. Lucas, KE5KKB  
Donna S. Nolen, KA5PVW (w/HF privileges)  
Erin E. Rhoden, KE5KJY Allison C. Rich, KE5KKD  
Dale W. Taylor, KE5KKC Bobby B. Tomlin, KE5KJZ  
Ricky C. White, KE5KJX

**Extra Class Licenses Processed**

Craig R. Markley, AD5YJ Daniel P. Valentine, AD5YK

**Examiners Participating in this Test Session**

Howard Glueck, K5ZUA Larry Gunter, WB5BEK  
Jerry Jackson, N5UJ Joe Makeever, W5HS  
Jimmy Mercer, N5WDH Tom Nevue, W2MN  
Malcolm Robertson, KE5GYW

**Next Two ARRL VE Test Sessions**

October 14th - LCRA Colorado Room  
November 4th - LCRA Colorado Room

TNX ES 73 DE W5HS  
Joe

**W5YI-VEC - 9-16-2006**

The South Austin W5YI VE team heartily congratulates all of the following people who earned new or upgraded amateur radio licenses at our September 16<sup>th</sup> session:

**Extra Class** –none

**General Class** – Phillip D. Ryals, WB6WRV

**Technician Class (all new) –**

Darin M. Greene Robert L. Hill Bryan J. Wann

Our administering volunteer examiners were:

Rick Bartel, AD5HT Jim Greenwood, AB5EK  
Harold Bates, KB5SXV Tony Lyon, KJ5XF  
Hugh Brown, NT5O Jimmy Mercer, N5WDH  
Lloyd Goehring, Jr., N5TO Dennis Murphy, W5KQF

Our next two exam dates are September 16<sup>th</sup> and October 21st, 2006. For additional information regarding our amateur radio examination sessions, please contact Jim, AB5EKat (512) 327-6184 or by e-mail to [hamradioexams@hotmail.com](mailto:hamradioexams@hotmail.com) or visit our web page at <http://texashams.org/w5yi-austin/>

**Exam fee is \$14.00**

**Please bring two forms of identification plus your social security number.**

**Sessions are accessible to handicapped applicants. No pre-registration is required. Walk-ins are welcomed.**

Austin Amateur Radio Club, Inc., PO BOX 4739, AUSTIN TX 78765-4739, Web site: <http://www.austinhams.org>

President	Jeff Schmidt	N5MNV	255-6753	n5mnw@arrl.net
Vice President	Thomas Visel	NX1N		thomas@neuric.com
Treasurer	Jerry Jackson	N5UJ	832-5663	jerry@gaj.com
Secretary	David Rivenburg,	AD5OO	821-3143	driven@onr.com
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ARRL Travis Co. Emer. Coord.	Don Dudley	AC5YK	301-8745	ac5yk@yahoo.com
ARRL Public Information Officer	Roger Wines	W5WIA	453-2193	w5wia@arrl.net

Please contact a club officer, attend a meeting, or mail us to join the organization.

**The Austin Amateur Radio Club, Inc.** has a membership dues of \$20.00/calendar year (\$30.00 family to the same address)  
**The Austin Amateur Radio Club, Inc.** AARC maintains the following repeaters. An open autopatch and emergency power on 146.78 MHz and an emergency HF/VHF station at the American Red Cross building. Persons residing or working within the coverage area are expected to join the club, if they use the autopatch. Non-residents on short visits are welcome to use this autopatch. 146.88MHz (-600) with autopatch; 146.94 MHz (-600) used for Weather Net when called, and Travis County ARES. It is also used for Swapnet and Newline @ 9p.m. Sunday; 224.80 MHz (-1.600); 444.10 MHz (+5); & 145.01 <MHz packet NetROM node (KB5PM-1 or alias AUS). Persons residing or working within the coverage area are expected to join the club, if they use the autopatch. Non-residents on short visits are welcome to use this autopatch. **The 146.78 and 146.88 repeaters have open autopatches.** Please transmit your call **before** sing the phone patch. Press \* and dial the phone number to place a call. Do not unkey after the \*. When finished, press # to hang up the phone. Dial 911 (no \* needed) for emergency services.

#### AARCOVER Information

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Viewpoints expressed in the AARCOVER do not necessarily reflect those of any club, or of its members, directors, or officers.

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Members and other readers are encouraged to submit material for publication. Call Mitch London, if mailed submissions are required. Electronic files are encouraged! Submissions may be edited for publication. **Deadline is the 15th of the month.**

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**Thanks to Alan Russell, KE5DTR, who helps me with getting out the AARCOVER each month!**

**For Changes in your ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER or CALL SIGN:**

See Jerry Jackson, N5UJ (512) 832-5663 [jerry@gaj.com](mailto:jerry@gaj.com)

**Jerry handles all changes for AARCOVER mailing labels & membership information & roster questions.**

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**Over the WWWaves...** A variety of interesting websites submitted by our readers.

Skywarn Date Announced

<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/grg/kimmel/SKYWARN2007.html>

Height info for NVIS Antennas

<http://www.w0ipl.com/ECom/NVIS/nvis.htm>

-Rick Herndon, K5FNI

I think this might have merit for AQRp folks to share diagrams and/or collaborate on designs. You surely don't have to buy expensive software to use it!

<http://www.glify.com/>

Stuart Rohre, K5KVH

Really fun approach to what he's doing. It may (or may not) include answers to questions that nibbled at the back of your mind, but you never had a chance to attack or that you didn't have the ammunition to find out more about the answers.

**www.gizmology.net** There's also more here than meets the casual glance. At least mark this for a rainy day read. Rick Herndon, K5FNI

## Learning the Code

By W2LJ

There are probably as many different methods for learning Morse Code as there are students trying to learn it! From the old Boy Scout method, where you would see the letters on a chart and then learn the characters to such "newer" methods as listening to letters delivered as jazzy, upbeat techno-tunes as in the popular CD, "The Rhythm of the Code".

We've come a long way from learning the Code from LP records (Ameco Code Course), cassette tapes, and even machines designed specifically for learning the Code, such as the old Instructograph. Today there are a plethora of freeware, and shareware computer programs which will aid in your learning process. Before we go into them, a few words first about learning the Code.

Learn each letter as a "sound". Do not learn the letters at such a slow speed that you can count each dit and dah. If you do it that way, then you will hit the dreaded "plateau"! This is what we all faced in the olden days when we learned code the old fashioned way. We learned code characters that were sent to us at a 5 WPM rate. (For example, the letter C was learned as dah di dah dit). Then, as Novices, when we tried to increase our speed up to 13 WPM for the General license test; we found the going got rough at about 10 WPM. It's at that point that Code is coming at you at a rate where you can no longer count the individual dits and dahs. At this speed you have to unlearn everything you had learned to that point; and you had to learn the sound of each letter as a whole. It's much easier if you learn it that way to begin with; and this is called the Farnsworth Method. Play the letters as if they are being sent at a 10 -15 WPM rate (Example - learn C as dahdidahdit) ; but increase the spacing between each letter to achieve the effect of 5 WPM. If you go this route you will not be tempted to pull your hair out later!

All that having been said, use the program you choose wisely. This is not an endorsement of one program over another; but one of the nice things about the G4FON program is that you can click and choose the letters you want to concentrate on. Once you have the basic letters, numerals and punctuation down; but find yourself having trouble with the "sound alike"; you now have a remedy. With the G4FON program, you can click just "H" and "5"; or "B" and "6"; or "L" and "F" or "L" and "R" or whatever you might be having a problem with. (From my examples, you can see where I had problems. Hi!) This way you can gain the confidence you need to go further. Please remember that learning Morse Code is not a one shot deal! Once you've learned the 5 WPM rate to pass the license requirement, it doesn't end there. Getting on the air, you will find that conversational CW begins somewhere around 13 to 15 WPM. At slower speeds it's kind of like two people talking at each other instead of with each other.

Practise, practise and practise! And then practise some more. Listen to Code whether it's software generated or on the air from W1AW or from real time QSOs. The more you listen, the better; but you want to limit your "concentrated" learning sessions to no longer than about 15 to 20 minutes. After that you kind of go into "sensory overload" and it becomes counter productive. A good thing to do is to set up one of the Code practise programs to generate a sound file that you can burn to a CD so you can listen in your car while driving; or even while doing other chores around the house. It is amazing how much you can pick up when you're just in "listening mode" with the code playing in the background.

Another little "thing" that you can do to help yourself learn code is to "tongue" it. I know, it sounds obscene; but all this is, is sounding out dits and dahs to yourself using your mouth. While you're driving back and forth to work, code out some of the signs you see on the road. Training yourself to translate normal words into Morse Code is good reinforcement. (Oh boy, it's a good thing I didn't miss that ditditdit dah dadadah didadahdit sign!) You get the idea!

The most important thing - relax, relax and relax some more. Frustration is your worst enemy and causes more people to give up than any other reason. You will finally "get it", just don't put too much pressure on yourself! Learning the Morse Code and using it is one of the most enjoyable aspects of this hobby as far as I'm concerned. Don't make it out to be such an ordeal. If you approach the whole process with a positive outlook; you will be amazed at what you can accomplish!



## **CLUB MINUTES**

### **AARC Meeting September 5th, 2006**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04PM by President Jeff Schmidt, N5MNMW.

### **Visitors, New Members, and New Calls**

We had a new member join us tonight, Jarrel Thomas, KE5KCV.

Also, Peter Flynn, formerly KE5BCG, is now K5BCG.

This month we had a cornucopia of door prizes:

a Dish Network dish won by Alan Russell, KE5DTR

50 feet of RG217U won by Bob Dixon, KD5TFI (donated by Pete Flynn, K5BCG)

a nifty candle won by Jeff Schmidt, N5MNMW (donated by Mitch London, KD5HCV)

a pair of FRS radios won by Joe Honovich, WJ5H

### **Officer Reports**

The minutes as they appeared in the last AARCOVER were approved.

Jerry Jackson, N5UJ gave the treasury report: \$1203.53 in the checking account, \$4234.37 in the equipment fund, 37 new members so far in 2006.

New members in August:

Grant Bogue, KE5EYJ

Don Hart, KE5JRS

Larry Frohnapfel, WB5NWN

Stuart Rohre, K5KVH was not present for the technical committee report.

### **Old Business**

The G.E. voter system for the new 146.94 repeater was purchased on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

The storage space that the club was renting for \$90/mo is no longer being used, and the contents are now distributed between the Red Cross and the garages of Jeff Schmidt, N5MNMW and Roger Wines, W5WIA.

### **New Business**

There was no new business at this time.

### **Ham of the Month**

Congratulations go to Charlie Gunn, KE5AY for achieving the Worked All Counties (all 3076 of them!) award.

### **Announcements**

Thomas Visel, NX1N announced that the Roadrunner Microwave Group is hosting the 2007 Central States Conference and they are looking for anyone who would care to give a presentation during the event.

Roger Wines, W5WIA reminded us of the ARES meeting on Sunday concerning the formation of emergency response teams.

Jeff Schmidt, N5MNMW reviewed the club loaner equipment status and adjourned the meeting at 7:44PM.

The presentation this evening was given by Rick Kirchof, KD5ABM and it covered the local repeater systems and the technology it takes to make them work.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Rivenburg, AD5OO  
AARC Secretary

## **ARRL ON-LINE AUCTION "PREVIEW" SET FOR MID-OCTOBER**

The ARRL Letter  
Vol. 25, No. 36  
September 8, 2006

With a little less than two months to go and counting before the ARRL's first On-Line Auction gets under way, ARRL Business Services Manager Deb Jahnke, K1DAJ, says the League has received several generous donations from a variety of sources. Auction proceeds will benefit ARRL educational programs and services.

"I think you'll find a terrific variety of items when bidding kicks off on October 23," she said. Jahnke says the On-Line Auction site will open for a "preview" starting Monday, October 16.

"At that time, you'll be able to view many of the items that will be up for bid the following week," she said. "You'll also be able to register at that time, if you choose." Auction proceeds will help to support the League's educational services and programs.

The auction will be open to all -- ARRL members and otherwise. Bidders just need online access and must register prior to participating, which they may do at any time during the auction.

The ARRL On-Line Auction will begin Monday, October 23, and will wrap up Friday, November 3. Jahnke and her Business Services team are planning, organizing and managing this premier event.

Jahnke said many ARRL members have inquired to ask if they could donate a piece of vintage Amateur Radio gear or other item for the auction -- either on their own behalf or in someone's memory.

"If this is something that you wish to do, please contact me <djahnke@arrl.org> to discuss it further," she said.

hnke says the link to the ARRL On-Line Auction site will become available via the ARRL Web home page during the October 16 preview and once bidding begins October 23.

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Reminder — vanity fee now \$20.80: The regulatory fee to obtain or renew a post-1995 Amateur Radio vanity call sign is \$20.80 for applications received by the FCC on or after Wednesday, September 6. The new fee covers the 10-year license term. See <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/08/01/3/>> for more information.

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Hydraulic malfunction faulted in CubeSat launch failure: The commission probing the July 26 Dnepr-1LV rocket launch vehicle failure that resulted in the loss of more than a dozen CubeSats with ham radio payloads believes it knows why the vehicle didn't reach orbit. A brief malfunction of a hydraulic drive in a first-stage propulsion unit caused a deviation in the rocket's trajectory and "the issuance of a command to abort the flight," said a news release from Kosmotras, the company responsible for the rocket's launch. Kosmotras said the cause of the hydraulic malfunction has been determined, and the committee is "working up recommendations for its rectification." Russia, meanwhile, has suspended further Dnepr-1 LV launches. Fourteen of the tiny spacecraft that were lost carried Amateur Radio VHF or UHF beacon or telemetry transmitters. Various accounts indicated that the mission went awry less than two minutes after liftoff. The CubeSat project was a collaboration between California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo and Stanford University's Space Systems Development Laboratory. All of the CubeSats were designed and built by students at various



**AARC Meeting Info.**  
**Business Meeting**

**7:00 pm at Mangia Pizza**  
**120001 Burnet Rd. (North of 183)**

**October 3rd-** Thomas Visel, NX1N will be discussing the Software "Brain"

**Hands on Hamming**

**7:00pm at ARL Labs**  
**10000 Burnet Rd. North of 183**

**October 10th** – Shane Hale, KE5HSS will talk about Gibson Ridge Weather Software and Storm Chasing. (Pizza \$1/slice drinks 50c or bring your own snack)

**Upcoming Amateur Exams**

**ARRL VEC- October 14th & November 11th** 9a.m. at **LCRA Complex** 3700 Lake Austin Blvd. Contact Joe Makeever, W5HS (345-0800) or Joe Thiel, N5SMN (832-0450) for info. \$14 fee.

**W5YI VEC- October 21st & November 18th** **NOTE**  
**TEMPORARY LOCATION CHANGE** \*\*\*2p.m. in room 204, Moody Hall, St. Edwards University. Contact Jim Greenwood, AB5EK@arrl.net, (327-6184)  
<http://texasparadise.com/w5yi-austin> for more info.

**Calendar of Events**

**Nov 3-4 Austin Radio Roundup** VFW Post 8787- N. Of Braker on IH35 N access rd. Details still in the works but likely same as last year! Camping & RV parking welcome! \$5 RV Hookups, \$5 to dump- 836-8767 (VFW) Friday night vendor setup, Dinner Party & Entertainment Sat setup 7AM, open to public 8AM-noon Talk-in 146.94 (-) Fri & Sat Grand Prizes- TBD Swapfest table reservations- Lori KM5MQ@arrl.net 512-255-6753  
**Nov 11 Tri-County ARC & City of Azle DPS Swapfest** David KB5YLG kb5ylg@yahoo.com 817-444-5165  
**Nov 11 South Texas ARC Swapfest** Corpus Christi Mark Mireles, AD5CA n5crp@arrl.net 361-855-9634  
**Nov 11 N. Central TX Emergency Comm Hamfest** Tri-County ARC of North Texas, Paul 817-444-0448  
**Nov 10-11 Texas Mission of Mercy**, TMoM Friday-Saturday, Dell Diamond [www.wc-ares.org/](http://www.wc-ares.org/)

Oct.	Nov.	Austin Meetings/Happenings	
3	7	AARC Meeting ARL Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
14	11	Austin QRP, Alvin's Sandwich Shop	11:00 a.m.
10	14	Hands on Hamming ARL Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
17	21	ATV Club Mtg. Mangia Pizza	7:00 p.m.
21	18	QCWA Denny's on Burnet Rd.	2:00 p.m.
23	27	Travis Co. REACT Denny's on Burnet	7:00 p.m.
24	28	Travis County A.R.E.S., ARL Aud.	7:00 p.m.

*\*\*AARC Business Meeting is at Mangia Pizza 120001 Burnet Rd.. Visitors are welcome whether they are licensed hams or not. Other meetings or activities are listed under the headings for Calendar.*

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