

AARC COVER

Bulletin of Austin Amateur Radio Clubs
Austin Amateur Radio Club

Austin Amateur Television Club

Austin Repeater Organization

ISSN 1067-0262

June 2007

Roster Comes Out in Next Issue, Pay Dues!

Issue 6-2007

BPL Update Meeting

By Glen Reid, K5FX

After meeting with representatives of the City of Austin, Austin Energy and PowerGrid, I can report the following of the updates.

In preparation for the meetings, I made my first "listening" trip into the 78702 test area with my mobile rig and a one meter long, voltage probe antenna mounted on the rear deck of my F150 pick up. The antenna fed with about 20 feet of RG400. I decided to use the one meter antenna because it hears equally poorly on all frequencies below 30 MHz.

I found:

1. BPL signals are clearly audible at all frequencies (except as noted below), at high levels, on my mobile rig, throughout the BPL test area.
2. As confirmed by K5GP, the ham bands from 2 to 11 MHz. did not appear to be notched in any way.
3. Above 11 MHz. the ham bands, except 18 MHz, were clearly notched; resulting in a sharp drop of BPL signal at the band edges.
4. None of the notches were as wide as was indicated in earlier conversations with the PowerGrid folks. Many of the notches were cut so close to the band edges, BPL noise (at lower levels) was audible a few KHz. into the ham band.
5. The BPL signals appeared to extend well beyond the test area well to the west, but not to the east (toward IH35). As of April 15, only about half of the BPL hardware is installed in the test area. That may explain the "lopsided" BPL signal

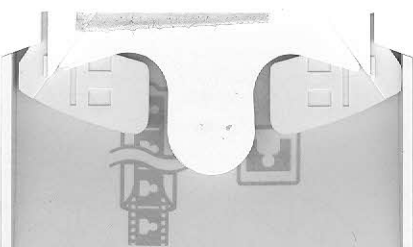
(Continued on page 4)

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 -
Tues.	7:30 p.m.	Hays ARES net **NEW FREQ!**	444.150 + (114.8)***
Tues.	8:00 p.m.	Bastrop ARES Net	443.750 + (114.8)
Wed	8:00 p.m.	Code Practice	146.94 MHz -
Wed	11:30 a.m.	Ham Social Luncheon, Jim's	146.94 MHz -
Thu	9:00 p.m.	2m SSB Net	144.250 (USB)
Thu	11:30 a.m.	Lunch, Waterloo Ice House	444.1 MHz+
Fri	8:00 p.m.	6m SSB Net	50.230(texasvhf.org/)
Sat	7:00 - 8:30a.m.	Breakfast @ Waterloo Ice House	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+

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Ham Radio Volunteer Exam Results

4-21-2007 The South Austin W5YI VE team heartily congratulates all of the following people who earned new or upgraded amateur radio licenses at our April 21st session:

Extra Class – Fredrick G. Brunell, KD5DKB

General Class – John W. Henley, KC5JTT
Margaret A. Robertson, KE5KCY

Sherry S. Nusko, KD5OQT
Charles C. Shilling, KE5MKB

Technician Class (all new) – Clinton T. Banek Rick Boyle

James A. Bryant

Russell A. Lockyear

Christopher B. Elliott

Raymond Sparks

Our administering volunteer examiners were:

Hugh Brown, NT5O

John Fisher, K5JHF

Lloyd Goehring, Jr., N5TO

Jim Greenwood, AB5EK

Jimmy Mercer, N5WDH

Dennis Murphy, W5KQF

The South Austin W5YI VE team heartily congratulates all of the following people who earned new or upgraded amateur radio licenses at our April 24th, April 28th and May 2nd special sessions:

At ARL on April 24th...

Extra Class – Eric L. Rabinowitz, KG6GAN Wilson F. Jared, Jr., AE5BD, ex-KD5MWN

General Class – Wade T. Bolling, W5ERX Edward I. Franks, KE5CAX Scott A. Scales, KE5OAT

Technician Class (all new) –

Alexander S. Broadbent, KE5OAN Michelle L. Oldroyd, KE5OAR Ruoting Huang, KE5OAM

Paul B. Rawlins, KE5OAO Todd A. Kanning, KE5OAK Joseph T. Richmond, KE5OAL

Phyllis N. Lowe, KE5OAS Lynn M. Scales, KE5OAQ Thomas A. Maughan, KE5OAU

Michael J. Wenglar, KE5OAP Josef Zeevi, KE5OAJ

The volunteer examiners were Jim Greenwood, AB5EK, Stuart Rohre, K5KVH and Robert Wright, KS4JH.

At Southwestern University in Georgetown on April 28th...

Technician Class (all new) – Patricia S. Ellsworth, KE5OBJ Joseph G. Mattingly, KE5OBK

Melanie E. Loop, KE5OBI Gregory B. Nash, KE5OBH Carl C. Webber, KE5OBL

The administering volunteer examiners were Jim Greenwood, AB5EK, Jerry Jackson, N5UJ, Dennis Murphy, W5KQF and Thomas Visel, NX1N.

On May 2nd at LBJ High School

General Class (all new) - Christopher T. Chu, KE5OEL Chelsea B. Shaw, KE5OEQ Alejandro Limonta, KE5OEO

Elizabeth R. Willmann, KE5OET Sanjna Zadoo, KE5OEU

Technician Class (all new) – Vivian C. Alston, KE5OEJ Xavier Hernandez, KE5OEN

Eric B. Chen, KE5OEK Sreeram M. Reddy, KE5OEP Bridget E. Haby, KE5OEM

William E. Sweetman, KE5OER Nathan J. Szalwinski, KE5OES

The administering volunteer examiners were Jim Greenwood, AB5EK, Joe Thiel, N5SMN and Robert Wright, KS4JH.

Our next two *regular* sessions will start at 2 PM in room 204 of Moody Hall on the campus of St. Edward's University on June 16th and July 21st

For additional information regarding our amateur radio examination sessions, please contact Jim, AB5EK at (512) 327-6184 or by e-mail to hamradioexams@hotmail.com or visit our web page at <http://texashams.org/w5yi-austin/>

The following are the results of the ARRL VE test session held in the LCRA Colorado Room on May 5th, 2007:

Technician Class Licenses Processed

Todd A. Blomerth, KE5OGS Kandis B. Hoover, KE5OGU Tamara A. Klindt, KE5OGV

John M. Longoria (10 years old) KE5OGT Charles A. Thomas Sr., KE5OGR

General Class Licenses Processed

Andrew P. Hoover, KE5OGW Daniel E. Reisem, N5VLF William J. Smith, KE5OGX

Examiners Participating in this Test Session

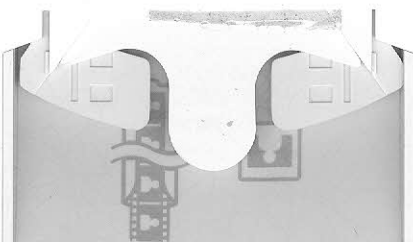
Milt Cram, W8NUE Jim Dear, W5LOG Howard Glueck, K5ZUA Curt Goodson, W4QBU

Joe Makeever, W5HS Joe Thiel, N5SMN

Next Two ARRL VE Test Sessions June 2nd - LCRA Colorado Room July 7th - LCRA Colorado Room

TNX ES 73

Joe



President	Don Dudley	AC5YK	340-0778	ac5yk@yahoo.com
Vice President	Lee Cooper	W5LHC	424 5491	w5lhc@arrl.net
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ARRL Travis Co. Emer. Coord.	Roger Wines	W5WIA	453-2193	w5wia@arrl.net
ARRL Public Information Officer	Lee Cooper	W5LHC	424 5491	w5lhc@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 Newslines @ 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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Published monthly by the Austin Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Viewpoints expressed in the AARCOVER do not necessarily reflect those of any club, or of its members, directors, or officers. Material quoted from the ARRL Letter is supplied by the American Radio Relay League, Inc.

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.**

Material may be used in a later issue. Unless otherwise noted, permission is granted to reprint AARCOVER articles, provided you credit the author and the AARCOVER.

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"XYL" is printed with permission by Carolyn Canfield, KE5DTS. Cartoons may not be reprinted without written permission.

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

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

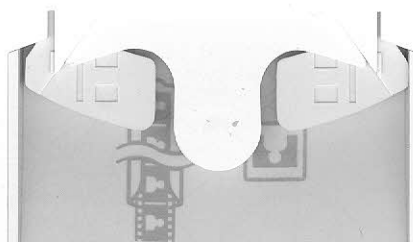
Jerry handles all changes for AARCOVER mailing labels & membership information & roster questions.

Roster Comes out in Next Issue!

The yearly roster is due to come out in the July issue of the AARCOVER, so be sure to get your dues paid up and also make sure all your information is correct, i.e., call sign, phone number, address, e-Mail etc. So when it comes out in the AARCOVER it will be correct.

If you want to make any corrections be sure to get in touch with Secretary Jerry Jackson, N5UJ. 512-832-5663 or jerry@gaj.com.

Also note that July is the last paper copy of the AARCOVER that is to be mailed out. From there on out we will be putting a .pdf link on the Austin hams website which will lead you to a color copy of the newsletter, with hot links that take you directly to websites listed in the newsletter. Not only will we be saving money from printing costs, with postal rate hike we will also be saving even more money totaling over \$300 per month!



distribution.

During the course of meeting, the following issues were discussed:

Noise Survey

As promised, PowerGrid commissioned an independent contractor to survey the existing power line noise in the test area, pre-BPL. They presented me with a summary of the survey and have promised the actual measurement data on DVD. The noise survey indicated what as we all knew – that is a really noisy area over there! With the results of that survey and some additional specific location noise assessment, AE and PowerGrid want to correct as much of the line generated noise as the can before the actual test begins. I asked for additional information regarding the survey methodology and instrumentation used. PowerGrid agreed.

Test Period Beginning

May 1st is still the anticipated test start date. The UPC BPL Conference begins at the Convention Center on May 6 and they intend to have the test system fully functional by then.

Lack of notching below 11 MHz.

The PowerGrid folks seemed genuinely surprised to learn of the lack of ham band notches for the 80, 60, 40, 30 meter bands. At first, they vehemently rejected that possibility. I offered to drive them and the City guys over to the test and let them listen. Perhaps not wanting to risk being proven wrong in front of the City and AE, they wisely indicated that they would check on the notches below 11 MHz.

As of 4/21, I have been informed by PowerGrid that new “noise reduction” (see below) BPL units have been installed and notches are in effect below 11 MHz.

Narrow width of the notches that are in effect

At an earlier meeting PowerGrid stated that they intended to have wider notches than are evident in the test area. I had made a note (which I used as an example) that the same PowerGrid engineer who attended, had promised a 6.7 to 7.6 MHz notch around 40 Meters. The notches in place are more like 5KHz (or less) from the band edges.

Corinex “Noise Reduction” Technology

PowerGrid stated that beginning next week they would be installing the “new Corinex noise reduction boxes” in the Austin test area. Apparently these units put the same BPL signal on parallel conductors in an effort to cancel out some of the radiated RF energy.

I told them it would work better if they could twist those conductors together >:-} – they declined!

While the theory seems sound it remains to be seen how effective this technique will be in reducing RFI.

WWV Interference

AE questioned whether WWV should be protected from the BPL RFI. I told them that although many hams used WWV for many services, it was not a ham frequency. I further stated that it would be best not to interfere with WWV just as a “best practice”. In a city wide implementation it would not be hard to imagine that someone at UT or in one of the tech companies in Austin might have a problem with interference to WWV. Apparently, that exact issue was a problem with the BPL test in Baton Rouge and the Physics Department at LSU.

Remote Noise Monitoring

Bob, WA5AOH has volunteered to install a remote RFI monitoring system for the BPL test.

Ed Hare at ARRL has volunteered hardware for the monitor and PowerGrid has OK'd a spot at their office in the test area. I hope work can proceed on that resource.

More Monitoring Needed

Anyone in the area of the Test is encouraged to monitor and listen for BPL in the ham bands.

In order to hear and identify the BPL signal, I suggest that you first listen to frequencies between the ham bands. With the receiver in the AM mode you will hear a characteristic audio tone of about 1 KHz. Along with the tone you will probably hear assorted pops, cracks and whistles as the BPL boxes communicate with each other. The un-notched BPL signal is very strong in the test area. Please, if possible, use the BPL RFI report form available in the files section of the BPL787 Yahoo group.

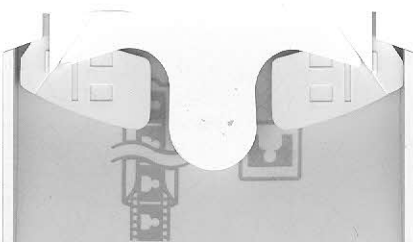
Please forward your reports to: k5fx@arrl.net.

Glen Reid

K5FX

BPL787

The ARRL Austin BPL Team



CLUB MINUTES

Meeting called to order: 7:10pm.

Housekeeping announcements: ARL security, restroom locations, drinks available but food no longer provided, building instructions for severe weather.

Visitors: Bill Gregerson, KE5MZH; Victor Garcia, Jr., W5UMT; Christopher Levenson, KE5NWJ.

New Calls/Upgrades: Wilson Jared, Jr., AE5BD, was KD5MWN; and 3 people received upgrades (listed in VE Results)

Minutes: approved as written in the AARCOVER.

Officer Reports:

President: The Radio Roundup and the Christmas Party have been combined and will be held on December 7th & 8th this year. Everyone is welcome to attend the Officer's Meeting at the Jack in the Box across the street. There has been discussion on changes to the contact persons for the repeaters. Joe Fischer, K5EJL, needs relief from Field Day duties.

Treasurer: Stated account amounts of ~\$1,500 for checking and ~1,800 savings. The club is getting memberships in and the rooster is going for printing on May 15th.

Editor: re-stated planned changes to AARCOVER as .pdf on the website instead of mailing paper copies through USPS, which shall save the club a lot of money.

Technical: Stuart Rohre, K5KVH, met with KVUE-TV. They said to stay with the old tower. The club is looking to get the rest of the needed equipment for the new 146.940 repeater so it can be tested. There is discussion to put W5KA on all club repeaters and change some of the trustees.

ARES: Jay Hoffman, KA5OST, announced the 2nd Tuesday meeting is now for response and the 4th Tuesday meeting will be training and business. ARES pages can be received on cell phones.

Old Business: mention of problems with the 146.94 444.1 repeaters.

Slides and discussion of upcoming events: all listed in the AARC Swapnet newsletter or at www.austinhams.org.

Ham of the Month: Glen Reid, K5FX, and John Stratton, KE5ISX.

Announcements: Club presentations are needed if anyone has something to present. Jay Hoffman has 4 or 5 computers for hams that will use them for packet work. Also, the 4th Wednesday @ the Red Cross is a packet set-up class.

Tami Friedman, KD5RJU, won the door prize; a NOAA All hazards WX Radio donated by KXAN-TV.

Adjourned: 7:55pm

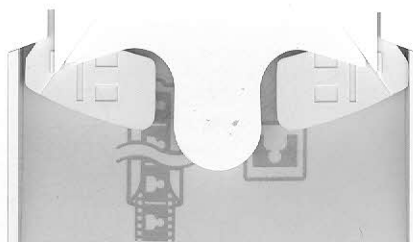
Presentation: Jeff Schmidt, N5MNW, presented "HF101 or Getting Started on HF"

FCC Poised to Lower Cost of Vanity Call Sign From ARRL Bulletin 12

The FCC has proposed reducing the regulatory fee to obtain or retain an Amateur Radio vanity call sign by more than 40 percent starting later this year. In a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) released April 18, "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2007," in MD Docket 07-81, the Commission is proposing to cut the fee from its current \$20.80 to \$11.70. If ultimately adopted, that would mark the lowest fee in the history of the current vanity call sign program. The FCC proposed to collect nearly \$290.3 million in FY 2007 regulatory fees.

"These fees are mandated by Congress and are collected to recover the regulatory costs associated with the Commission's enforcement, policy and rulemaking, user information, and international activities," the FCC said. "Consistent with our established practice, we intend to collect these regulatory fees in the August-September 2007 time frame in order to collect the required amount by the end of the fiscal year." Comments on MD Docket 07-81 are due May 3. Reply comments are due May 11.

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

The vanity call sign fee has fluctuated over the 11 years of the current vanity call sign program, from a low of \$12 to a high of \$50. The FCC says it anticipates some 14,700 Amateur Radio vanity call sign "payment units" or applications during the next fiscal year.

The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable not only when applying for a new vanity call sign but upon renewing a vanity call sign for a new term. The first vanity call sign licenses issued under the current Amateur Radio vanity call sign program that began in 1996 came up for renewal last year.

Those holding vanity call signs issued prior to 1996 are exempt from having to pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee at renewal, however. That's because Congress did not authorize the FCC to collect regulatory fees until 1993. Such "heritage" vanity call sign holders do not appear as vanity licensees in the FCC Amateur Radio database.

Amateur Radio licensees may file for renewal only within 90 days of their license expiration date. All radio amateurs must have an FCC Registration Number (FRN) before filing any application with the Commission. Applicants can obtain an FRN by going to the FCC Universal Licensing System (ULS) at, <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>, and clicking on the "New Users Register" link. You must supply your Social Security Number to obtain an FRN. ■

MOTOROLA SUSPENDS POWERLINE LV BPL DEVELOPMENT

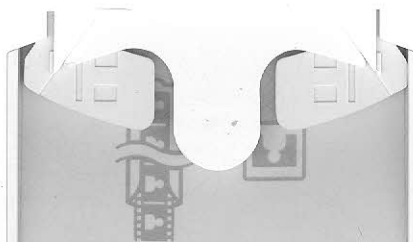
From ARRL Letter Vol. 26 No. 18

Less than two years after announcing its Powerline LV Access BPL product, Motorola has decided to suspend product development and to devote its resources to more promising markets, industry sources say. Motorola reportedly has decided to focus on a product called Powerline MU, which is for use within multiple-unit dwellings. The decision to stop work on its Access BPL product reflects declining interest in residential broadband service delivery among utilities coupled with more immediate demand for in-building BPL systems. Motorola has indicated that it's not scrapping Powerline LV altogether, however.

Powerline LV united Motorola's Canopy wireless broadband Internet platform with enhanced ham band-notching HomePlug technology, drastically reducing BPL interference potential by restricting the application of high-frequency RF to the low-voltage side of the power transformers serving customers' homes, not the medium-voltage wires that line many residential streets. As a result, Powerline LV avoided the system architecture that poses the greatest risk of BPL interference to radio communication -- radiation from the medium-voltage power lines.

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, expressed appreciation for Motorola's approach to the thorny issue of radio interference from BPL systems. In an effort to minimize interference, particularly to the Amateur Radio bands, Motorola designed its Powerline LV system in close cooperation with the League's technical staff, Sumner noted. A test stand Access BPL system was in operation briefly at ARRL Headquarters. Measurements and subjective listening tests on the ham bands showed that Powerline LV was Amateur Radio-friendly.

"As one would expect from a company with such a distinguished record in the field of radio communication, Motorola acknowledged at the outset the seriousness of the interference problem," he said. "Motorola's system architecture influenced other vendors, raised industry awareness of the interference issue, and demonstrated the value of working with the ARRL to find positive solutions."



Austin Amateur Radio Club

Membership Form for year ending December 31, _____
 Application for: (check applicable box or boxes and include payment)

- AARC \$20 single \$30 family (all at same mailing address)
 \$5 student (thru 12th grade, no AARCOVER by mail)
 ARRL \$24 (first time member) \$21 (senior first time)
 \$37 (renewal thru AARC) \$34 (senior renewal)
 QCWA \$6 (Local chapter 67 annual dues)

Check One: Information changes Renew membership
 New member (never before registered)

Call sign: _____ License class? E A G T+ T N (circle one)
 Year First Licensed: _____ Date of Birth*: _____
 First name: _____ Last name: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____
 Mobile Phone: _____ Pager: _____
 Email Address: _____

If the family box is checked please list family members below.

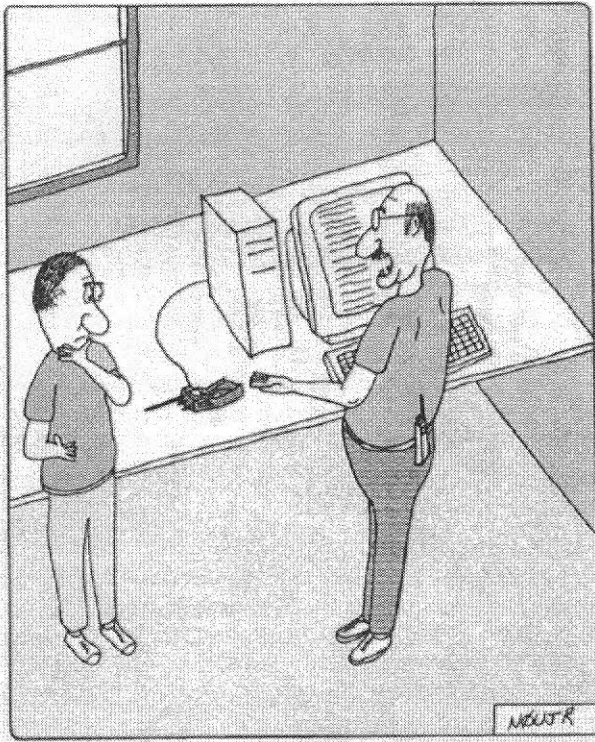
2nd Call: _____ Name: _____ ARRL?
 3rd Call: _____ Name: _____ ARRL?
 4th Call: _____ Name: _____ ARRL?

I/We have interest in the following:

- Monthly meetings Field Day Working events Transmitter hunts
 2 meters FM DXing Newsletter Holding Office
 Presenting programs CW Net control Emer communications
 Holding ARRL office Education Public Awareness Working with Youth
 Other _____

Mail this form with payment to:
 AARC - P.O. Box 4739 - Austin, TX 78765 or:
 Bring it to the next meeting (See <http://www.austinhams.org>)

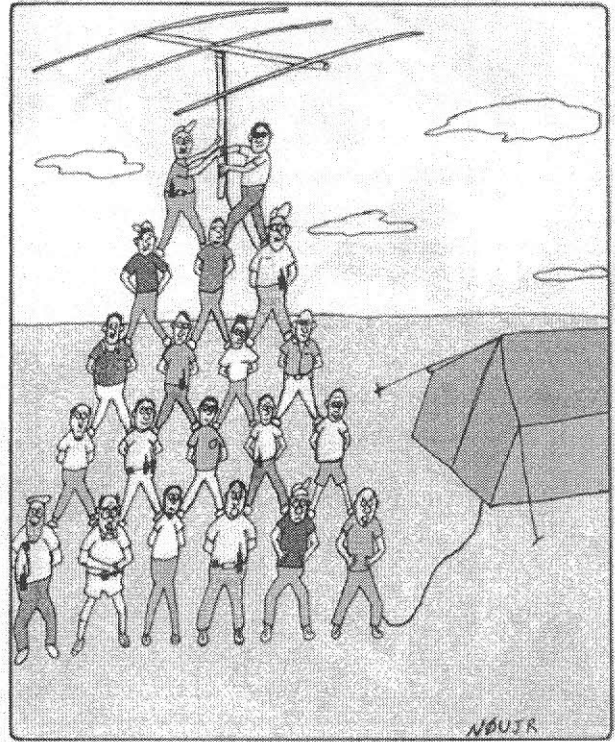
* Required by ARRL for student and senior discounts.



Sorry Fred, but when I try to read out the program in your radio, all I get is a repeating message that says: "SOME IDIOT RAN OVER ME... SOME IDIOT RAN OVER ME!!!!"

NØUJR and His Friends

By Greg Trook, NØUJR



The Oak Valley Amateur Radio Club demonstrates its well honed emergency operating skills, by improvising a tower during Field Day.

AARC Meeting Info.

*****NOTE Meeting Changes*****

ARL Labs

10000 Burnet Rd. North of 183

Officers Meeting 6:00 PM

Jack in the Box across the street from ARL Labs. Come by and eat dinner first if you like and listen in.

Regular Business Meeting 7:00 PM

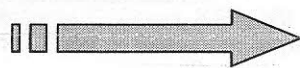
June 5th - Stuart Rohre, K5KVH will give us a rundown on Field Day 2007. The what, where, why, when, and how and goals we want to achieve.

2007 Upcoming Amateur Exams

ARRL VEC- June 2nd & July 7th 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- June 16th & July 21st
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.

JOIN



2007 Calendar of Events

Jun 8-9 Hamcom Plano Center in Plano

469-361-2143 www.hamcom.org

Jun 22-24 Field Day weekend

Jun 30 Deep East Texas Amateur Radio Club first

Swapfest Denman Avenue Baptist Church Family Life Center Setup at 7AM and selling begins 8AM, sales will cease at noon All amateurs can set up and sell. Talk-in 146.94 (- offset, PL 141.3) repeater in Lufkin

<http://www.qsl.net/detarc/>

Jul 26-29 Central States VHF Conference in San

Antonio www.csvhfs.org/conference/index.html

Aug 3-4 Austin Summerfest (note venue and hotel name change) **Wyndham Garden Hotel** - Austin (was Woodward Hotel & Conference Center) 3401 South IH-35 & Woodward St. Joe W5HS@arrl.net (512) 345-0800
www.austinsummerfest.org/

June	July	Austin Meetings/Happenings
5	3	AARC Meeting ARL Auditorium** 7:00 p.m.
9	14	Austin QRP, Alvin's Sandwich Shop 11:00 a.m.
12	10	ARES Training -LCRA Hancock Bldg 7:30 p.m.
12	10	High Speed Multimedia SIG Red Cross 7:00 p.m.
19	17	ATV Club Mtg. Mangia Pizza 6:30 p.m.
16	21	QCWA Denny's on Burnet Rd. 2:00 p.m.
25	23	Travis Co. REACT Denny's on Burnet 7:00 p.m.
26	24	Travis County A.R.E.S., ARL Aud. 7:00 p.m.
27	25	Packet Set-up Lab @ Red Cross* 7:00 p.m.

*Red Cross Located at 2218 Pershing Dr. Austin

**AARC Business Meeting is at ARL Labs 10000 Burnet Rd.

Visitors are welcome whether they are licensed hams or not. Other meetings or activities are listed under the headings for Calendar.

Lori Schmidt, KM5MQ
903 Fieldstone
Round Rock, TX 78664

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
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Permit No. 2942
Time Value Newsletter

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Austin Amateur Radio Club
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June 2007
Return Service Requested

