Volume 19, No. 3   March 2001

MARC St. Patrick Day Hamfest set for March 17-18

The 2001 MARC Hamfest and Texas State ARRL Convention will be at the Midland Country Exhibit Building, 2445 E. Business loop 20. The headquarters hotel is the Holiday Inn, Midland. *The pre-registrations have to be received before Monday, March 12, 2001, otherwise, you can not get the lower rate and chance at the pre-registration prize.* Having the Texas State ARRL Convention in connection will probably increase the attendance. As always, the Amateurs in Midland need to be good hosts.

WTSCM, Charles Royall, WB5T, will host the ARRL Meeting at the Holiday Inn on Friday night at 7:00 p.m. Jim Haynie, W5JBP, ARRL President, Coy C. Day, N5PK, W. Gulf Director, and Dr. David Woolweaver, K5RAV, Vice Director will be present. Special Guest, Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZXDH, FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement, will be present. Other activities include visiting with friends and Amateurs, buying and selling, forums and meetings, testing for Amateur Radio Licenses, and swapping "yarns". Also, there will be a number of commercial dealers present with their "goodies". Don't forget the Hospitality Room with our own, George Toone, WB5FBJ, entertaining with his talents and humor for your enjoyment at the Holiday Inn on Saturday evening. If you have not had the privilege of hearing, George, you have missed a treat.

Midland Amateurs, don't forget the times and dates you have agreed to help in "staging" the Hamfest. You are needed to be present and on time for your duties. The success of Hamfest depends upon how you do your jobs. You have never failed to carry out your responsibilities in a superb fashion. Keep your "welcome smile" on at all times.

MARC Meetings
Clubhouse - 7:30 P.M.

March 12, 2001
Midland Amateur Radio Club Hamfest - Final preparations

March 26, 2001
Mark Cranford, N5XXD, and Sara Cranford, N5ZMP, will present a program on W.A..S. (Worked All States).

MARC Happenings

April 7 ? - Guadalupe DXpedition

March - Technician Class continues

President Pete Speaks, WB7AMP

No article this month from our president. He is probably working in New Mexico at his new job.

Greetings de KK5ZG

As you all know, the Hamfest is only about ten days from now. If you have forgotton to send in your reservation for a table or bought your pre-registration tickets, time is running out. It looks like we are going to have a better year this year than last year. Everything is going very good. We need everybody to attend and enjoy the show. Lets see how full we can get the exhibit building, and let the out of town guests know that we support our Hamfest. It is a known fact most Hamfest attendance is down. Let's not let this happen to Midland. Come one, come all, and show our support. See you there.

73, Joe, KK5ZG, President Elect

March programs and other information

Thanks everyone, we had a great February. I want to thank Marcus Pacheco, N5OMV, for allowing Jerry Hearn, N5JHX, Dwayne T. Fox, W5ZOX, John Peterson, NX5E, and Bill Bentley, N5POB, for their presentation of the A.T.V. program. Thanks, Marcus, everyone enjoyed the presentation. I also want to thank Scott Johnson, KD5MHM, Alton Teague, N5PSP, and James Martin, KD5HAD, for their A.P.R.S. program. Very good job guys. For those wanting to present a program call me by phone at 699-4574. I will put you on my list.

Programs for March as follows:

Programs from 1st column

March 12 - Midland amateur radio club Hamfest - Final preparations

March 26 - Mark Cranford N5XXD, and Sara Cranford, N5ZMP, will do a program on W. A..S. (Worked All States).

March is here and our Hamfest is around the corner, I hope to see everyone there. Everyone's help is needed this year.

From B. John McDaniel

The following is an interesting page. The URL is: http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/papers/overpass.html

Jim Haynie, W5JBP, President, ARRL, Tue, 13 Feb 2001

TO: All Texas ARRL Members
RE: Texas Bill H.B. 1148

There has been much concern recently about the potential impact of H.B. 1148, introduced in the Texas State Legislature by Representative Robert "Robbie" Cook (28th District). Hundreds of ARRL members have contacted me urging ARRL involvement in protecting the interests of Amateur Radio operators in the state.

Here's the issue: Many Amateur Radio operators fear that this bill, if enacted, could inadvertently impose some very difficult bureaucratic requirements on any attempt to erect even the smallest whip antenna.

I have spoken with Representative Cook's office and that was not his intention. The bill was supposed to deal only with commercial structures. When informed of the concerns of ham operators, Representative Cook's office invited an amendment to ensure that ham operators would not be

Reporting violations on the bands

From: "Hennessee, John, N1KB, Fri, 16 Feb 2001. Email: <jhennessee@arrl.org>

Your Editor contacted John, N1KB, at ARRL regarding complaints and FCC violations on the bands. The following information was sent.

If you have proof and if it is a repeated violation, you can contact Riley Hollingsworth at <fccham@fcc.gov> or by mail at"

FCC
1270 Fairfield Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325

He prefers to have information in writing. 73,

John C. Hennessee, N1KB
Regulatory Information Specialist
Field and Educational Services
ARRL--The National Association
for AMATEUR RADIO
Phone: 860-594-0236
E-mail: n1kb@arrl.org
Fax: 860-594-0259 (indicate John Hennessee)
Regulatory Information Web page: http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/

2001 St. Patrick Day
Hamfest
and
West Section Convention

Saturday and Sunday
March 17th and 18th, 2001

Areas Packet Net Notice

Ares Packet Net is now only a mail drop net until interest is restored.
Dwayne Fox, W5ZOX

APRS: Using It (or: Now that I've got it set up, how do I make it work for me?)

by Arte Booten, N2ZRC <n2zrc@arrl. net>

In other articles I've described what The Automatic Position Reporting System is and how to get it set up on your computer and radio. So you're now probably telling yourself "OK, great. I've got all of these stations appearing on my screen. Now what do I do?"

One feature in APRS is the ability to send what we call one-liners; that is, one-line messages from station to station either direct, or via digipeaters. From the main APRS screen press S(end), type the station's call and <cr>. Then type your message and another <cr>. You'll know if they got it when you receive an *ACK* which replaces the first five characters of your message. These one-liners are the only situation when APRS uses anything other than UI packets.

When you send a message in this manner it will be sent via the same else, you can STILL send it there (if using APRSDos or pocketAPRS) by specifying any of several alternate digipeater paths which the program can store for you. If you press O(perations) D(igipath) S(ave), you're prompted to enter a two-letter code for that path via whatever path you choose, such as: NJ VIA WB2ZII,N2MH-15, KB2EAR-1,K3ATI-11 to get to Southern New Jersey from Westchester. To see the paths you've stored, press O(perations) D (igipath) L(ist). The MAIN purpose of these alternate paths is to keep the QRM to a minimum, and to use the most direct and, sometimes, the only feasible path.

The weather systems feature of APRS allows you to see weather data in real-time, transmitted by stations with using several different kinds of autometed weather stations, including those made by Peet Bro's, Davis Instruments and Oregon Scientific (which made the Radio Shack unit).

Depending on which options the weather station owner installed, you can get different kinds of information including temperature, rainfall amounts (to the 1/100th inch) in the past hour and 24 hour periods, wind speed, direction and gusts and barometric pressure. Press W(eather) to see a list of options to choose from.

If at any time you wish to cease transmitting without shutting down the program, simply touch C (ommands) X(mit). This toggles the TX timer within APRS. You will still send out whatever the TNC itself is set to transmit at their predetermined periods. When you want to send a specific packet (usually your position), you can do so by pressing X(mit) P(osition) [or S (tatus), M(essage), S(tatus), O (bject) or A(ll), as the case may be.]

In order to find a station on the screen, use O(perations) F(ind) (what else!) command. If you'd like to see something really neat, try O (perations) R(eplay) with a mobile station. You'll see that station's track being replayed. To access your TNC you'd use O(perations) C (omms) T(NC) which leads you to a very basic terminal screen. To get stations to appear on your screen faster (within two or three minutes) you'd use O(perations) Q(uery), followed by a radius in miles from you.

Now that you've been QRV with APRS for a few hours, you don't particularly want to wait for all those stations to reappear if, for some reason, you have to exit the program. No problem. When you shut down APRS by pressing Q(uit) Q(uit) <cr> <cr>, it asks if you want to save a backup (it'll do so by default). Next time you fire it up, you'd press F(iles) L(oad), then type BACKUP.BK . Every time you shut

APRS down, it saves this file, replacing the previous copy. Be aware, though, That all of those packets are timed, and any station in this backup that was heard more than two hours ago will "gray-out" (APRS considers them to be inactive and makes room for more stations that way.)

One thing to bear in mind when playing APRS is that the best way to learn, as with anything else, is by doing. You can use most of the commands as much as you want. You're not going to BREAK anything! About the worst thing that can happen is a lockup, and this is rare. Usually the three-fingered-salute (Ctrl-Alt-Del) will get you out of it and you have to start over. So play with the thing. I mean, how do you think I learned all this about APRS stuff, by reading about it?

Speaking of reading about it, yes I did. It's all right there in the APRS distribution zip file. You can always read those files by just pressing F1 F(iles) and typing in the name of the file you want to see. One suggestion: if you're a slow reader, press the down-arrow button every so often, as APRS seems to get impatient with you when it just sits there while you re-read that paragraph for the umpty-umph time and pushes you back into the program.

There are dozens of these readme files in the "README" folder. You can also see them (at your leisure and there for the printing) by using any old text editor. Many of the answers to your questions can be found there, sometimes buried deep and not quite as visible as you'd like.

I hope you've enjoyed this series about APRS and hope to see you on the map in the near future. Whenever I see a new station on the screen I try to send them a one-liner, welcoming them to APRS and offering live assistance and advice. Feel free to take advantage of this

or ask questions of any station on the air at that time. We're all very excited about this program and think that "the more, the merrier" is the way to go. We've gotten a lot of "converts" in the last few years, and this situation can only improve so come and join us on 144.390! 73

Figuring out the best Digipeater Which Way Do They Go, George?)

by Arte Booten, N2ZRC
<n2zrc@weca.org>

As with any packet networking, path selection depends on what can be heard by you and those that can actually hear you. You can get the equivalent of an MHEARD command, showing you the paths stations near you are using and which stations you hear direct by pressing the D(igipeat) key. See who these are. Hopefully, one of them will be a WIDE.

Any APRS network relies on the majority of fixed stations having their TNC's DIGIpeat function turned on and their MYAlias set to RELAY. Since APRS is an unconnected protocol, packet nodes (with a few excep tions), which rely on connections and error-checking for data transfer, are counterproductive. APRS utilizes that DIGIpeat function by the use of GENERIC callsigns as a TNC's alias(es), most commonly RELAY and WIDE.

There are various flavors of WIDE, all represented differently on the screens of different APRS versions. But first let me describe the function of RELAY in the APRS network, as this is a useful, In many areas, most of these RELAYs are able to hit the nearest WIDE directly.

This means that if you can hear and get digi'd by the nearest IDE from a fixed location with reasonable consistency, you should AVOID THE USE OF RELAY be-

cause if a WIDE hears you, others probably can as well..and they're probably also using the alias RELAY. This causes collisions as each of the RELAYs that hear you try to digipeat your packet at about the same instant. And your packet will probably die then and there.

Now back to the various flavors of WIDE. The first is just that. It'll digipeat anything that specifically goes via its callsign as well as to the generic callsign WIDE, shown as a small green star in APRSDos. Sometimes, there's also a weather station associated with this DIGI, in which case APRSDos shows them as a green circle. Next comes WIDE-RELAY. These are TNC's that can have two aliases and digi packets addressed via RELAY, WIDE or its own callsign and show on APRSDos as big green stars.

We also use WIDEs that use an alias of TRACE. Their firmware supports the DIGI-SWAP function. When it DIGIs something addressed via one of its generic callsigns it changes that GENERIC callsign to that of its own in the VIA: field of that packet. This allows people to see how the network is propagating and makes selection of paths a bit easier. Those of us running APRSDos, WinMacAPRS and pocketAPRS see these as that large star with a T in the middle.

The next type uses something the inventor of APRS (The Great Oracle of Glen Burnie) Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, first proposed several years ago to enhance unconnected networking via amateur packet radio and Kantronics recently picked up on. It uses a scheme Bob calls WIDEn-n. "N" is a number between 1 & 6. The first of these would represent the number of "hops" you want to take.

The second of these numbers depends on how many times that packet has been digipeated by the time the last digi retransmitted it. It's set by the firmware in current

Kantronics TNC's (but I understand that others *MAY* be coming out with it in the "near" future) and decrements one from that number on the packet it's heard, but hasn't yet DIGI'd. WIDEn-n TNC's can also be set for callsign substitution, as I described above. They have an N in the middle of the green star.

The beauty of WIDEn-n is seen best in a network in which most, if not all, WIDEs in a given area have such firmware. In others, users of callsign substitution might consider shutting that feature off. Unfortunately, not everybody that has a digi is USING Kantronics' stuff. And some of those that are aren't willing or able to change the chip. This pretty much describes the APRS network in my part of the woods.

What's the best path? Look around. Who hears you. Who do they hear. And where do you want the packets to go? I suppose you'd like a nice, stable path from Montauk to Albany and Newark to Binghampton. Good luck. The path you need is there, if you can see anybody else on your screen. If a Green Star can hear you, then that's gonna be your starting point. From there, just follow the bouncing green stars. 73

|Arte Booten <n2zrc@arrl.net> AEC for Digital Services, NYC ARES/RACES|
|Riverdale, New York [FN30bu] ! 4052.71N/07354.06WNPHG5370/A=00240|
|PGP Key Fingerprint: D73E B889 C630 6F4A F31F 3083 56BD 0AAD 9996 3B03|

The is the second and the last part of the Article on APRS. I hope that some of you will make use of this long but informative article. Please let you editor know if you like or dislike this type of article in the newsletter.

Club needs overhead projector

The club needs an overhead projector for the licensing classes and etc. If you know where one is available, please contact Dewey, WB5CDD. Remember the club can accept items as tax write-offs.

NETS

Big Bend Emergency Net meets at 8:30 A.M. (Central) Every Sunday Morning. The frequency is 3922.

The West Texas Connection Sunday Morning Net meets at 0900 (Central) every Sunday morning. The net is informal and open to all. Check in for local ham news and events. Midland frequency is 147.220, + offset, 88.5 tone or 444.100 + offset, 162.2 tone. Mike Smith, W5MLS, is Net Control.

The Southwest Lynx System Net meets at 12:00 noon, Sunday. The net meets at 145.130, - offset, 88.50 tone and 440.200, + offset, 162.2 tone. Dwayne Fox, W5ZOX is net control.

West Texas Amateur Radio Club Net, Odessa, meets each Monday at 9:00 P.M. The frequency is 145.470 with an 88.5 tone. Needs a Net Control.

Big Spring 10 Meter Net is at 8:00 P. M on Tuesday evening at 28.485 up or down a few.

Midland 2 Meter Net meets each Tuesday night at 9:00 P.M. on 147.300, offset: – 600 Mhz. Mike Smith, W5MLS is Net Control.

Ares Net meets each Wednesday night at 9:00 p.m. on 147.300, offset: -600 Mz. Dwayne T.Fox, W5ZOX, is Net Control.

ARES 70 Centimeters Net (West Texas & Southwest New Mexico) meets on Wednesday night at 8:00 p.m. on 444.925 UHF with a 2146..2 tone. Net Control is Mark Smith, N5UNH.

<u>New Net.</u> **Midland County ARES Packet Net** meets on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. on 144.970. Check-ins go through MIDTEX on the talk mode. No net control. Leave your check-ins at Dwayne's mail drop.

Howard County Net meets each Thursday at 8:00 P.M. on 146.820.

Pay Your Dues

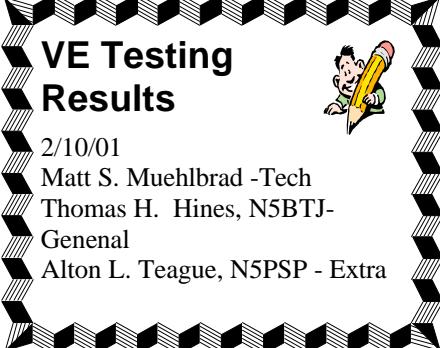If you haven't paid your dues for 2001, please do so.

March Birthdays

DON MCCARTY, 26, K5CFA
CALVIN WHITE, 11, K5VLN
EDDIE OWEN, 01, KA5L
EVA JO DALY, 04, KA5SIX
STACIE CRAIG, 14, KB5CPB
RALPH LANG, 29, KB5CWJ
GINGER STRAIT, 08, KB5JGS
MICHAEL LLOYD, 04. KB5NJR
GERALD BEAZLEY, 14, KB5RGD
WILLIAM COOPER, 27, KB5RTR
BILLY SALYERS, 28, KB5TUN
ROBERT WANDS, 17, KC5WUP
ROBERT BOYD, 08, KC5ZJO
B. JOHN MCDANIEL, 02, KE5PL
DAVID EGGLESTON, 29, KI5AS
J "RIC" SOHL, 20, KK5RIC
JOE E COLDEWEY, 16, KK5ZG
JAY SCHWISOW, 24, KT5E
DONALD RAY, 04, N5FRN
DANE WIGGONS, 04, N5JST
RANDY KARCH, 31, N5OVH
RUSTY HILL, 23, N5TLI,
ROD NORRIS, 13, N5XXO
DWAYNE FOX, 17, W5ZOX
WILLIAM WRIGHT, 10, WA5CVO
ROYCE ROWDEN, 13, WA5IKX
BRAD COX, 01, WB0AOO
GEORGE TOONE, 13, WB5FBJ
MARK DILL, 22, WB5RCD
JOANNE BECKLEY, 05, WB5UKD
PETE STULL, 30, WB7AMP
LES BANNON, 20, WF5E
TERRY LAMBDIN, 07, WV5E

Telephone at MARC Clubhouse reprogrammed

The telephone at the club house has been reprogrammed to include the MARC Web Page, <http://www.w5qgg.org/>, and the club email address, which is <wb5cdd@arrl.net>. The phone number is 685-3372.

VE Testing Results

2/10/01
Matt S. Muehlbrad -Tech
Thomas H. Hines, N5BTJ-Genenal
Alton L. Teague, N5PSP - Extra

Member of

Midland VE Team

Testing is conducted at the Red Cross Building on Elizabeth Street at 8:30 A.M. on the second Saturday of every month. (Other times may be arranged.) A total of $10.00 will charged for each session. All elements and code use the multiple choice format. Individual ear phones are used for code testing.Testing is always sponsored by the ARRL-VEC. For more information call Mitch Martin, WA5ZAP @ 561-9397, Email: wa5zap@apex2000.net or Sterling Talley,Contact Person, WB5G @ 684-6994, Email: sterling@apex2000.net.

Club needs overhead projector

The club needs an overhead projector for the licensing classes and etc. If you know where one is available, please contact Dewey, WB5CDD. Remember the club can accept items as tax write-offs.

Officers for 2000

R.L. "Pete" Stull, WB7AMP – President
306 E. 57th St., Odessa, TX 79762-3611
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Email: WB7AMP@caprok.net

Dwayne Fox, W5ZOX - V. President
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Phone: 699-4574
Email: w5zox@texascavers.com

Beverley Harwood, KC5BNT, Secretary
6100 S. Couty Rd, Midlnd, TX 79706-7700
Phone 686-1841
Email: shamrock109@home.com

C. A. Ross, KM5OK - Treasurer
3507 W. Louisiana Ave.Midland, TX
79703-5645 Phone: 697-5487

Ken Williams, K5JOG, Director
9700 S. County Rd., 79706-7812
Phone: 684-3738
Email: TELCOKEN@worldnet.att.net

Jim Reid, K5KUX – Director
3504 Douglas Ave., Midland, TX 79703-5016
Phone: 694-0725

Steve Hopkins, K5RS – Trustee
3511 Princeton Ave., 79703-5011
Phone: 915-520-4003
Email:k5rs@apex2000.net

The officers for 2000 will serve with the 2001 officers until after the Hamfest.

West Texas Section Manager
Charlie Royall, WB5T
915-944-0469
cnroyall@wcc.net

H.B. 1148 from page 2

affected.

I have sent the following amendment to Representative Cook's office and they are willing to put it into the bill:

Sec. 240.082.5 EXCLUSIONS: Nothing herein shall be construed to regulate, nor shall it regulate, antennas, antenna support structures, devices or facilities, installed, maintained and used exclusively for Amateur Radio communications by Amateur Radio operators licensed by the Federal Communications Commission.

Rather than continuing to alert me about this bill, Amateur Radio operators in Texas may wish to contact Representative Cook at the State Capitol to indicate their support of this amendment.

Technician Class is in progress

The Technician Class is off to a good start. There are nine students enrolled.

They are Virginia Byrd, Robert Jahnel, Troy Rich, Norman Swango, Donna Fin Pacheco, D.J. Fin, John Patterson. Other are Scott Johnson and David Grimes.

If you would consider teaching, call Dewey, WB5CDD, 694-3162.

Officers for 2001

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Email:k5rs@apex2000.net

W5QGG Since 1955 — MIDLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB — P O BOX 4401 Midland TX 79704-4401

Midland Amateur Radio Club ApplicationForm

Name _____ Call _____ Class _____

Address _____ ARRL Member _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Home Phone _____Work Phone _____

Email Address _____ Date of Birth _____ _____ _____

Do you wish to purchase a speed call ?. _____

Names and Calls of Additional Family Members:
_____
_____
_____

Number of Years ____ X $15.00 _____
Addl Members X Years X $3.00 _____
Speed Call at $5.00(Optional) _____

Make checks Payable to Midland Amateur Radio Club.Thank You
and Send TO P O BOX 4401 MIDLAND TX 79704-4401

Total Enclosed:_____