



GRAYSON COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NEWS

MAY 2017

WWW.GRAYSONCOUNTYARC.COM

VOL. 23, No. 5

THE PRESIDENT'S QSO

Hi All,

The Club meeting was good. Lee Sly N5SLY talked about our overall W5I event, and James Frank KW5CW talked about using CW for the event. Trevor KG5BFI did a presentation on HF techniques, and I talked about APRS. We will be using APRS for the Kiwanis Bike Rally later this year.

Here are my links to APRS info I talked about at the meeting:

<http://tnc-x.com/>

<https://aprs.fi>

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

Speaking of the Bike Rally, here is some information from Joe Brown regarding the current plan:

As for now, what you can tell your club is: August 12 at Tanglewood. Routes will be generally the same distances, but we are changing the course. We will be avoiding 289 this year, and going through a different part of the county. Charlie is finalizing routes this week. You should know the general routes next week at the meeting. Rest stop locations will change.

Saturday was okay at the Perrin Field event station; we made some contacts, but the bands were bad. Douglas Hotalen KG5QPI got his first HF contact!

Remember to email me or Trevor if you would like to do a presentation at one of the meetings or to sign up for net control for our twice monthly information nets.

Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW@arrl.net

Trevor Reed kg5bfi@gmail.com

See you at the next meeting.

Mark
KF5UZW



Can anyone guess who this is?

CLUB INFORMATION

OFFICERS

President: Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW
Vice President: James Frank KW5CW
Secretaries: Stacy Branam W5ORD
Nancy Pierce KG5PIZ
Treasurer: Marvin Schiavone KG5GMA
Activity Director: Trevor Reed KG5BFI
Trustee: Rick Simmons K5ECX

MEETINGS

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

MAILING ADDRESS

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

MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

Memberships are from January 1 – December 31

NEWSLETTER

Published: Monthly via e-mail
Editor: Mike Bernier KF5NPM
To submit news or Send E-Mail to
e-mail changes: KF5NPM@gmail.com
Submission 12 midnight on the Sunday
Deadline: following each monthly meeting

WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Address: www.graysoncountyar.com
Webmaster: Ben Sly KF5OEB
Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/K5GCC
Page:

DUES AND DONATIONS

Membership dues are payable upon joining and renew on January 1st 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

GCARC MEETING MINUTES

GCARC Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2017

- Meeting called to order 7:03 pm, 19 members in attendance
- Recognized new hams Linda KG5SKN and Andrew KG5SKM
- Minutes and treasurer's report from April meeting were approved
- Saturday, May 20, the club held its Perrin Field Special Event Station. Lee Sly N5SLY made a special presentation detailing the event.
The event will run through May 28th at 2359 Zulu; any club member can participate using their personal equipment using the W5I call sign. Please keep a log of your contacts to submit to Lee Sly at the end of the event.
- Field Day will be June 24-25 at the Sherman Municipal Airport
We will be on the air by 1:00 pm and tear down at noon on Sunday.
Bring your own drinks, the club will provide hotdogs/buns/chips
We will run PSK31, digital, and phone.
James Frank KW5CW will bring his equipment and run CW, Mark Pilkilton KF5UZW will bring his radio and Buddipole, the club radio and antenna will also be utilized.
- The tower project at Perrin Field is still in the works, we are looking for suggestions for a good 20 m beam antenna. Ben Sly KF5OEB will get the hole dug, we will mount the bracket, set the base, and pour concrete. After it sets we will continue adding sections.
- The Kiwanis Bike Rally was addressed. It is August 12th. Some of the routes have changed and we will continue to receive information as it becomes available.

Trevor Reed KG5BFI concluded the meeting with a presentation and Q&A about the basics of HF. Many new hams had excellent questions about operating HF.

The next meeting will be Friday, June 16, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Grayson County Courthouse, 2nd Floor Assembly Room, 100 W. Houston St., Sherman TX.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy Branam W5ORD
Nancy Pierce KG5PIZ
GCARC Secretaries

GCARC TREASURER'S REPORT

Bank Balance as of 05.01.2017 1791.87

Operating Fund Beginning Bal 1,462.33

Deposits	Dues	Checks	30.00	
		Cash	30.00	
		Online		
		Clothes	91.00	

Less expenses

		online fee		
Perrin AFB	Donation	1123	50.00	
Troop 605	Memorial	1125	20.00	

Operating Fund Balance 1,543.33

** Members YTD

Available Equipment Funds 329.54

Donation

Less expenditures

Mark Pilkilton		1124	151.89	
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Equipment Fund Balance 177.65

Ending Bank Balance as of May 22, 2017 1,720.98

Marvin Schiavone KG5GMA
GCARC Treasurer

OPERATING BUDGET	
Post Office Box	64.00
Checks	9.25
Website	103.92
<i>Special Events Deposit</i>	
Perrin	50.00
<i>Food for Special Events</i>	
<i>Donations</i>	
Memorials	
Wade's mother Troop 605	20.00
<i>Total</i>	247.17

EQUIPMENT NEEDS	
Tower Bracket	151.89
Amount Budgeted	0

CLUB MEETINGS, LOCAL ACTIVITIES, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Club Meetings

Grayson County Amateur Radio Club (GCARC)

3rd Friday at 7:00pm

Grayson County Courthouse 2nd floor assembly room, 100 West Houston Street, Sherman TX

<http://www.graysoncountyarc.com>

Cooke County Amateur Radio Club (CCARC)

2nd Thursday at 7:00pm

Cooke County Library, 200 S. Weaver Street, Gainesville TX

<http://www.gainesvillehamfest.org/club.htm>

Durant Amateur Repeater Association (DARA)

3rd 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)

3rd Saturday at 9:00am

First Presbyterian Church, 818 North Main Street, Bonham TX

<http://www.k5frc.org>

McKinney Amateur Radio Club (MARC)

2nd Tuesday at 7:00pm

Spring Creek Barbecue, 1993 North Central Expressway, McKinney TX

<http://www.mckinneyarc.org>

Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) Chapter 41

1st Saturday at 11:00am

Visit website for meeting location

<https://qcwachapter41dallas.org>

ARES® / SKYWARN®

Grayson County ARES® Training

4th 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

ARRL Field Day

Setup: June 24, 2017 9:00am

Operating: June 24, 2017 1:00pm through June 25, 2017 4:00pm

Sherman Municipal Airport Terminal Building, 1200 S. Dewey Ave., Sherman TX

Specific bands and modes TBA

Red River Bridge War Special Event

Operating Period: July 21-30, 2017

The club will operate a special event station using the callsign W5I to commemorate the Red River Bridge War in July 1931 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_River_Bridge_War).

Details TBA

VE Testing Sessions

Texoma VE Team – Bi-Monthly Testing

1st 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@arll.net

Durant Amateur Repeater Association – Monthly Testing

3rd Tuesday of each month at 8:00pm (following the DARA monthly meeting)

Bryan County Emergency Management, 2808 Enterprise Drive, Durant OK

Contact: Jim K5BNK (jharmon1940@gmail.com)

Fannin County Amateur Radio Club – Appointment-Only Testing

First Presbyterian Church, 818 North Main Street, Bonham TX

Contact David WA0URJ (wa0urj@yahoo.com) to schedule a session

Hamfests and Swap Meets

Ham-Com

June 9-10, 2017 (Friday and Saturday 8:00am-5:00pm)

VE Testing: Friday 11:00am-5:00pm, Saturday 11:00am-4:00pm

Irving Convention Center, 500 West Las Colinas Blvd, Irving TX

Talk-In: 146.720 (110.9 PL)

Public Contact: Bill Nelson AB5QZ (469) 964-2814 or bill.nelson@hamcom.org

Website: <http://www.hamcom.org>

Ham Holiday (Oklahoma State ARRL Convention)

July 21-22, 2017 (Friday 3:00pm-7:00pm, Saturday 8:00am-3:00pm)

VE Testing: Saturday 1:00pm-3:00pm

Tower Hotel, 3233 Northwest Expressway, Oklahoma City OK

Talk-In: 146.895 (141.3 PL)

Public Contact: Thomas Webb WA9AFM (405) 737-6716 or wa9afm@arrl.net

Website: <http://hamholiday.com>

CW CORNER

I said I would be there, but I never showed up. Things came up in the last minute that prevented me from operating CW at the Perrin Field Event last Saturday - May 20th. But all is not lost. I am working on 40 and 20 CW through this week (7.045 Mhz + 14.045 Mhz), until the beginning a real weekend CW contest begins on Friday May 27 starting at 0000 UTC Saturday (May 26th - Friday @ 7PM) and runs until 2359 UTC Sunday. It is the CQ World Wide WPX contest. This contest always runs the last full weekend of May. Needless to say the bands will be crowded with us contest nuts, and I will be working 24 hours in that contest (the allowable maximum of time). Then playing will be over and then back to work Monday night.

Well guess what? This CW freak known as KW5CW is now running JT65 and PSK31. Can you believe that?!?!?!@!#!%!!. It looks like we will be having a few visitors on Field Day that may be willing to help operate CW and the digital modes. Heck! Even the Boy Scouts plan to be there. I'm looking forward in introducing CW to the younger people. I'm hoping that some of these scouts decide to get into the hobby and even join our club.

Not much can please me more at the moment, except a confirmed contact with Arkansas using W5I on CW. It seems that we can work the world on CW and PK65/PSK31, but we can't seem to find a single soul in Arkansas. But heads up.... A ham that we know - Gary Stone N5PHT will be camping in Arkansas starting on Thursday, so I'll report at the next meeting if I contacted him.

During my W5I operations this week, I finally hooked up with a friend from back in Ohio who I haven't talked to in over 31 years. I have been looking for him since leaving Ohio to move to Texas back in 1986. He answered a W5I CQ this week. Thanks to Ham Radio Deluxe and a service known as QRZ.com within that program, I was immediately enlightened to my contacts full name which rang a bell in my head. He confirmed whom I expected he was and finally, I mean finally I found one of my friends in Ohio that I've been wondering about for over 30 years.

An another CW contest I plan to work this year so far is another ARRL sponsored contest - The 2017 November Sweepstakes CW - November 4th, 5th, and 6th. There are a few CQ contests coming up this year for CW, and it's undecided if I'll actually have time to work them. Club sponsored events where CW operations will be present are Field

Day - June 24-25th, Red River Bridge War Special Event - July 22nd and the Eisenhower Birthday Special Event - October 14th. Come on out and have some CW fun !!

73

James Frank KW5CW
GCARC Vice President

QSL MANAGER'S DESK

The Perrin Field Special Event is off and running using the W5I call sign. We set up our station at the Perrin Field Museum on Saturday and had fun making contacts for a few hours. We shut it down early so members could attend the services for Wade's mother. Very sorry to hear of her passing.

The event continues all this week so there is plenty of time to get on the air and make some contacts using our 1X1 call sign before the event ends on May 28 at 2359z.

I've had good luck making contacts so far using the W5I call sign and here are a few of the "special" ones I've been able to contact...

- KA3DHV – Jim in Florida. He completed High Altitude Training at Perrin AFB in 1966. He gets a free QSL card.
- KG7QAR – William in Tennessee. This was his 1st HF contact. Congrats to him. First Contact Award requested from ARRL for him.
- N7T – Hubble Space Telescope Special Event Station
- N3S – National Maritime Day Special Event Station
- VB7150 – Canada's 150th Birthday Special Event Station
- W9A – National EMS Week Special Event Station

These Special Event to Special Event contacts are always special to each of us and we both enjoyed sharing our event information.

I hope you'll find some time this week to get on the air and make some "special" contacts of your own.

73

Lee – N5SLY

P.S. We finally made a contact in Arkansas and it was confirmed on Log Book Of The World, so we qualify for our Worked All States Award from ARRL. Congrats to everyone who has made a contact using the K5GCC or W5I call signs...you all helped us get this award.

The goals for our Perrin Field Special Event were... Have Fun & Contact someone in Arkansas.

As far as I'm concerned our event has been a fantastic success.

HELPING HAMS

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. 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
Bob Sholl W5DSA	Needs help with a rotator on a 100' tower.	Denison
Sheila Sammons KF5TDP	Needs help with antenna repairs – damaged from falling tree limbs. Looking at sometime later in the year.	Sherman
Mike Bernier KF5NPM	Needs help with replacing damaged HF antenna plus installing two additional antennas and grounding. Looking at sometime later in the year.	Denison

SWAP MEET

(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. Photographs are encouraged. There is no charge for listings, and you do not need to be a member of GCARC to participate.

FOR SALE: Heathkit DX-60

DX-60 in great condition. Finals replaced.

Asking \$85.

Contact: David Reeder WA0URJ
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

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF AMATEUR RADIO

FCC Issues Notice of Unlicensed Operation in Dallas Public Safety Interference Complaint



The FCC has issued a *Notice of Unlicensed Operation* ([NUO](#)) to a Texas man for causing interference to a VHF public safety communications system in Dallas County. The FCC Enforcement Bureau issued the *Notice* to Bradley C. Pike of Dallas on May 17.

On April 3, agents from the FCC’s Dallas Enforcement Bureau Office responded to a complaint from Dallas County Consolidated Services regarding interference to their VHF public safety communications system. Agents confirmed by direction-finding techniques that VHF emissions coming from Pike’s residence were causing the interference. Pike surrendered a radio signal jammer after admitting to agents that he had used the device, the FCC said.

The Communications Act not only prohibits intentional interference, but the manufacture, importation, marketing, sale, or operation of devices designed to jam or disrupt wireless communications deliberately. Pike could face a substantial fine, seizure of radio equipment, and criminal sanctions, including imprisonment, the FCC said.

Pike has 30 days to respond to the *Notice*, and the Enforcement Bureau “will use all relevant material information before it to determine what, if any, enforcement action is required to ensure your compliance with FCC rules. This will include any information that you disclose in your reply,” the FCC told Pike.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

Maritime Mobile Service Net Relays Distress Call; Crew and Vessel Safe



The Maritime Mobile Service Network ([MMSN](#)) recently served as a critical communication link after the sport fishing vessel *Free Spirit* put out a “mayday” distress call on VHF marine channel 16 after running into trouble in Mexican waters. Brian Stipak, KF7QCX – skipper of the sailing vessel *Ubiquity* – heard the May 13 mayday, which advised that the *Free Spirit* was sinking quickly with four people on board and that all were abandoning ship. Unable to raise coastal stations on his vessel’s VHF radio, Stipak went to the MMSN’s 14.300 MHz frequency. Despite marginal band conditions, he was able to relay a position report to net control station Ken Porter, AC0ML, who had assistance from fellow NCS Scott Roberts, KK4ECR.

“They were taking on water and could not find the source, and were deploying their life raft,” Stipak [recounted](#) on his website. “He clearly gave the coordinates for his position, which I plotted and saw [he] was about in the middle of the Sea of Cortez, about 46 nautical miles from me. My VHF communication with him was marginal.” Stipak said that while he

could barely hear the MMSN net control, the operator was able to copy the information. The S/V *Fathom* also heard the mayday and set a course for the distressed boat.

Porter notified the US Coast Guard in San Diego to relay the information to the Mexican Navy, which dispatched a vessel to the *Free Spirit*'s last-known position. The Coast Guard also tried to raise *Ubiquity* on 14.300 MHz, but band conditions were changing rapidly, and there was no further contact.

Stipak also was able to get through on his cell phone to the port captain at Puerto Escondido and leave information on the distress call.

“We did not hear from the boat in distress for an hour, the last communication saying they were deploying the life raft. I thought the boat had likely sunk,” Stipak said in his website narrative. “Then, the captain of *Free Spirit* came on the VHF again saying they had found and stopped the leak, were trying to pump out the boat, could not start the engine, had deployed the life raft, but not abandoned the boat and did not yet want to cancel the mayday.

Roberts later learned via the Coast Guard that the *Free Spirit* had been towed to the port of San Carlos and that all on board were safe.

“It looks like a great resolution to a very intense situation,” Stipak allowed afterward.

The MMSN is in its 50th year of operation.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

CW Enthusiasts! All Issues of *Morsum Magnificat* Are Now Available for Download

All copies of the English-language version of *Morsum Magnificat*, the Morse Magazine, are now available for [free download](#) from the website of Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO. This includes all 89 issues published from 1986 to 2004. Mike Feher, N4FS, was able to provide the missing editions, which Randy Cole, KN6W, scanned for viewing. The 89 issues of *Morsum Magnificat* contain more than 4,000 printed pages, covering all aspects of Morse telegraphy.



The newly available downloads also include “The Story of the Key: The Best of MM-1,” by Louise Ramsey Moreau W3WRE, which includes a list of American telegraph instrument makers from 1837 to 1900, compiled by Roger Reinke. In addition, there’s “Key WT 8 Amp Worldwide Survey: The Best of MM-2,” by Tony Smith G4FAI, an updated and revised version of the 54-page booklet that provides information about the famous military Morse key, of which more than 100 versions were manufactured in six countries.

Also available: *The MM Q & Z Codebook*, (English), compiled by Rinus Hellemons, PA0BFN, and Dick Kraayveld, PA3ALM, publishers of the original Dutch version of *Morsum Magnificat*. The codebook lists all Q & Z codes in their original applications, including a copy of the original single-page Q-code guide of 1912.

All copies of *Morsum Magnificat* or associated publications downloaded from the N7CFO website are for personal use only and may not be downloaded or distributed for any commercial purpose.

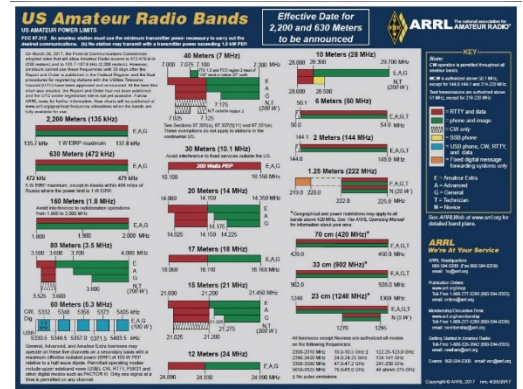
- Originally published online at ARRL.org

Updated ARRL “US Amateur Radio Bands” Chart Now Available

ARRL has revised and updated its “US Amateur Radio Bands” charts, and these now are available for [download](#). These are PDF documents, available in color or grayscale presentations.

The revised charts reflect the new 630- and 2,200-meter bands, but also emphasize that these bands are *not yet available* for Amateur Radio use. The effective date of the recent FCC *Report & Order* granting these allocations has not yet been determined, and until the start date has been set, it is *not* legal under an Amateur Radio license to transmit on either band.

The FCC will publish a notice in *The Federal Register* “announcing such approval and the relevant effective date.” ARRL will announce the UTC notification procedures *and* the effective date to use these new bands as soon as these are known. ARRL will update the Amateur Radio frequency charts at that time.



These reference guides are available for purchase in [11 × 17](#) and [8.5 × 11](#) formats in packs of 50 from the ARRL Store. Both include an ARRL Worked All States (WAS) map on the reverse side.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

FCC Personal Radio Service Revisions Will Affect GMRS, FRS, CB, Other Part 95 Devices

In a lengthy *Report and Order (R&O)* in a proceeding (WT Docket No. 10-119) dating back 7 years, the FCC has announced rule changes affecting the General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS), the Family Radio Service (FRS), the Citizens Band Radio Service (CBRS or “CB”), as well as other applications that fall under the FCC’s Part 95 Personal Radio Services (PRS) rules and regulations. Part 95 devices typically are low-power units that communicate over shared spectrum and, with some exceptions, do not require an individual user license from the FCC. As the *R&O* explains, common examples of PRS devices include “walkie-talkies;” radio-control cars, boats, and planes; hearing assistance devices; CB radios; medical implant devices; and Personal Locator Beacons.



“This draft *Report and Order* completes a thorough review of the PRS rules in order to modernize them, remove outdated requirements, and reorganize them to make it easier to find information,” the FCC said in a summary attached to the *R&O*. “As a result of this effort, the rules will become consistent, clear, and concise.”

GMRS and FRS devices are used for personal communication over several miles; compact FRS handhelds, often sold in pairs, are widely available. While GMRS and FRS share spectrum, GMRS provides for greater communications range and requires an FCC license; FRS does not.

“The rules will increase the number of communications channels for both GMRS and FRS, expand digital capabilities to GMRS (currently allowed for FRS), and increase the power/range for certain FRS channels to meet consumer demands for longer range communications (while maintaining higher power capabilities for licensed GMRS),” the FCC explained.

The amended rules eventually will eliminate combination FRS/GMRS radios for the most part, but allow up to 2 W PEP output for FRS transceivers. “[M]any current users of GMRS/FRS combination radios do not obtain licenses to operate over the GMRS frequencies in those radios,” the FCC said. “Much of this problem likely arises as a result of the mass consumer marketing of combination devices for sale to the public in large quantities to users who do not know about or do not understand the licensing requirements attached to such radios and obligations associated with operating in the GMRS.”

The FCC said it no longer will certify FRS devices that incorporate GMRS capabilities or capabilities of other services. Existing GMRS/FRS combination radios that operate at power levels of less than 2 W ERP will be reclassified as FRS devices; existing GMRS/FRS radios that operate above that power level will be reclassified as GMRS devices, requiring an individual license. Radios that can transmit on GMRS repeater input channels will continue to be licensed individually and not by rule.

“We believe the 2 W limit for FRS is appropriate, because many of the existing combination GMRS/FRS radios already operate under that level with no significant complaints about interference or other problems, and it provides a reasonable balance between the desire for increased range over the prior FRS power levels and battery life,” the FCC said.

The FCC said changes to the decades-old Citizens Band (CB) rules will remove outdated requirements, including certain labeling requirements. DXing on Citizens Band will become legal too. Once the new rules are effective, CBers will be allowed to contact stations outside of the FCC-imposed – but widely disregarded – 155.3-mile distance limit. The revised CB rules further clarify how hands-free devices can be used with CB radios and will allow the use of wireless microphones with CB radios. “We find the record persuasive regarding the consumer demand for this feature, and it will promote safety on the highways by reducing driver distraction for those using CB [radios],” the FCC said. The FCC left in place the current power limits for the CB Radio Service.

The rule changes will phase out the use of voice-scrambling or “obscuring” features in all Part 95 devices, and it will ultimately prohibit manufacture, importation, or sale of any devices incorporating such features, “regardless of whether the Commission has previously certified that radio.”

Overall, the FCC said, its action “achieves a thorough review of Part 95 rules and creates a new rule structure where common administrative rules are consolidated to reduce duplication, and individual subparts are structured with a common numbering scheme.” The FCC said the changes remove “outdated and unnecessary rules, while clarifying others.”

Most of the new Part 95 rules will become effective 30 days after their publication in *The Federal Register*.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

Amateur Radio Volunteers Support 2017 Boston Marathon

Nearly 280 Amateur Radio communication volunteers on April 17 participated the 2017 Boston Marathon, the 121st running of the event organized by the Boston Athletic Association (BAA). Warmer-than-typical temperatures for the Patriots' Day race raised concern for increased medical issues, but lower humidity and some cloud cover later in the afternoon mitigated the potential for problems.

Amateur Radio's primary communication role involved logistics. Amateur Radio operations included relaying medical resupply requests, picking up runners via medical sweep buses, conveying medical statistics as required by the Red Cross and Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and providing situational awareness as needed along the entire 26-mile route. Amateur Radio also backed up EMS communications, and the team relayed several ambulance requests along the route. Brett Smith, AB1RL, one of the BAA Organizational Committee representative, said Marathon organizers were very pleased with the efforts of Amateur Radio Operators.

“Congratulations to everyone on a job very well done,” Smith said afterward. “We were braced for a busy day, and our preparation helped see us through to make sure it was never anything we couldn't handle.” Smith said that many volunteers enjoyed spending their day supporting the Marathon this year.

“We're already seeing e-mails from our volunteers thanking us for our work too. So the work was appreciated not only by organizers from the BAA but the volunteers as well,” he said.

Course volunteer Matt Knowles, KC1AEI, was among them. “I feel like Amateur Radio plays an important role in the safety and security of the Boston Marathon,” said Knowles. “Our net operators were succinct, clear, and very patient, as we took care of our individual responsibilities on the course. All of the communications volunteers put forth a unified effort on Monday, which made for another successful race.

Rob Macedo, KD1CY, the other BAA Organizational Committee representative, reported that state emergency managers were very pleased with the logistics and situational awareness support from Amateur Radio operators. He was stationed at the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), located at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Framingham.

“At one point mid-afternoon, one of the two finish line medical tents was filled to capacity,” Macedo recounted. “The BAA and EMS representatives at the MACC were impressed at receiving the on- and off-diversion reports in a timely fashion from Finish Segment Coordinator Matt Brennan, NM1B.”

Start Segment Coordinator Mark Richards, K1MGY, said all of the planning and setup at the race’s starting point of Hopkinton paid off. “We provided BAA organizers at the start with an analysis that looks to correlate the planned and actual times of the start of the race very well,” he said.

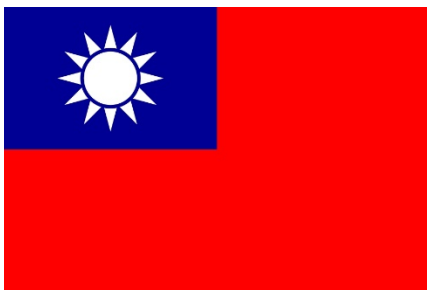
Course Field Operations/Course Net Control Segment Coordinator Jim Palmer, KB1KQW, said he was pleased with the performance of the Amateur Radio teams throughout the event. “Numerous course Amateur Radio volunteers have already expressed their appreciation for a well-run, highly organized event, and are already looking toward volunteering at the 2018 Marathon,” he said. Course volunteers logged an estimated nearly 1,000 volunteer hours, and Palmer said their support was instrumental to the success of the communication support mission.

At the Course Net Control Operations Center in Brookline, students from Dexter-Southfield School provided support to net control operators during the event. Numerous nets cover the Marathon course, and all are run from this single location. Students regularly updated status boards, informing both local net control operators and the other net control operations centers of each ham radio volunteer’s location. Veteran net control operators dedicated some time to work with the students to teach them how marathon nets operate, providing a robust ham radio learning experience in an educational setting.

Amateur Radio is one of three radio communication systems used for the Boston Marathon. Eight Amateur Radio representatives, including segment coordinators, sit on the BAA Communications Committee with BAA officials and representatives of the Massachusetts State Police and a commercial communications contractor. Boston Marathon Medical Coordinator Chris Troyanos, who chairs the Communications Committee, has let the Amateur Radio community know that it is – and will remain – a vital component of Marathon communication support.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

Taiwan to Drop Amateur Radio Morse Code Requirement



According to an article in *Taipei Times*, the National Communications Commission (NCC) in Taiwan (the Republic of China) has proposed to abolish the Amateur Radio Morse code requirement and to permit operation on 432-440 MHz on a secondary basis, among other changes to the Amateur Radio rules there.

The NCC has said that a Morse requirement “should not hinder the development of Amateur Radio.”

Although the NCC has approved the amendments, it must put them on public notice for 2 months and then make any changes it considers necessary, before they take effect.

The amended rules also will extend the term of Amateur Radio licenses from 5 to 10 years, although licensees must pass a test to qualify for the extension. NCC data show that 42,900 Amateur Radio licenses were issued in Taiwan between 2012 and 2016.

- Originally published online at ARRL.org

LOCAL RADIO NETS

Daily

Texas Slow Net (CW only)

Daily 7:45pm CT on 3.570 MHz

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

Weekly

South Texas Section ARES Net (HF)

Mondays 7:30pm CT on 3.873 MHz LSB

This is an information net open to South Texas (STX) Section ARES members. Other Amateur stations are welcome to listen in.

Durant ARA Weekly Net

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

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

Fannin County ARC Weekly Net

Tuesdays 8:00pm CT on the 147.200+ (100.0 PL) repeater.

This is an informal information net.

McKinney 6 meter AM Net

Wednesdays 10:00pm CT on 50.400 MHz

Ladies Net

Thursdays 8:00pm 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

1st & 3rd 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

2nd & 4th 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 (HF)

2nd & 4th 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

North Texas Section ARES Net (HF)

2nd 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

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

AREA REPEATERS

Sherman TX	147.000+ MHz (100.0 PL) 147.280+ MHz (107.2 PL) 444.750+ MHz (100.0 PL)	W5RVT W5COP W5RVT	Gainesville TX	147.340+ MHz (100.0 PL)	WB5FHI
Allen TX	145.350- MHz (100.0 PL)	N5GI	Kingston OK	146.085- MHz (103.5 PL) (currently out of service)	K5BQC
Bonham TX	147.200+ MHz (100.0 PL) 145.470- MHz (100.0 PL) 443.750+ MHz (100.0 PL)	K5FRC K5FRC K5FRC	McKinney TX	146.740- MHz (110.9 PL)	W5MRC
Denison TX	145.330- MHz (100.0 PL)	W5DWH	Melissa TX	443.200+ MHz (100.0 PL)	W5MRA
Durant OK	147.390+ MHz (118.8 PL) 147.255+ MHz (114.8 PL) (currently out of service)	K5KIE K5CGE	Paris TX	146.760- MHz (203.5 PL)	WB5RDD
			Rosston TX	145.490- MHz (85.4 PL)	WD5U
			Van Alstyne TX	443.800+ MHz (103.5 PL)	W5VAL
			Whitesboro TX	442.875+ MHz (100.0 PL)	WC5GC

GRAYSON COUNTY ARES AND RACES

Sparks, Crackles, and Other Random Thoughts

By Rick Simmons K5ECX
Grayson County ARRL EC

Come ON Summer!

It's been a busy few weeks for ARES. We've had our usual ARES training nets, some SKYWARN activations and our Face to Face training. At last week's F2F training Rusty Haddock AE5AE shared his understanding of basic packet radio. Seems not many folks use that specific mode any more, but the mode is the basis to enable digital modes we use such as Winlink and Echolink. I think this area of Amateur Radio will continue to see an evolution as so many ops have computer backgrounds and see ways to incorporate digital tools and radios. He did a great job telling us how it works and how to begin to set up a station. We have had similar topics shared before and I saw for many of those in attendance the light bulb had come on.



Concerning SKYWARN, I guess I'm gonna have to write a nasty letter to the Authorities. It seems they have begun scheduling our activations for the late night hours. This is totally unacceptable. It causes QRM from our spouses, creates sleep deprived operators and causes conflict with normal daily activities. Activations at night are usually a "spot from home" event causing further QRM and not giving ops the chance to get out of the house and play radio in their mobile. Might as well sell the mobile if we're not going to use it, to say nothing of the neat APRS tools we have invested in. Just schedule our weather activations in the late afternoon, after work and before bedtime. I hope they will listen. But thanks to those of you who will respond at midnight or two in the morning, it may seem pointless sometimes but your reports are the basis for a number of decisions. I understand even the hail reports are recorded for reference among other things, by insurance companies to confirm hail was reported in an area when claims are made.

I am looking forward to a couple of events coming up. Field Day and Ham-Com in Irving. Field Day can be a great deal of fun. Setting up is always interesting as each year the group is a little different and so are the decisions and techniques used to deploy equipment. I don't think any year I have participated the exact same setup has been used. That speaks to the variations and adaptability available and success and learning experiences we can participate in. It's also a good time to see other operating styles, modes and just visit with others about Amateur Radio. Ham-Com is a great opportunity to go see, touch and feel all kinds of equipment. Some is mysteriously robust and old looking and some is newfangled, tiny and seems to look like a transistor radio on steroids, ya'll do remember transistor radios? In any case it's an enjoyable day immersed in our hobby. I hope you will try to participate in both of these learning opportunities as we play radio, increase our knowledge and provide a service to our communities.

Now on to that letter to the Authorities...

73
Rick
K5ECX