



# The **HOTLINE**

Official Newsletter for the  
Heart O' Texas Amateur Radio Club  
Waco, Texas

Volume XXXII, Number 3

March 2007

## *Let's Aim Higher!*

*by Bill Feltenberger, KD5UEW*

And a good time was had by all. At our February meeting we learned about baseball and some physics of ball flight. We learned some wonderful trivia about some baseball players. And we learned that our programs can be good—even if the word “radio” is not in the title!

Now, it's March meeting time. We are going to have [Doug Loughmiller](#) visit us again—this time to present a program about amateur radio and high-altitude balloons. We will learn about launch and recovery. We will learn about why and how. We will learn about the opportunity to help in this process. I am really looking forward to this presentation!

I hope you will attend the meeting. I hope you will bring suggestions for future programs. I hope you will let me know what you think of these programs and how we can make them better. I hope that as you leave the meeting you can also say with me, “A good time was had by all.”



## *President's Corner*

*by Wayne Branscum, KD5SMC*

For better or for worse, Morse testing to obtain a United States Amateur Radio service license disappeared on February 23rd. Many hams who either wanted Morse testing retained, or a return to the more stringent 5-13-20 word per minute testing regime, said that the fight to save code exams would not be over until the proverbial fat lady sang. Well, she not only has sung her final song but also danced her last dance. Now Morse testing in the United States is being relegated to the ham radio history books. Yet, of course, the mode itself continues.

Back in the 1920's the introduction of voice communications using AM telephony caused a schism among hams. Seasoned Morse operators looked down on the new mode. Many said that there was no need for voice because the code could get a message through far better under adverse conditions. And so, the proponents of code and voice went their separate ways—but they were all still bound together by one common link: all had passed a Morse code proficiency exam. That was because the FCC maintained code as a prerequisite for a ham license. But not any longer!

In any case, let me take this opportunity to welcome the 19 new hams (from our Technician classes) to our ranks. Thanks to all the teachers for these folks. If any of you new hams are looking for a radio, mark your calendars for Saturday April 14: [HamExpo](#) of 2007 at the Bell County Expo Center in Belton, Texas (7:00 am to 3:00pm). Lots of good deals! But, for now, I'm looking forward to seeing each of you at the meeting.

Wayne Branscum, KD5SMC  
HOTARC President



**Wayne, KD5SMC**

***LAST CHANCE to renew your HOTARC membership!***

Dues for 2007 are due by **March 31**, if you haven't done it yet...send it **now!**

...and please complete the [Membership Renewal Form](#), too! Thanks!!

## For the Record...

### HOTARC Meeting of Members February 22, 2007

HOTARC's February Meeting was called to order by President Wayne Branscum KD5SMC at 7:05 PM at the Kultgen Automotive Center of the TSTC Waco campus. Present were fourteen full members, one associate member, and four visitors. Visitors were: Johnny Collander KD5ZYO of Bellmead, Geof Schwer of Elm Mott, David Branch of China Spring, and Dr. Greg Banesh of Waco (our guest speaker).

Ed Middlebrook KC5NT opened the meeting with a prayer.

KD5SMC introduced two of our visitors Johnny and Geoff, who had submitted applications for Club membership.

The Minutes for the January meeting were approved as published in the HOTLINE, on a motion by Rodney Baden K5YKC, second by Bill Feltenberger KD5UEW, and unanimous vote by the members. The January Treasurer's Report was also accepted as published in the HOTLINE following a motion by K5YKC, second by KD5UEW, and unanimous vote by the members.

#### Announcements

- **Traffic Handling Class:** Our own J.W. Roach W5AYX will be conducting a Traffic Handling training class on March 15, 10:00 AM at (location to be determined). KC5NT suggested that we could send practice messages on the Monday night net.

#### Committee Reports

- **ARES:** K5YKC reported that there was a very good turnout for the Skywarn sessions, and announced that a rehearsal for the Comanche Peak exercise will be held July 25 and the actual exercise will be held on August 29.
- **Trailer:** Mike Ross N5MVL reported that the trailer was still needing a bracket for the new LCD television screen. David Bush KC5UOZ commented that a suitable bracket will probably have to be fabricated to be strong enough to withstand the vibrations expected when the trailer is moved. The floor needs repainting—all agreed this should be done before Field Day.
- **Repeater:** KB5SLI reported that the 88 repeater is in the cabinet, ready to be installed at the DPS, but still behaving intermittently.
- **Web page:** John Chamberlain AC5CV proposed to create a Committee's section on our web site, but will need support from all the Committee chairs to keep it up to date. The idea was well received, but concern expressed for overloading John.
- **ATV:** David Bush KC5UOZ reported the Skycam needs to be taken down for repairs.
- **Education:** KD5UEW reported that we had 24 students paid in advance for the Technician classes; 22 attended the first session—which went very well; and we are expecting 22 or 23 to attend the second session and take the FCC exam afterwards.
- **Public Relations:** No report.
- **Special Events:** No report.

## The Treasurer Reports...

### Heart O' Texas Amateur Radio Club Treasurer's Report, February 2007

<b>Beginning Account Balance</b>		\$ 4,770.31
<b>Income</b>		
Dues	\$ 110.00	
Technician class dues	427.04	
Interest	<u>0.92</u>	
<b>TOTAL Income</b>	<b>\$ 537.96</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>		
Repeater lightning arrestors	\$ 68.95	
TX Non-profit status renewal fee	5.00	
Testing fees	<u>84.00</u>	
<b>TOTAL Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 157.95</b>	
<b>Ending Account Balance</b>		\$ 5,150.32
<b>Outstanding (as of 3-13-2007)</b>		
<i>Credits:</i> Waco Wild West Century donation, \$500.00		
Dues for Technician Class, \$90.00		
<i>Debits:</i> (none)		
<i>Actual cash on hand:</i> \$5,740.32		

Submitted by  
**Norris Martin, KB5SLI**  
HOTARC Treasurer

## Old Business

- **Audit Committee:** The Committee had not yet completed their audit of the 2006 books.

## New Business

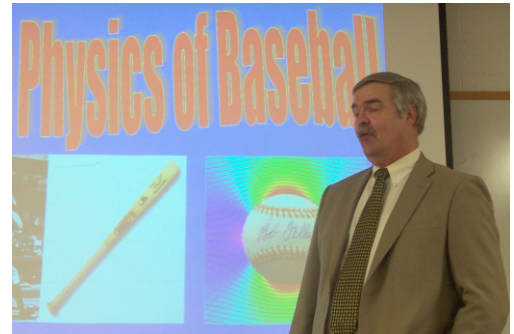
- **New Members:** KD5SMC recognized a motion from KC5NT and a second from K5YKC to accept Johnny Collander's application for Full Membership. The members voted to approve the motion. Norris Martin KB5SLI moved to accept Geoff Schwer's application for Associate Membership, Mike Ross N5MVL seconded the motion, and the members again approved the motion.

A motion to adjourn was heard from KD5UEW at approximately 8:10 pm.

Dr Greg Banesh of the Baylor Physics Department presented an interesting program on the *Physics of Baseball*.

Submitted by:

John Chamberlain AC5CV  
HOTARC Secretary



**Dr Greg Banesh explains  
the Physics of Baseball**

## Required Training

by Ed Hyman, KC5KNI,  
McLennan County Emergency Coordinator

Current buzz words heard on many nets and in conversations between amateur radio operators include "NIMS," "ICS," and "NRP." These are the acronyms for courses offered by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency).

Are volunteers required to be **N**ational **I**ncident **M**anagement **S**ystem (NIMS) compliant? The short answer is, **Yes**. In a response scenario that extends beyond local government, there needs to be common terminology and doctrine that everyone can follow so that personnel and resources are feathered in a seamless manner. This is especially true for radio communications. Radio operators need to understand what is being said and asked of them during an incident so that they can convey this information effectively and efficiently.

FEMA courses are **FREE!** The three courses available online are described below, taken right from the FEMA website. For more information and to enroll for any of these online courses, visit the FEMA website: <http://www.fema.gov> and click on **Education and Training**.



### **IS-700: National Incident Management System (NIMS)**

This course introduces NIMS and takes approximately three hours to complete. It explains the purpose, principles, key components, and benefits of NIMS. The course also contains "Planning Activity" screens giving you an opportunity to complete some planning tasks during this course. The planning activity screens are printable so that you can use them after you complete the course.

### **IS-100: Introduction to Incident Command System**

Introduces the Incident Command System (ICS) and provides the foundation for higher level ICS training. This course describes the history, features and principles, and organizational structure of the Incident Command System. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

### **IS-800: National Response Plan (NRP)**

This course introduces you to the NRP, including the concept of operations upon which the plan is built, roles and responsibilities of the key players, and the organizational structures used to manage these resources. The NRP provides a framework to ensure that we can all work together when our nation is threatened.

## What Does All This Mean To McLennan County A.R.E.S.?

We have added “Training Courses Completed” to the back of the current ID Cards. ARES Members will be asked to provide copies of these certificates when joining ARES or updating their data.

While non-completion of the courses will not prevent you from becoming a member of ARES, not completing the courses **may have an impact on your access** to specific areas during an emergency.

In addition, we highly recommend that you also complete the **ARRL Emergency Communications Courses**. Links to all of the courses mentioned above are provided for your convenience on the [HOTARC home page](#).

## February VE Session Report

by Linda Hynan AC5QQ

The testing session on Saturday, February 24th is now history. Not only was this the 2nd day of the new “Codeless Testing Regime,” this session was the **largest testing session** ever hosted by the HOTARC/BARC ARRL Volunteer Examiner (VE) team. We had a total of 31 participants resulting in 23 earning a new *Technician* license and 5 upgrades to *General*.

I'd like to thank all members of the two VE teams who made this testing session possible. Team 1 consisted of Patrick Hynan KK5KN, Karen (Elaine) Ault KC5WQE, and Leonard Cooper KE5BQN. This team was responsible for testing 28 people (of which 20 of 23 had just completed HOTARC's two-Saturday Technician Licensing Class). In this first group, 23 (of 26) passed the Technician Test and 2 (of 2) passed the General Test. Team 2 consisted of John Chamberlain AC5CV, William Feltenberger KD5UEW, and Rodney Baden K5YKC. Since these three had been instructors for the Technician class, they could not also help test the first group. In this second group, one participant had a paperwork upgrade to General and another 2 took and passed the General test. I (AC5QQ) was a member of both teams. Additionally, Mike Ross N5MVL helped keep the testing room organized and running smoothly.



The HOTARC Technician Class was a wonderful success! Of the 23 taking the course, 20 attempted the Technician Class Test with 17 earning their ticket. Since I do statistics for a living, I wanted to let you know the stats for the testing session. The Technician Class test has 35 items and a minimum passing score of 26. For the 20 taking the class, the median test score (the score in the middle if we rank the scores from high to low) was 31 with a range 22 – 35. If we analyze only the scores for the 17 passing the test, the median was 33 with a range 28 – 35. Wow, talk about high scores!

Testing 31 participants is a challenge especially when many of our VEs teach the class. While the testing session took 2 hours and 45 minutes because of the high number of new or upgraded licenses, everyone watching the Team 1 VEs in action noted how quickly and efficiently the paperwork was processed. In addition to the actual testing session, they spent two hours before the session paper clipping tests to answer forms, sharpening pencils, and preparing and organizing other materials for the testing session. For future large testing sessions, we have a couple of shortcuts approved by ARRL that can be implemented.

I'd like to take a little space to brag about the number of sessions that members of our VE team have participated. The HOTARC/BARC ARRL VE testing group has been testing since November 1997 (almost 11 years). There have been two other testing sessions with more than 10 participants (February 26, 2000 with 12 participants and April 15, 2000 with 18). As of March 11, 2007, 1543 individuals have participated in all of Texas as ARRL VEs in one or more testing sessions; the median number of sessions for these VEs is 8. One person on this list has a session count of 439 (S. Neal, N5AF)—talk about a large number of testing sessions! Four of the 7 VEs who participated in the February 24th testing session have higher than the median number of sessions. John AC5CV has participated in 42 sessions (87th percentile), Pat KK5KN in 44 sessions (88th percentile), and Elaine KC5WQE in 47 sessions (89th percentile). I (AC5QQ) have participated in 76 sessions (95th percentile).

Being a VE is not difficult and we need volunteers to help with the testing sessions. We hold 9 to 10 testing sessions each year with plenty of opportunities for a VE to participate. Please contact AC5QQ to find out how to become an ARRL VE.

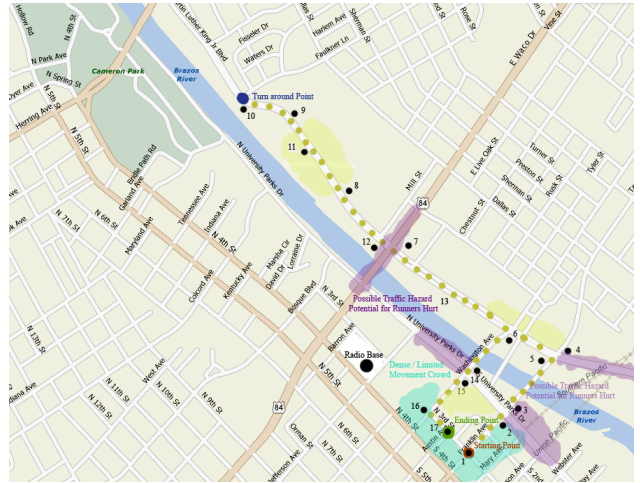
## Getting Ready for "Race for the Cure"

by Grant Gilliam KE5ERW

I have prepared a map of the race along with a set of numbers and highlights. You'll notice we have a new route compared to previous years. (Click the map for a larger version.)

My madness has no rationale to it at first glance. However, let me explain. I have positioned Net Control (NC) at the corners of Jefferson and 3rd street. NC is approximately 1000 feet from the closest point of the race. I purposely placed NC here to permit operations to continue in the event of difficulties around the crowded areas.

I am requesting help from seven volunteers in this area of approximately four blocks (numbers include 1, 2, 3, 14, 15, 16 and 17). If things remain calm, these operators can also provide a valuable resource for noting the last runners/walkers, and being available to offer other communications-related help.



The purple area represents the areas with the highest expected densities of "traffic." Mainly, these areas are on the streets of Martin Luther King Blvd., 4th Street, and University Parks. I would like to have two operators for everywhere the race crosses the paths of these streets. From past experience, people try to drive in this area. Therefore, I think it is valuable to have operators at these points of greater risk. You're probably also wondering why I have colored purple the Waco Drive overpass. I see this as a possible location where unregistered runners try to get on the race, and for more automobiles to cause trouble. This has not happened in the past, but it is always a possibility.

The area in the yellow I see as lesser risk for trouble. It could be something as small as a child slipping away from his/her mother, and running off. Also this could be a potential area for someone to get in parked cars and try to drive off.

At NC, I would like to have three operators. One to serve as Net Control, one to serve as a Backup Net Control, and one to facilitate with other needs.

So, at this time, I would like to have 21 operators: 17 on the race course, 3 in the trailer, and 1 to ride with pace car (Waco Police). I will keep an up-to-date list of assignments at <http://www.txhssports.com/race.doc> of positions 1-20.

I will also be contacting Kenneth Ransom, trustee of the Baylor Club's repeater. Previously when I spoke with him, he encouraged me to use their repeater in any way possible. So, for this event we'll listen on 147.16 MHz, transmit with a positive offset (+600 kHz), using a tone of 123 Hz. The repeater can be easily accessed anywhere on the course with ½ watt. Should the repeater fail us, we'll rely on a simplex backup frequency of 147.55 MHz. I think it would be nice if everyone used a tone of 123 in this case, too, to help reduce any interference we might hear on this frequency.

I will print copies of the map for everyone, along with a listing of everyone's assignments, and give it to you on the day of the event. All we need is you, your experience, and your radio. Feel free to call or email me if you have any questions.



It's hard to believe that we are already thinking about Field Day, but after our March meeting, we'll **only have two more meetings before the big day!** That's because this year the "fourth full weekend in June" occurs before the fourth Thursday (our meeting date).

So, bring your "contesting spirit" to this month's meeting, and let's get the ball rolling towards a record setting **HOTARC Field Day 2007!!**



The HOTLINE is the monthly newsletter of the Heart O' Texas Amateur Radio Club (HOTARC), Inc., a nonprofit corporation, chartered by the State of Texas and principally located in Waco. It is permissible to use any of the original material contained herein, provided proper credit is given to the source.

Edited and Published by John Chamberlain AC5CV, [AC5CV@arrl.net](mailto:AC5CV@arrl.net)

## HOTARC 2007 Board of Directors

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**Vice Pres:** Bill Feltenberger KD5UEW, 756-1397, [bfeltenb@swbell.net](mailto:bfeltenb@swbell.net)

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**Director (2009):** Mike Ross N5MVL, 836-1083, [N5MVL@juno.com](mailto:N5MVL@juno.com)

## Club Repeaters

145.15 MHz (input at -600 kHz, tone 123 Hz)

146.88 MHz (input at -600 kHz, tone 123 Hz)

146.98 MHz (input at -600 kHz, tone 123 Hz)

ATV: 421.25MHz (Cable 57), input 439.25 MHz (Cable 60)

## VE Testing

Next session is Saturday March 24, 10:00 AM. **Location:** Baylor's [Rogers Engineering and Computer Science Bldg](#) (#63 on the map). **Bring:** 1) testing fee of \$14 (cash only); 2) a photo ID (two for first-time licensees); and for licensed amateurs: 3) current license *and photocopy of it*; and 4) photocopy of any relevant CSCE. **Contact:** Linda Hynan, AC5QQ at 666-4873 or [Linda.Hynan@UTSouthwestern.edu](mailto:Linda.Hynan@UTSouthwestern.edu).



**2007 Board of Directors**

*Back:* KD5KJU, KC5NT, N5MVL, K5YKC  
*Front:* KB5SLI, AC5CV, KD5UEW, KD5SMC

## Meeting Notice

The monthly meeting of HOTARC will be at 7:00 pm on Thursday March 22, 2007 in the [Kultgen Automotive Center](#) of the TSTC Waco Campus. Meetings generally last about 75 minutes consisting of fellowship, general Club business, and an interesting program. Visiting hams, family members, and prospective hams are welcomed!

*No more Morse code requirement!  
Tell someone about it!*

Heart O' Texas Amateur Radio Club, Inc.  
P.O. Box 32  
Waco, TX 76703-0032

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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