



# The **HOTLINE**

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

Volume XXXII, Number 8

August 2007

## ***D-STAR...the Next Generation Digital Amateur System?***

*by Bill Feltenberger, KD5UEW  
and Wayne Branscum, KD5SMC*

Single-sideband, repeaters, packet radio, and microprocessor technology all took radio to new levels. Now D-STAR's protocols are opening up new possibilities for casual users, system builders, group leaders, and good, old ham radio experimentation. Just as high-speed digital networks led to brand-new ways to communicate, D-STAR brings digital systems to the amateur bands to create entirely new radio systems and services.

D-STAR is a digital voice and data protocol specification developed for use in amateur radio. I have been reading the email group about this for the last month. I know it is new and uses the internet as part of the process. I know it is FM and that it is digital. There are even two articles about D-STAR in September 2007's QST. So, now I want to know more and want to come and hear our speaker explain all the details of how this works and why it is such a great technology.



I hope you will all choose to be there and learn about this new technology. Our guest speaker will be Jim McClellan, N5MIJ. Hope to see you at the August Club meeting, and we'll all hear what Jim has to share!

## ***President's Corner***

*by Wayne Branscum, KD5SMC*

September is National Preparedness Month. With tropical systems and hurricane Dean making its way into the Gulf of Mexico, amateur radio operators are joining a wide variety of national, state and local organizations, including the US Department of Homeland Security, in educating the public about **preparing for emergencies**.

When unexpected emergencies occur, our greatest individual defense is **preparedness**. Getting an emergency supply kit, making an emergency plan, and identifying resources within our communities are several things we can do to prepare ourselves.

This nationwide effort is to encourage individuals and families to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and schools. For hams it means getting your *Go Kit* ready, and making sure you are trained to properly communicate—in case 'the worst' actually happens.

Here is one list of recommended items to include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

- Water: one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food: at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food



**Wayne, KD5SMC**

- Battery-powered (or hand-crank) radio, and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert—and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight—and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle—to signal for help
- Dust mask—to help filter contaminated air
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape—to make a quick shelter
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties—for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers—to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps

The ARRL has a list that you might want to examine, if you have not.

Be prepared—we may be called.

Looking forward to seeing each of you at the meeting. Bill has a neat program about D-STAR planned for us!

Wayne Branscum, KD5SMC  
HOTARC President

## For the Record...

### HOTARC Meeting of Members July 26, 2007

HOTARC's July Meeting was called to order by Wayne Branscum, KD5SMC, at 7:00 pm at the Kultgen Automotive Center of the TSTC Waco campus. Chaplain Dell Bredemeyer, KE5MZS, opened the meeting with a prayer.

Present were nineteen members and six visitors. Visitors were Ryan Dyer KE5FFV of Crawford; Jeremy Neal KE5PRG and Abby Neal KE5PRH of Lorena; Dave Pafford of Waco; Justin Martin of Elm Mott; and Mark Plough KD5DWE of China Springs.

The Minutes for the June meeting were reviewed as published in the HOTLINE newsletter. Motion to approve made by Roger Miles WB5MBO, with second by Rodney Baden K5YKC. Motion passed.

The June Treasurer's Report was reviewed as published in the HOTLINE newsletter. Motion to approve made by Roger Miles WB5MBO with second by Rusty Keyes AD5JY. Motion passed.

### Committee Reports

- **ARES:** Rodney discussed an exercise that was held on July 18 with the Central Texas Regional Advisory Council (RAC) and involved 10 hospitals. A

## The Treasurer Reports...

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

|   |           |             |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Beginning Account Balance</b>                |           | \$ 6,770.54 |
| <b>Income</b>                                   |           |             |
| Interest  | \$ 1.41   |             |
| TOTAL Income                                    | \$ 1.41   |             |
| <b>Expenses</b>                                 |           |             |
| Field Day gasoline                              | \$ 92.32  |             |
| Trailer paint                                   | \$19.64   |             |
| Skywarn donuts                                  | \$55.00   |             |
| Backup generator                                | 300.00    |             |
| TOTAL Expenses                                  | \$ 466.96 |             |
| <b>Ending Account Balance</b>                   |           | \$ 6,304.99 |
| <b>Outstanding</b> (as of 8-12-2007)            |           |             |
| <i>Credits:</i> Dues \$45.00; Donations \$20.00 |           |             |
| <i>Debits:</i> (none)                           |           |             |
| <i>Actual cash on hand:</i> \$6,369.99          |           |             |

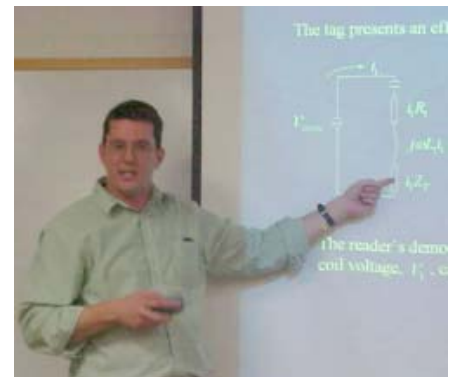
Submitted by  
Norris Martin, KB5SLI  
HOTARC Treasurer

second exercise was held on July 25 that involved the Comanche Peak Nuclear Plant. An upcoming exercise will be held on August 29 to involve the Comanche Peak facility, and it will be graded by federal authorities. Ed Hynan KC5KNI, reminded everyone that NIMs testing needs to be completed by ARES members by 2008 if they plan to take part in actual emergency events. See the HOTARC website for more information.

- **Repeater:** Norris Martin KB5SLI reported that the 145.15 MHz repeater is currently active on the Hillcrest Medical Tower due to a power supply problem at the tower site. He also noted that the 146.88 MHz repeater is not working properly at this time.
- **Trailer:** Bill Cox W5JRM raised the question about what the club wanted to do with the Kenwood TS-440S transceiver in the trailer that is not working properly. No decision was made.
- **Web page:** No report.
- **ATV:** No report.
- **Education:** We discussed the possibility of a Fall 2007 class.
- **Public Relations:** No report.
- **Special Events:** August 8 will be National Night Out and the Wild West Century Bike Ride is planned for the Fall.

## Old Business

- **Generators:**
  - Wayne opened up the floor for discussion about a replacement generator. It was decided to approve the purchase of a small, portable generator from Ron Bowden AA5RT for \$300. Rodney made the motion, with second by Ed Hynan. Motion passed.
  - A replacement for the primary generator mounted on the trailer is still under review by the trailer committee.
  - Motion to auction off the current portable generator at the next meeting was made by Bill Cox with second by Ray Read AD5CK. Motion passed.



Baylor professor Ian Gravagne discusses RFID

## New Business

- **New members:** Three new members were accepted into the Club:
  - Scott Hamilton K5ZOH applied for Full membership. Motion to accept by Ed Middlebrook, second by Bill Feltenberger KD5UEW.
  - Jeremy Neal KE5PRG and Abby Neal KE5PRH applied for Associate memberships. Motion to accept by Bill Feltenberger, second by Ed Hynan.

## Announcements

- **Ham Equipment:** Ed Middlebrook KC5NT, discussed the acquisition of some equipment from the Love estate. This equipment will be made available for auction at the August meeting.

Motion to adjourn was made by Rodney Baden at 7:43 pm.

Submitted by:

Ed Middlebrook KC5NT

Substitute Secretary

How will YOU  
 communicate  
 in an emergency?  
 Visit [emergency-radio.org](http://emergency-radio.org)  
 to learn more!

An advertisement for ARRL's "Emergency Radio" program. At the top, it says "WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS... AMATEUR RADIO WORKS" with logos for ARES, EAS, and E-911. Below that, it says "SEND 'EM OK MESSAGE VIA RADIO". The main text reads "Emergency Radio... Getting the message through for your family and community". At the bottom, it features the ARRL logo and contact information: "The national association for AMATEUR RADIO Tel: +1 800 541-8200 haq@arll.org". A copyright notice for 2007 ARRL is in the bottom right corner.

## Request For Hospital Volunteers

by Ed Hynan, KC5KNI,  
McLennan County Emergency Coordinator

In time of an emergency, there will be many requests for amateur radio emergency communications support. Locally, in McLennan County, we have four medical organizations that may/will need emergency communications support. In the past we have simply identified operators to fill these positions and then sent them to the requested location to provide the support. As we have seen following the events of 9/11—and with the Department of Homeland Security becoming involved in providing resources and support—what may have worked in the past will definitely not be the norm in the future. We need to have individuals pre-cleared and with the proper additional ID before the need arises for emergency communications support.

I have received a request to identify four individuals for each of the four medical facilities in McLennan County. These individuals would be primary operators at the hospitals—should there be a need. They need to be identified so that they can be processed and issued the required hospital ID cards for emergency operation. Should the hospitals not need amateur support they would be used in other capacities. If the hospitals *were* using amateur support, then the fact that we had *four* individuals already cleared would provide for relief operators, if the situation lasted that long.

If you would like to volunteer, please let me know by phone or e-mail. You can volunteer for a specific hospital, or for hospital support, in general. The four facilities we will be prepared to support are: Hillcrest, Providence, De Paul, and the Veterans Hospital.

Remember, in times of a major incident/disaster we can expect our resources to be stretched thin. Pre-identifying operators to support the hospitals is a big step in the right direction.



## Welcome to Elmerville!

by Ed Middlebrook, KC5NT

To all new amateur radio operators: **Welcome!** I hope that you enjoy your new FCC “ticket” and that you use that ticket to travel around this magical world of radio. I hope that you’ll find fellow hams that will help you along the way. These special folks are called “Elmers” (or “Elmira’s”), and their role is to share with you their experiences and knowledge gained over the years. We, Elmers, have made our share of mistakes—but you can benefit from those.



### Welcome to Elmerville

Elmerville? Yes! In the fine tradition of "old" amateur radio operators called "Elmers" helping those new to the service, this blog exists to carry on the tradition in a new way. This site will cover various tips and techniques for getting your station "on the air"!

#### Amateur Radio and Linux news...


ARRL    ARRL - Surfin': Huntsville Convention Web Cam    powered by Google™


MONDAY, AUGUST 13, 2007

**Best new HF radios under \$1k...**

A friend called up this past Saturday and asked what should he look for in a new HF rig for under \$1,000. That's always been about my price, so I had a few suggestions for him and now you can benefit as well.


Icom has a super radio for the new ham that is about \$550. Another friend of mine just purchased one and he is very happy with it. In fact, this friend has been licensed since 1960 and is now just getting back into the hobby after about a 20 year hiatus. The Icom IC-718 packs a wallop for its price and here is a rundown of its features:





Our A-1 Operator!

North American QRP CW Club



www.arm-tek.net/~yoel

I am happy to report that a new weblog (“blog”) site is for you, the new ham! Simply go to [elmerville.blogspot.com](http://elmerville.blogspot.com) and come by often. In Elmerville, I and others will pass along some ideas and thoughts that will hopefully assist you in your travels. If you’re an experienced amateur operator, send me your tips and I’ll make them available. Let’s help the newcomers to become fine radio operators and experimenters—those that we can be proud of!

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.

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## HOTARC 2007 Board of Directors

**President:** Wayne Branscum KD5SMC, 857-3964, [wbscum@grandecom.net](mailto:wbscum@grandecom.net)

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**Director (2008):** Ed Middlebrook KC5NT, 826-4053, [KC5NT@arrl.net](mailto:KC5NT@arrl.net)

**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 September 22, 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 already 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 August 23, 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!*

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Visit our web site at:  
[hotarc.org](http://hotarc.org)