Minutes of the March 2014 Monthly Meeting of
The Longview/East Texas Amateur Radio Club

The March, 2014, monthly meeting of the Longview/East Texas Amateur Radio Club was opened at 9:00 am on March 15 by President John Zenter AE5OY with 20 members present. After a review of the meeting agenda, an introduction of members was conducted. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved by a show of hands after a motion to accept was made by Todd Hoover N5TJH and seconded by Phillip Mullins AE5KE. The treasurer's report from the previous reporting period was read and approved by a show of hands after a motion to accept was made by Jim Rogers N5VGQ and seconded by Horace Richardson N5ZQD.

Jerry Ritchie WA5OKO then presented a program entitled "Antenna Efficiency and Gain". Jerry defined antenna efficiency as the ratio between antenna input power and radiated power. Antenna efficiency can range from 50% to 99%. Causes of antenna loss can be feed point impedance mismatch, radiated power loss causes by environmental surroundings, skin effect loss, or wires sizes. Jerry stated that the term "antenna gain" can be a bit misleading since an antenna is a passive device and does not have any amplifying characteristics. Instead, it can direct a major portion of the signal in one or more directions. The reference used to determine antenna gain is either isotropic (dBi) or as a dipole (dBd). The dipole antenna has 2.1 gain over the isotropic antenna. Jerry presented a chart showing the wattage and antenna gain. Beginning with 1 watt and 0 gain, an antenna with 42 dB gain would give an Effective Radiated Power of 16,384 watts. After a question and answer period, the meeting was adjourned briefly for refreshments.

The business portion of the meeting continued.

Todd Hoover N5TJH gave an update on the upcoming tailgate sale. Fourteen clubs have been contacted and will be co-sponsoring the event. A number of portable radios, other assorted radio accessories and gift cards have been pledged as door prizes. A website has been set up to promote the event. Those club members who can volunteer to work at the event should see Todd and sign up.

Gary Lewis WG5L gave an update on the DSTAR project. He said Jerry Ritchie put a preamp on the receiver side of the "C" module and this seemed to improve coverage. Gary announced that a DSTAR class would be held at the upcoming tailgate sale and more details would be available on the internet. Gary stated that the Icom discount on DSTAR equipment would be available until the end of the month and the "B" module could be purchased for approximately $750-$800. A number of LETARC members came forward and donated funds to purchase the UHF module. Gary announced the possibility of putting a DSTAR hot spot in the Marshall-Waskom area was being considered and would help give continuous DSTAR coverage along I20 through East Texas.

The project to paint the upstairs Red Cross training room and restrooms was announced. Anyone able to assist should see John Zenter.

The monthly VE test session will be held this afternoon at 2:00 pm at LeTourneau University. All available VE's are requested to attend.

Todd Hoover N5TJH presented a brief review of the Red Cross Disaster Assessment Drill using FLDigi. The Longview Red Cross chapter and the Tyler Red Cross chapter and a number of local amateur radio operators took part in the drill. Using FLDigi over a wi-fi connection, the participants were able, with limited success, to pass disaster assessment forms to neighborhood collection points to be forwarded to incident command. Areas for improvement were identified and the process holds great promise.

After thorough discussion, it was decided to hold the next Sunday evening meal at El Sombrero on McCann Street, Sunday, April 6, at 6:00 pm.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

ATTENDEES

Horace Richardson	N5ZQD	John Zenter	AE5OY
Dean Patterson	KE5AVH	Phillip Mullins	AE5KE
Charles Fricks	AF5FB	Jim Quinn	AA5CX
Jerry Ritchie	WA5OKO	Cliff Scott	AE5ZA
Rich Fleming	N3DNU	Gary Lewis	WG5L
Jay Rowe	KF5UBO	Todd Hoover	N5TJH
Jim Perry	KA5BCM	Priscilla Quinn	AA5PQ
Jim Quinn	AJ1MQ	Arlie Long	N5RDD
Jim Rogers	N5VGQ	Dave Luchak	KL7BX
John Boone	KB5LXS	Terry Johnson	KG5WO

TREASURER'S REPORT

Brought forward from the last reporting period was $3,241.18 which consisted of $1,872.01 club funds, $275.00 tailgate sale donations, and $1,094.17 DSTAR fund donations. Income for this period included $25.00 membership dues from each of the following: Jay Rowe KF5UBO, John Boone KB5LXS, Paul Piccola W5BPP, Erik Sandvik KE5PTV, Dianna Fate KF5ZBH, Dan Sells KF5CHC, Mitch Fortner AA5D, Rod Bartlett N8QVR, and Marty Duplissey N5KBP for a total dues income of $225.00. Other donations included $2.00 from Paul Piccola W5BPP for ARRL Dues Rebate. Tailgate fund donations included $100.00 from the Palestine ARC and $5.00 from Richard Green KC5CID for a total of $105.00. DSTAR Fund donations included the following: Jim Perry KA5BCM $100.00, John Zenter AE5OY $100.00, Jim Quinn AA5CX $20.00, Todd Hoover N5TJH $40.00, Dean Patterson KE5AVH $50.00, Jerry Ritchie WA5OKO 20.00, Rich Fleming N3DNU 20.00, Horace Richardson N5ZQD 50.00, Charles Fricks AF5FB 20.00, and Gary Lewis WG5L $400.00 for total donations of $820.00. Expenses for the period included $524.00 to Main Trading Company of Paris, Texas for tailgate sale door prizes, $16.50 to Donut Palace of Longview for donuts for the monthly meeting, 3 charges to Lowes Home Center of $29.14, $45.40, and $424.17 (total $498.71), $34.14 to Horace Richardson (plumbing supplies) for painting and plumbing supplies to renovate the upstairs training room and restrooms at the Red Cross (total renovation cost $532.85), $811.82 to Icom America for the DSTAR "C" module and $808.07 for the DSTAR "B" module. Total income for the period amounted to $1,152.00. Total expenses for the period amounted to $2,693.24. This leaves a closing balance of $1,699.94 which consists of $6.00 tailgate fund donations, $294.28 DSTAR fund donations and $1,399.66 club funds.