



LETARC Propagation

LONGVIEW / EAST TEXAS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

D-Star Repeater Project Update

Gary Lewis WG5L reports that the new D-Star repeater here in Longview is up and running quite well after some fine tuning, though there may be a chance of some more tweaking if necessary. The repeater, K5LET, is installed in northeast Longview and provides a substantial footprint as depicted in last month's Propagation, almost closing the coverage gap between the Shreveport D-Star repeater and the Tyler repeater. There is a fairly small lack of coverage between the Louisiana state line and Marshall, but that may be addressed in the near future. In related news, a variety of D-Star classes/presentations will be conducted at the fourth annual Spring Tailgate Sale at LeTourneau University on Saturday, April 12th. (See below.)

Additionally, the D-Star UHF module and antenna were installed this past Saturday morning! All that is required for it to be on the air is some cabling between different repeater components and an assigned frequency from the frequency coordinators. The last step will be the tweaking process for Longview to have dual-band D-Star repeater access!

Since updates are coming so often, please go to the club website for the latest information about the D-Star project: www.letarc.org

Inside...

- East Texas Regional Amateur Radio Tailgate Sale
- How I Got into Ham Radio
- ARC Painting Project Report
- Club Dues
- VE Session Report
- Suggestions for Activities
- Upcoming Events
- Next Meeting and VE Tests

March Meeting Presentation - Antenna Efficiency & Gain



Jerry Ritchie WA5OKO was again gracious enough to present the March meeting program about antenna efficiency and gain. Defining antenna efficiency as the "ratio between antenna input power and radiated power." Surprisingly, efficiency can range anywhere between 50 to 99%. Jerry explained that there are four main causes of antenna gain loss: Feed point impedance mismatch; radiated power loss causes by environmental surroundings; skin effect loss; and wire size. Concerning antenna gain (directivity), Jerry passed out a sheet with a great depiction of how antenna gain looks. Showing an isotropic radiator (a perfect spherical antenna, something that does not actually exist) using a balloon as an example, a dipole pattern was shown as a round balloon squeezed in the middle, and a round balloon squeezed at about a quarter length illustrated a beam pattern. (Continued)

(Photo by Priscilla Quim AA5PQ)

March Meeting Presentation - Antenna Efficiency & Gain (cont)

Though antenna is a passive device which does not have any amplifying characteristics, a dipole pattern can offer about 2.1 db gain over the isotropic radiator. One impressive chart showed that with zero gain and one watt power, simply increasing gain dramatically increased the Effective Radiated Power (ERP). At 3db the ERP doubled to 2 watts; at 6db the ERP was 4 watts, at 6db gain the ERP was quadrupled to four watts, and so on. As usual, Jerry did a fine job with his presentation. We look forward to more in the future.

East Texas Regional Amateur Radio Tailgate Sale April 12th

Saturday, April 12th from 0730 to 1100, the Longview/East Texas Amateur Radio Club and the LeTourneau University Amateur Radio Club (LETARC/LUARC) will host the four annual spring tailgate sale at the LeTourneau University Campus.

Fifteen total sponsors have provided support for the event, including: LETARC/LUARC, the Cedar Creek ARC, Athens ARC, Marshall ARC, Panola County ARC, Minden ARC, Tyler ARC, SARA, ARCOS, Rusk County ARC, Cherokee County ARC, Nacogdoches ARC, NFL ARC (Corsicana), Palestine/Anderson County ARC and the Main Trading Company from Paris.

The event is open to anybody and everybody who has an interest in ham radio and electronics, or anyone who just wants to come by, say hello, and just visit and browse.

The tailgate sale is absolutely FREE to all! Just bring your ham radio sale items and any tables, chairs or other displays that you want to use. Parking will be on a first-come, first-served basis, and no electricity will be available. Bring plenty of water especially if the weather is warm. Coffee will be provided by LUARC, and other campus organizations may provide concessions but please check the website for the latest information. Door prizes are numerous due to the gracious gifts from the sponsoring clubs and individuals, and include radios, accessories and gift cards.

LeTourneau University is located at 2100 South Mobberly Avenue in Longview, and the event will be held rain or shine in the parking lot on the south side of the Glaske Science & Technology Building. For full details including a map, check out the website at www.i2ohamfest.com

Late Breaking News: D-Star classes will be held at the tailgate sale! See the link!

How I got into ham radio..

For much of my younger life, I wanted to become a ham, but didn't for several reasons. The main reason was the cost, and the next was the code requirement. When the Technician level opened I got interested again. Each year at Christmas when my family asked what I wanted, I would give them a list of books to choose one from. In 1992, when we began opening our presents I was handed a present approximately the size of any of the books on my list. I sat with the present in my lap watching my wife and kids open their presents. My son turned to me and said, "Well Dad, aren't you going to open your present? I answered "Okay, here goes my book." They all began laughing as I opened my "book." (Continued)

How I got into ham radio (continued)...

Much to my surprise the “book” was a box with a handheld two-meter radio. My son had just received his ham license, along with one of his friends. An uncle of this friend had gotten them interested in ham radio and the “no-code” Technician license. My son then said, “Well, now you have a radio, start studying.” I did and that started my time as a ham. The years have been most enjoyable as I have used the various radios talking with various other hams while at home or on the road. There was a ham in Waco I would talk with when traveling through there. He was blind and ham radio was the way he kept up with many people. I stumbled on the repeater in Waco as it was the same frequency and code as the repeater in Atlanta where we lived. As I traveled to hospital meetings in Austin and San Antonio, I would be sure to contact the Waco ham. I had lived for many years in Waco and had many friends there. The repeater was equipped with a telephone patch. It was remote controlled and I could call some friends using it. When you connected with the repeater a three digit code would connect you with the Waco or Temple telephones.

Most of the people I know in Longview has been through ham contacts. I have been very active in the club there. When a hurricane hit New Orleans the Longview Fair was going and the club had a booth there. We set up a 2-meter radio and an HF radio. We could listen to hams in New Orleans, but did not attempt contact as to not distract them.

And that’s 73 to all.

Tom Nance KB5ZFS

Thanks to our recently-transplanted LETARC member Tom Nance KB5ZFS who now hails from Hughes Springs! If you have your own story, please share it with us! Send it to letarcnewsletter@yahoo.com.

ARC Painting Project Report

Miraculously, the paint project scheduled for the three weekends beginning March 21st was completed in just one weekend! The hallways, bathrooms and meeting room were decked out in the same colors as the LETARC radio room, and the results are beautiful!

Here is the email from Gary Lewis WG5L, the club Vice President:

“Over a period of three days (03/22-24/2014), the following LETARC operators pitched in and spent long hours to repaint the area where LETARC meets on a monthly basis at the Red Cross building here in Longview (all in one weekend!):

Rich Fleming (N3DNU)

Todd Hoover (N5TJH)

Terry Johnson (KG5WO)

Gary Lewis (WG5L)

Jim Quinn the Younger (AJ1MQ)

Priscilla Quinn (AA5PQ)

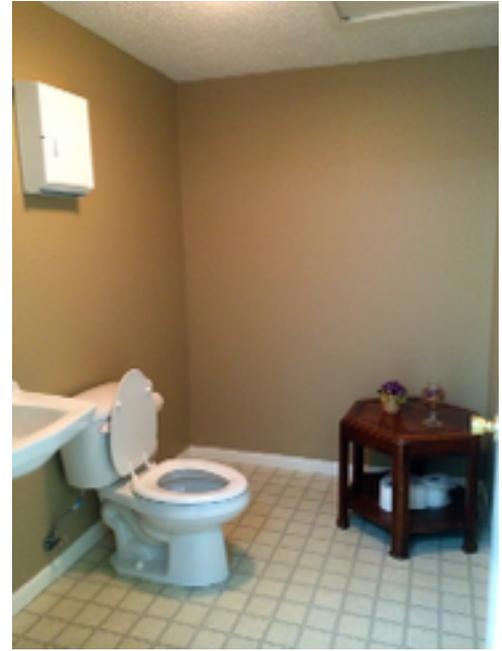
Horace Richardson (N5ZQD)

Jay Rowe (KF5UBO)

John Zenter (AE5OY)

The area included the upstairs classroom and restrooms behind the radio room and was painted with the same color scheme as the radio room, so it gives a uniform appearance. In addition, Horace Richardson repaired both sinks in the restrooms.”

Here are a few photos from Gary on the next page:



Club Dues

Club dues are still being accepted for 2014. Please fill out a membership application (even if you're already a member) to ensure that all your information is current. You may find the application in PDF form at <http://letarc.org/main/about/> on the right side of the page. Dues are \$25 and \$35 for single or family memberships and can be mailed to PO Box 5613, Longview TX 75608 or brought to a meeting.

VE Session Report

John Zenter AE5OY, LETARC President and VE Team Liaison reports that John Coutret of Shreveport and Lonnie Smith of Frierson, Louisiana, both tested and successfully attained their Technician Class licenses at the March 15th VE session. Congratulations, John and Lonnie!

Suggestions for Activities

We are still open to suggestions for club members to participate in any sort of community activities to provide communications services. Please send your ideas/suggestions to letarcnewsletter@yahoo.com

Upcoming Events

April 12th	4th Annual Tailgate Sale and D-Star Classes
April/May/June	Possible Licensing Classes
June 13th & 14th	HamCom in Plano (www.hamcom.org)

Next Meeting:

Saturday, April 19th at 9:00 a.m.
American Red Cross Building, Upstairs
SE Corner of Hwy 31 and Loop 281

Next VE Session:

Saturday, April 19th at 2:00 p.m.
LeTourneau University Glaske Building for Science & Technology

Longview/East Texas Amateur Radio Club (LETARC)
PO Box 5613
Longview, TX 75608