



PARKING TICKET

Plano, Texas

"Having fun with Amateur Radio!"

March, 2000

Greetings to one and all.

What a busy month. Lots of travel for work, study for extra class upgrade, (and Passing ; >)) and amateur activity. Now that the worst of the winter is behind us it is fitting that the next club meeting will be addressing the upcoming storm season. Bruce Dingman will present Tornados... How to stay out of the way!!! Not bad advise to any of the storm spotters. There will be a video from the Oklahoma tornado outbreak with audio, and a tape from a storm spotter in Plano when a tornado touched down near 121 and Preston Rd. You don't want to miss this one.

The April meeting will be interesting. It will be on the 18th and will fall just after the FCC deadline for the new license class structure. We will have VE's present to upgrade (paper only, no testing) for those of us who have upgraded and need to have the paper work finished to get the new license. In fact, it is requested that you utilize this service instead of using the normal 15th VE session to ease the

load on the VE's at that time. If you are considering upgrading... now is the time to get it done. I do have 4 extra copies of the extra class study guide for your use. It will give you two more VE session to complete the exam and get upgraded. Why don't we all get that done. Let's plan on everyone upgrade at least one class. Elmers are available to assist. Once past the 5 wpm code, we should all work to be extra class operators. Just think.... a whole club that are extra class operators!!! We can do that!

Elections are in April too! President, Treasurer, Activities, and Newsletter are the positions open. To date we have running (rerunning) Bill Drake President Bruce Dingman Treasurer Susie Hegg Activities Dan Kautz has completed his 2 year term and will not be able to continue as the newsletter editor. (He also asked to be relieved) So we will need to fill this position for sure. Is there anyone who has newsletter experience? Anyone who is willing to step forward and take on this position? We (the entire club) need your help and support. Don't let us down now. We are a club on the move, activities are increasing, together we can make this a premier amateur radio club. Speaking of activity. The meeting last month saw a

request for club activity from Collin County Community College Engineering Department. Twelve of our members have become active in the endeavor to bring RF technology into the schools throughout Collin County and some Richardson schools. This is a joint coordination effort with McKinney ARC, and other Amateurs from the Tele-Com Corridor. You too can help. More chances for sign up at the next meeting

I am probably rambling on way to long for a newsletter, So until the March meeting, or I hear you on the air. 73's and God Bless.

Bill Drake KJ5ZV/ AAR6CE

K5VOU

I would like to take this time to thank Tom Gentry for his time and efforts in support of the Plano Amateur Radio Klub. Tom has resigned his seat on the long range planning committee, and as the trustee for the club 440 machine. His work over the years have made our club what it is today. Tom, Thank you from all the current and past members of the Plano Amateur Radio Klub.

Bill Drake



The following dates are the Plano Amateur Radio Klub meetings for the year 2000.

@ Harrington Library

- Mar. 06-00 (Mon.)**
- Apr. 18-00 (Tue.)**
- May 08-00 (Mon.)**
- June 12-00 (Mon.)**
- July 18-00 (Tue.)**
- Aug. 15-00 (Tue.)**
- Sept. 11-00 (Mon.)**
- Oct. 09-00 (Mon.)**
- Nov. 21-00 (Tue.)**
- Dec. 19-00 (Tue.)**

The Mars Corner

By Lorraine S. Matthew/AAA9PR
lorimatt@aol.com

On his first command net of the year, Chief Army MARS opened the year 2000 with the reading of the honor roll of silent keys who departed their MARS service in 1999. Forty-five valued members were read into that list and are missed.

So far, in the year 2000, we have had 10 additional members leave us.

Some people have questioned the viability of the continuation of Army MARS given the number of lost volunteers. Actually, the volunteer Army MARS membership has increased over the last few years. New members outnumber departing members with great consistency.

Army MARS welcomes new members from the experienced ranks of FCC Amateur licensees as well as newly licensed Hams. You Hams out there who hold the entry class licenses are just as welcome as those who hold any other class of license. The great advantage of being an army MARS member is the opportunity to operate in modes from which they are barred in the civilian Amateur Radio community. We welcome all of you because with the entry of new members comes an automatic entry of new talents and new ideas.

Others have questioned the viability of continued MARS operation in terms of useable services. They cite the improved organization and operational capabilities of the ARES and other civilian emergency communications teams.

A look at some statistics from 1999 show that Army MARS is alive and well. Consider the total number of hours of service reported being over 570,000, the hours on the air being over 367,000 with the total number of messages processed being more than 422,000 is indicative of the continuing service being made by Army MARS volunteers. Unattended equipment hours which include computers, radio relay message centers and like equipment were nearly 685,000. Being volunteer hours, there is no cost to the taxpayer for all of these efforts or for the expensive equipment in use. Even at minimum wage, the cost savings to the taxpayers is in the millions of dollars.

The mission of Army MARS has

always been associated with emergency communications and the passing of emergency related information. When the widespread nature of the Army MARS operator network was recognized, this mission was formalized into the very important submission of EEI reports to DOMS, the Army's Directorate of Military Support. Through this mission and via DOMS, information directly from the emergency site is on hand for those emergency agencies who can best use it.

Is this mission valuable? Let's hear what LTC Peter Menk/AAN3DOMS, the DOMS point of contact for MARS, has to say about this factor. He spoke to the MARS members directly via phone patch supplied by Pat Lane/AAA9CE on the Chief Army MARS command net on 21 January 1999.

"It is a pleasure and honor to talk to you and the MARS volunteers on the MARS network. Let me talk to you on behalf of the director of DOMS, and DOMS is, of course, the Director of Military Support.

"The director is Major General Richard Cody. You may have recognized his name from some current publications. His background before he became the director of DOMS includes being a legendary apache helicopter pilot and he has received some press in regards to that recently. Also I am making a statement on behalf of Colonel Robert Fenton, who is Chief of the Current Operations Section of the Military Support Division.

"I myself am a senior staff officer in the Military Support Current Operations and it has been my pleasure to benefit from the Essential Elements Of Information reports, EEI reports, that you all furnished to FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and you do also support the National Disaster Medical System.

"We have had a very busy year. I think that all of you are, perhaps, aware of that. Fortunately we have not had the national catastrophe that would kick in all of the abilities and capacities that are within the MARS system. One of the large benefits that we received from the MARS system this year is clear EEI reports which serves the role as an information gathering device for the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Army who is his executive agent for

military support to civilian authorities where we get the who, what, where, when, and how in a very clean concise message so that we can advise our senior leaders perhaps before CNN gives a lesser quality report that they have to react to.

"For those of you who are not fully familiar with DOMS, we are located in the sub-basement of the pentagon in the Army Operations Center. We act as a portal or entrance for all requests for military support from civilian authorities, for disasters, for weapons of mass destruction terrorist attacks if that were to occur. The request would be coordinated through the Federal Bureau of Investigation to the Department of Justice through DOMS. So what we have is an important role. We fill that role by using military assets usually tasking a CINC, usually the United States Joint Forces Command in Norfolk to provide support, and that support can be anywhere from plastic, water, and ice to develop the support we saw in the Los Angeles riots in the last decade.

"So again on behalf of the DOMS I want to thank you for your support and look forward to our continued and very beneficial association."

Obviously, the MARS mission is being carried out efficiently and effectively by the MARS volunteers.

The year 2000 has already seen a stream of EEIs forwarded to DOMS giving them the firsthand, often eye witness, information that they and other federal agencies need in order to function in times of need. This continuing mission utilizes a wide variety of technologies that have been adapted to the MARS mission. MARS members are not limited to radio only traffic transmission. Messages and information are passed by the most efficient and speediest means available. Radio continues to be a mainstay, however, since other technologies can fail.

This was emphasized to me and the local ARES group with which I work when the FBI team that was alerted for Y2K needs met later with the Kingman Police Department. The FBI advised the Kingman Police Department to not dismantle the ARES radio communications team because those Amateurs manage to stay on the air no matter what

happens. This applies equally well to the Amateurs who are the MARS volunteers.

Army MARS and their volunteers march ever forward...

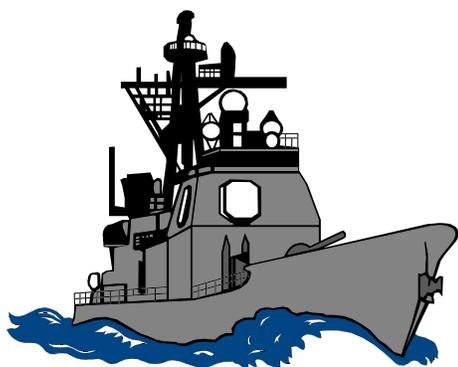
Proud, Professional, and Ready.

Robert L. Sutton Chief Army MARS
DSN: 879-8286 Comm: (520) 538-8286

This EMail distributed by: Army
Telecommunications Directorate Fort
Huachuca, Arizona

E-Mail:

ATO_Automation@hqasc.army.mil



From the DEC

Y2K concerns have come and gone although there are still predictions about problems yet to come. The next date of concern is 29 February and how leap year will be handled. Since so little problems have been reported during the transition to the year 2000, many may be asking what did we accomplish of value especially to the amateur radio community.

Well, for me there were several areas of value that made the effort worth while.

First, we demonstrated that the ARES organizations could respond to our service providers' request. We can be ready and able to support them. That is valuable to be sure, as that demonstration of readiness and organizational structure will lead to continued confidence in our service.

Second, the Y2K activities in Collin, Denton and Grayson counties provided our ARES organizations with the opportunity to interface with many different

Club Call

This past month the board of directors has indicated that a club call sign should be applied for from the FCC. We have done just that. We are currently awaiting the assigned call, and will then be able to apply for a vanity call. Dan Kautz has indicated that N5PRK or K5PRK is still available. We can use this to replace the call of our 440 machine. I will keep you updated when we hear more. Bill

people in the various supported agencies which we may not have gotten to do under other activities. Here again, that increased awareness on the operating personnel is valuable and will make continued working relationships just that much easier for the future.

Third, the Y2K activities demonstrated yet again that the ARES organizations have the support of the local amateur community. Being able to get support on New Year's eve and into the early hours of New Year's day meant that ARES activities had a high priority to those who actively were involved and to those who stood by for additional support if needed. That was very reassuring to me that ARES is a valuable activity and one that the members give an element of importance to.

Fourth, the Y2K activities provided an opportunity to involve new amateurs in ARES activities, many for the first time. Such serves to renew the organization and to provide the needed element of continued involvement by those who will fill the ranks in the future.

Fifth, the Y2K activities may well have given the general public yet another exposure to amateur radio. As we know from our Skywarn nets, the general public does listen in and even though they may have little understanding of the amateur service, they equate useful information and timely reports with amateur radio. Clearly, every chance that we have to enhance the image of amateur radio is important.

So yes it can be said that the Y2K activities were very uneventful, it can also be said that the effort was not wasted. In

PBS Hams!

The PBS station KERA will be having their fund rising blitz beginning in March. We are looking for a total of 50 amateurs to man the phone banks on a Saturday night to take pledges. If we can find enough ops, it would be declared as Amateur Radio night at KERA. It would be one of the last two Saturday nights of March. For further information and sign up sheets contact:

Jeff Soloman 972-736-2303

Jeff is a member of the McKinney
ARC

fact, the effort on the part of all involved was quite valuable. It is important that we look forward to serving such events whenever that is possible.

On another subject, if you have not yet attended a Skywarn class or would like to attend another one this season please check the official listing at: the following URL: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/fwd/sptrsch.html> for the time and location of one near you.

SKYWARN schools are a valuable and critical element in the role that ARES plays in providing a service to the general public and the agencies that we serve. Plan to attend at least one during the upcoming months. If possible you might wish to attend more than one. Some of our members attend those schools that offer the basics and then follow up with those schools that offer more detailed training on the formation of severe weather formations. This is a good mix of training and is worth considering.

SKYWARN SCHOOLS – A GOOD INVESTMENT OF TIME

The best to each of you,

Bill – K5MWC DEC District 5 and
Collin County EC

Uh-Oh...

Another DEC -->

From the (2nd) DEC

This month's article begins a look at the general subject of weather. These articles will hopefully contain information that is of value to all involved with the Skywarn program. The content will also be covered on a series of training sessions conducted on the Collin County ARES nets. The intent is for the reader to have some information about the weather that will help us all do a better job of observing the weather phenomena in the North Texas area. This material was extracted from an Observer Handbook published in 1995 and updated in 1998 by Tim Vasquez. Acknowledgement is made to Tim Vasquez and Weather Graphics Technologies for the fine reference.

As a person interested in Weather, you may wish to begin a log of your observations. It does not have to be anything especially fancy or involved. A daily log using some of the terminology and descriptions that we will be covering in this series is a good starting point.

Session One – Lithometeors

Weather especially in North Texas can manifest itself in several different ways and as we all know, those manifestations can change very quickly and in some cases go from placid to violent in just as short of a time.

In general Weather events consist of water particles in some state, rain, snow and fog. It can also be made up of electrical phenomena such as lightning or a thunderstorm. Weather like haze and dust simply obscure visibility and is referred to as an "obstruction to vision".

So what are Lithometeors? A Lithometeor is a weather phenomenon that consists of solid material suspended or falling through the atmosphere. It is not considered to be occurring unless visibility is being reduced to a point below 7 miles. Categories of Lithometeors include Haze, Smoke, Dust, Dust storms/Sand storms, Blowing Dust/ Blowing Sand and Dust Devil. Now for a little about each.

Haze

Haze is a suspension of extremely small, dry particles invisible to the naked

eye and in sufficient numbers to give the air an opalescent appearance. *Composition:* Submicroscopic dust, soil, pollen or various pollutants *Distant Objects:* Dark objects tend to have a bluish tinge while bright objects may appear as dark yellowish blue *Sky:* The midday sky may have a silvery tinge *Sun:* In thick haze, the sun may become dirty yellow and reddish at sunrise and sunset

Smoke

Smoke is a suspension in the air of small particles produced by combustion. *Composition:* Ash, carbon monoxide, etc. *Distant Objects:* May appear dark gray or dark red *Sky:* Light gray or blue *Sun:* Orange, during sunrise or sunset, it may be very red

Dust

Dust is fine particles of soil or sand suspended in the air by a dust storm or sand storm and which may be occurring at large distances from the observer *Composition:* Tiny dust or sand particles *Distant Objects:* Often take on a tan or grayish tinge *Sky:* Pale to a pearly color or tan *Sun:* Pale and colorless, sometimes may have a yellow tinge also note that shadows may disappear under extreme dust conditions

Dust storms/Sand storm

Dust or sandstorms simply are dust or sand raised by the wind to great heights above the earth and which restrict visibility to less than 5/8 of a mile. These storms become SEVERE when visibility falls below 5/16 of a mile.

Blowing dust/Blowing sand

Blowing dust or sand occurs when dust or sand is raised by the wind to heights great enough to affect the visibility at eye-level.

Dust Devil

A Dust Devil is a small vigorous whirlwind made visible by the dust or other debris picked up from the surface. Dust Devils are normally listed as obstruction to visibility but in some instances could also cause property and in extreme cases cause personal injury.

The next in this series will be on Hydrometeors which is a weather phenomenon caused by water suspended or falling through the atmosphere.

Let me know if you find this series beneficial and also pass along any suggestions that you may have on making the series more useful to you. My e:mail address is hswan@collins.rockwell.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

The best to each of you,
Bill – K5MWC DEC District 5 and Collin County EC

Old Satellite Retooled For New Use

UO-14 is proving that you can teach an old bird new tricks. The venerable British satellite recently was switched to FM repeater mode, and reports already are coming in from hams who've worked it using pretty modest equipment.

The satellite's controller Chris Jackson, G7UPN/ZL2TPO, says UO-14 was launched in January 1990 and spent its first 18 months in orbit operating as an amateur store-and-forward satellite, prior to the launch of UO-22. It was then switched for use by Volunteers In Technical Assistance, who used it for messaging into Africa.

"Since the computer which is used for store-and-forward communications is no longer able to perform that task, UO-14 is no longer usable in this mode," Jackson says. "It is, however, possible to use the satellite as a single-channel FM voice repeater, and I have just configured the satellite to do this."

The satellite works as an "FM bent pipe repeater satellite" in full duplex. Operators with full-duplex transceivers will be able to hear their downlink signal as they transmit. Half-duplex operation also will work satisfactorily.

The uplink is 145.975 MHz, and the downlink is 435.070 MHz. Jackson says he plans to leave the satellite in FM mode for the next few weeks. "If it is useful, then I will probably leave it running," he said. "If it isn't used, it will be switched to transmitting telemetry."

Houston AMSAT Coordinator Bruce Paige, KK5DO, says no more than 5 W is required to make a contact with UO-14,

and some have made it with as little as 1.5 W. "It should be a very suitable bird for those with an H-T and a rubber duck," he said.

"Cool satellite!" was the reaction of W1AW Station Manager Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, who worked 11 stations during a "very short" near-horizon pass this week. "Some of the stations sounded like they were next door!"

P.A.R.K. Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2000

The regularly monthly meeting of the Plano Amateur Radio Club was called to order by Bill Drake, PARK President. The meeting was attended by 30 members and 7 visitors.

The Secretary's and Treasurer's Report was approved as printed in the newsletter.

Bill Fell reported no known problems on the repeaters. Don Tice, WB5TVI, reported no new customers except himself with no complaints from his neighbors.

Bruce N5BYL reported on obtaining the video from the weather service showing the dramatic live tornado chase. A portion was shown at the Skywarn class in Plano.

After a short break was taken for refreshments and the speaker for the evening was introduced. Professor Tom Mobley, Department Head of Telecommunications at Collin County Community College discussed the "Technology Awareness Program". This is a new program that will expose middle and high school students to technologies leading to high paying careers available in Engineering and Engineering Technology. They plan to start with wireless technologies with initial focus on packet radio. TAP also calls for the establishment of a Summer Technology Camp. (For information, vector to <http://iws.ccccd.edu/tmobley/camp.htm>.) The presentation was very well received and deemed very worthwhile. Many felt this would be a good club project.

Lester Woosley, W5EIJ, offered the door prize for the evening - a Xerox copy of the 1st QST (1915). Ross Lockmiller, W5HRL was the lucky winner.

Dan W5EHS noted that the mobile

license plate application was on his web site with the newsletter (<http://www.tedatum.com/park/>).

A round of introductions was made before closing the meeting.

Clarence Sebesta K5YO - PARK
Secretary k5yo@arrl.net
972-867-2691



Easily Heard Signals

de W5EHS

Bill, KJ5ZV, already "spilled the beans" on the front page. It is hard to believe that it is almost two years since I started producing the **Parking Ticket**. I do not plan to continue on as the newsletter editor.

First, the KLUB rules forbid an officer from serving more than two consecutive terms. That rule could be overcome but there is no need.

I have published newsletters of various sorts almost continuously for over 30 years. The first one was for an R/C model airplane club I belonged to back in Ohio. I used a typewriter and was very concerned about misspellings and typos. The computer has solved all those problems. The hardest (and most rewarding) was a weekly newsletter for my ROTARY club. I did that for three years and earned a governor's trophy each year.

So I guess I am a hooked newsletter editor/publisher. However, two years is enough for me at this time. Publishing the **Parking Ticket** takes quite a bit of time. I do it because I like it. But there are

always other things I would like to also be doing. It is time to move on to other interests.

I will continue to submit this column. I hope the membership enjoys my ramblings. I just sit down at the keyboard and start writing. I am never sure where the story will go. It would be nice if a few of you out there would give it a try. (Some of you already do a great job!) A newsletter is judged by the material it contains. A good layout can't make up for poor content.

I have been on HF a lot more lately. I have PSK31 running on 40 and 20 meters. It is a wondrous mode. Unbelievable contacts made on very low power and very crowded bands. IT WORKS GREAT! If you have a computer with a sound card and a sideband radio, there is no reason not to try this mode. The software is free on the Internet. One audio cable and you will be reading solid copy. Two cables and you will be talking back. It is actually that simple. Try it. You'll like it.

I have my packet station running 24/7. Look for it on 145.01MHz. I primarily have it up for the student program that was presented at the last meeting. I am only about one mile from the CCCC Frisco campus. I hear very well all over the Collin county area with the antenna (5/8 wave) up about 20 foot. If I see activity in the PBBS I will move it up to the rooftop. Right now as with the rest of packet, it is fairly dead. I could easily set up a packet BBS for the PARK. But with so little activity, it just doesn't make much sense. Internet email rules. It is the slow speed of packet and the unwillingness of users to upgrade to faster speeds (9600 baud has been available on two meters for a very long time.) that has spelled packet's demise. Today 9600 is a relatively slow speed. I do not hear anything running at that speed.

The PSK31 is only 31 baud! Extremely slow, but perfect for making keyboard-to-keyboard contacts. It is never intended to be anything more than a keyboard mode. That is what puts the FUN in operating PSK31. REAL people operating at the other end in REAL time.

'Nuff said for now. I am going to go have some FUN with Amateur radio.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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TV/RFI Committee Don R. Hice, WB5TVI 972-599-2038

LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

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	<open>		
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	Deb Varian, KA5HQY	972-398-0407	
	Craig Young, KA5BOU	972-396-9184	972-952-4616

The **PARKING TICKET** is the monthly publication of the Plano Amateur Radio Klub (PARK) and is intended to present news, issues and opinions of interest to the PARK and the Amateur Radio Community. We encourage contribution of articles, letters to the editor, etc. and welcome newsletter exchanges with other clubs around the country. Permission is granted to reprint material as long as proper credit is given. Ideas for and contributions to the **PARKING TICKET** should be sent to:

Editor - Dan Kautz, W5EHS
PARKING TICKET
11314 Harbor Rd.
Frisco, Texas 75035-7569

email: w5ehs@arrl.net

Submissions must be received no later than the first day of the month to be included in that month's issue. Material received after the deadline will be included in the following month's issue if it is still current.

The Plano Amateur Radio Klub meets each month at 7:30 PM in the Harrington Library, 18th and Avenue P. See newsletter, web page or listen to repeaters for date. Dues are \$15 per year, \$21 for family membership, and \$7 for the Repeater Association, prorated biannually. The PARK operates two repeaters: WD5ERD on 147.18+ and K5VOU on 444.25+.

Visit the P.A.R.K. Web Site at: <http://home1.gte.net/n5cae>. Click on the link for the *Plano Amateur Radio Klub*.



Plano Amateur Radio Klub
PARKING TICKET
P.O. Box 860435
Plano, TX. 75086-0435



Next Meeting: Monday,
March 6, 2000 7:30PM
Harrington Library

