

# *The eKilo - What*

Monthly Newsletter of the San Angelo Amateur Radio Club

*April 2005*

## *Meeting Minutes*

*By Bob Freeman/KD5PIX, Secretary*

The regular monthly meeting of the San Angelo Amateur Radio Club, Inc., was called to order by President Joe Kent/KC5ILD on March 10, 2005, at 1930.

Introductions were made with 14 members in attendance.

The minutes of the February meeting were approved as printed in the March issue of *The Kilo-What*. The treasurer's report was approved as read.

### **Officers' Reports**

Don Gallion/KD5NAI, Activities Manager, was not able to attend the meeting and asked Bob/KD5PIX to speak with Mr. Hohn at Christmas in April. Mr. Hohn counts on the SAARC each year for help in the warehouse. His needs are for pick-ups for deliveries. The event is April 2, 2005 from 0730-1630. Our volunteers are: Joe Kent/KC5ILD, Ronnie Mecklenburg/KD5WXJ, Ken Pierson/KD5NXV, Paul Wittenborn/N7SDQ and Bob Freeman/KD5PIX.

Paul Wittenborn/N7SDQ, Emergency Coordinator, has compiled a list of operators (and back-ups) for the SAARC's radio at the National Weather Service. This will prevent a crowd at the Weather Service and less confusion. Paul is also compiling a list of operators for the Monday Night Net. This will give experience to others and keep one person from being obligated every Monday night.

The Technician License Course will begin April 7, 2005. This will give 3 weeks for media coverage and to list the materials required of the students.

### **Old Business**

Chad Goodman/KD5SMK, Public Information Officer, has not been able to work on any of the cards for the club.

The information obtained by Joe Kent/KC5ILD and Bob Freeman/KD5PIX on the required fees to turn our water on was discussed with the members. The Assistant City Manager believes we should give him a copy of our letter and attachments along with a cover sheet of what we do for the city and community. He will forward this to the City Manager. The City Manager will bring it before the City Council, requesting a waiver of all fees. Glenn Miller/AA5PK has written a cover sheet for us. We need to proceed as soon as possible.

The May meeting will be our 2nd annual "Old Timers Appreciation Day." We will hold a brief business meeting, then enjoy the festivities. We need to make plans now.

David Wolfe/KA5VTG, spoke to Carl Young/KC5QGR, son of SK Ivy Young, regarding the possible sale of his equipment. Carl said they would need some time to get things in order.

### **New Business**

Community Awareness Day will be April 9, 2005, at the Sunset Mall from 1000 until 1800. There will be several Volunteer Fire Departments, the Red Cross and many other agencies. We will have a table inside the Mall.

### **Good of the Order**

Split-the-Pot winner was David Behrend/KB5FNK. David and the club each received \$6.50.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2030. The next meeting of the San Angelo Amateur Radio Club, Inc., will be April 14, 2005, at 1930 at the clubhouse.

## License Testing News

# ARRL VEC

*By Glenn Miller/AA5PK, Volunteer Examiner*

The next regularly scheduled license testing session will be Sunday, April 17, at 1 PM at the clubhouse. Pre-registration (submission of NCVEC Form 605 and \$12 check/money order payable to "ARRL/VEC") is required not later than April 11.

License testing information and a link to download the form are available on the club's Web site <http://www.w5qx.org>.

Information/forms can be obtained by contacting Don/AB5BG at 651-5441 or Glenn/AA5PK at 949-4775.

## Utility Pulls Plug on Texas BPL Pilot Project

*From The ARRL Letter, April 1, 2005*

An Irving, Texas, BPL pilot project that was the target of an ARRL complaint has shut down and removed its equipment. In mid-March, the League called on the FCC to shut down the system and issue fines for causing harmful interference to Amateur Radio communications. The ARRL's March 15 filing to the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, its Office of Engineering and Technology, system operator TXU and equipment manufacturer Amperion supported a complaint from ARRL member and North Texas Section BPL Task Force Chair Jory McIntosh, KJ5RM, who regularly commutes through the BPL test zone in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

"I just got back from reviewing the site and can confirm that the BPL installation in Irving, Texas, has been removed and is no longer operating," McIntosh told ARRL this week. "Things are so quiet you can hear a pin drop. Definitely quite a change!" He said when the system was running, interference in its vicinity was 20 dB over S9 or stronger on all amateur bands from 40 through 6 meters.

The ARRL became involved after the FCC failed to respond to McIntosh's formal complaint last fall. ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, also took measurements at the Texas site that verified McIntosh's observations. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, thanked McIntosh for his help in bringing the situation to a head. "I hope your example inspires other amateurs facing similar situations to get involved," Sumner added.

On the basis of McIntosh's report, the ARRL this week canceled its complaint to the FCC. "ARRL therefore withdraws its complaint with respect to the TXU/Amperion site and requests that the Commission turn its attention to the remainder of the BPL sites which are actively causing interference to radio amateurs, including Briarcliff Manor, New York," ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, wrote the Commission.

There's been no word from TXU as to its reasons for shutting down the system and removing the equipment. The test report the League included with its complaint pointed out that the interference was not confined to Amateur Radio spectrum but included additional HF spectrum. The ARRL said the system failed to protect many of the bands that the FCC's new BPL rules will require to be notched by July 2006.

The Irving BPL test site is the third using Amperion BPL equipment to shut down following complaints from Amateur Radio operators. In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, last June, Alliant Energy cut short its BPL "evaluation system" after the utility and Amperion were unable to resolve ongoing HF interference to amateurs. In the Raleigh, North Carolina, area last October, Progress Energy Corporation shut down Phase II of its BPL field trial after pronouncing the test a success.

Despite an FCC inspection report to the contrary, local amateurs said Progress and Amperion had only limited success in mitigating interference on amateur frequencies in that trial. While initially saying it had no plans for a large-scale commercial rollout of BPL in its service areas, Progress later backed away from that statement, contained in a memorandum announcing the shutdown.

The ARRL formally supported Amateur Radio complaints in Iowa and North Carolina.

## Scanner Jack's Corner

*By Jack Roberts/KB5TMY*

These are the frequencies to monitor during a power failure.

856.3125  
857.3125  
858.3125  
859.3125  
860.3125  
856.3375  
857.3375  
858.3375  
859.3375  
860.3375  
856.3625  
857.3625  
858.3625  
859.3625  
860.3625

# CQ DX de WB5ZAM



By Bill Richards/WB5ZAM

**DXpeditions in April:** Not many out after the first of the month: JW, A25, C6, JT, LX, HBØ and SU.

## Island of the Month

**Martinique - FM.** In the sunny Caribbean sea, with a surface area of approximately 1 km, and a population of about 414,000, Martinique is said to be a slice of France in the Caribbean. Although the culture may seem French, it is more like New Orleans than Paris. The Martinicans have a culture “all of their own, solidly based on West Indian Creole traditions”. 14d 40m North and 61dW, with the dormant Mount Pelee (Montange Pelee) (last erupting in 1900’s) at 4582 feet above sea level as the highest point of land.

The island is noted for its natural disasters occurring every 5 years: hurricanes, flooding, volcano eruptions, etc. The population is 90% African-West Indies mixture, 5% white and 5% other nationalities. And, as one would expect from a French nation, 85% are Roman Catholic. The official languages are French and Creole patois. Still a dependant of France, the government follows the motherland political trends, and does actually send representatives to France to represent the island’s interests.



The economy is based on sugar cane, bananas, tourism and light industry. Most sugar cane is now used in the production of rum, and an exclusivity contract allows all of their banana exports to go to France. Unemployment in 1998 was 27% and the island relies heavily on France for support. They have a fledgling oil refining sub-economy, but tourism has more employed than the agricultural side of the economy. Exports are, of course, rum, bananas, pineapples and refined petroleum products. The Euro is the currency of choice, which floats against the US dollar on the world economy (\$1=0.76EU\$). The best times to visit are in February to May (peak tourist season, of course) when the humidity is at its lowest (end of the rainy season) and the worst time to visit is hurricane season starting in September. Lots to do and see on the island, but somewhat hampered by the lack of non-English speaking locals. Exchanging money is recommended only at exchange offices and banks as hotels give the lowest possible exchange. Lonely Planets recommends the beach at Les Salines as the best on the island and, if you are into biking, there are roads used for the Tour de France trials all over the island. Important places to visit include the Vulcanology Museum (Musee Vulcanologique) and, of course, the Musee du Rhum (Museum of Rum).

Like most of the Caribbean islands, the South American Indians went through their different groups with the violent Carib Indians present when Christopher Columbus found the islands. It was 30 years before the first party of settlers arrived, building what eventually would become Saint Pierre, the island’s first capital. In 1636, King Louis XIII authorized the use of slaves and the island rapidly became colonized. The Caribs were no match for the French army and were eventually forced from the island in 1660. The British invaded the island in 1794 and maintained it until 1815. This annexation to Britain allowed the island to escape the Napoleonic wars and, by 1815 when it was returned to France, the French government was stable and the island continued to prosper. The wife of Napoleon, Josephine, was purportedly born on the island in 1763. Slavery ended in 1848. In 1902 Mount Pelee exploded and laid waste to Saint Pierre. With the complete extinction of the town, the capital was moved to Fort-de-France in the south.

The islands terrain mimics St Lucia with high mountain ranges in the center giving way to plains and plateaus and hills. The central mountain ranges rise to 4000 feet and drop to sea level. Most of the rain forest is in the north with the southern end the drier part (interesting note, St Lucia to the south 25 miles, is dry in the north and wet in the south). And, like St Lucia, the interior forests are cooler and wetter, especially as you rise away from the sea. Lots of nature trails and varied animal and bird life gives hikers much to see. The beaches and reefs add to the vacation spots. Amateur radio is provided by several resident amateurs as well as European vacationers. Electricity is the 240VAC European standard. Tourism is still in its infancy. At one time the Caribbean Islands were a popular stopping spot for cruise liners, but as the ships became larger and more self contained, they stop less and demand more from the islands, so there is an on-going conflict between the islands tourism groups and the ship companies. Inter-island ferries are available for trips from other nearby islands to Martinique, and the local airport does have enough length to take in most Caribbean based airlines. Medical facilities are based around the French social medicine system. An 18-hole Robert Trent Jones Sr. course, the Golf de l'Impératrice Joséphine, is at Trois Ilets, one mile from the Pointe du Bout resort, 20 miles from Fort-de-France.

## QSL OF THE MONTH - FM1NM

Guy is in Fort-de-France and is somewhat active locally, especially on the weather nets.

See you on the bands chasing DX (or maybe in the “Sunny Caribbean.”) 73 de Bill.



## Concho Valley Two Meter Net

Date	NCS	Check-ins	Duration
Mar 7	N7SDQ	20	13 min
Mar 14	KD5NAI	17	9 min
Mar 21	N7SDQ	15	8 min
Mar 28	KA5VTG	16	8 min
Apr 4	AA5PK	10	7 min

This net meets every Monday night at 8 p.m. on the club's 146.34/.94 repeater. All amateurs licensed to operate on that frequency are invited to participate.

## Concho Valley Open FM Repeaters

2 Meter		70 centimeter	
145.27-	San Angelo PL 88.5	441.750+	San Angelo PL 162.2
146.64-	Sterling City PL 88.5	442.250+	San Angelo PL 162.2
146.72-	Eldorado PL 100.0	444.225+	Robert Lee PL 162.2
146.88-	San Angelo	444.350+	San Angelo PL 162.2
146.94-	San Angelo PL 103.5 when needed		
147.06+	San Angelo	6 Meter Crossband	
147.34+	Robert Lee PL 88.5	147.30/53.63	San Angelo PL 88.5

## Associate Members



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Wide Web at [www.w5qx.org](http://www.w5qx.org)

### 2005 SAARC Officers:

President - Joe Kent/KC5ILD  
Vice President - Bill Murphy/WA6CMJ  
Secretary/Treasurer - Bob Freeman/KD5PIX  
Emergency Coordinator - Paul Wittenborn/N7SDQ  
Activities Manager - Don Gallion/KD5NAI  
Grounds Custodian - Ron Mechenburg/KC5WXJ

**SAARC Monthly Meetings:** 2nd Thursday,  
1930, clubhouse, 5513 Stewart Lane

**Annual Dues:** \$20, Sr. & Jr. \$10

**The Kilo-What:** Edited by Glenn/AA5PK at 949-  
4775 or email [aa5pk@qsl.net](mailto:aa5pk@qsl.net)

**Article submission deadline:** Ten days prior  
to monthly club meeting.



**NEXT MEETING:**  
**THURSDAY, APR 14, 7:30 P.M.**  
**MATHIS FIELD CLUBHOUSE**