

Red River Valley Amateur Radio Club (RRVARC)

Secretary Report

July 27, 2024

It has been a busy couple of months. Takeaways are:

- At this years Field Day we got four new members and one former member to sign up and join/rejoin the Club.
- As a result we have five members to vote on today:
 - Barry Bryant (KJ5AXI)
 - Audie Earlie (KU5GSN)
 - Kevin Sao (KK7BZE)
 - Martin Struss (KD7QZA)
 - Former member Thomas Sorensen (AF5WO).
- We again secured W5W for Field Day 2025. I think we keep getting really lucky and securing that tactical call sign. It is much, much, easier for operators at both ends of the contact to hear and say. You can only reserve it a year in advance, so we have a running list of things the Club officers tend to and this is one of them. Delighted to report that we got it yet again.
- We previously secured W5W for Winter Field Day this coming January. The State of Texas has restrictions on reservations for the spots we would like to secure. If you have a large group you can reserve early, but since we only have 5-6 people committed at this time we will not be able to register camping locations until next month (August). There is a mix of full RV hook ups and overnight structures available. Mark and the Beall's plan to RV it while Cliff may RV or get a house. The Penry's get a house. They are all grouped together and the structures are heated and cooled and have bunkbeds. There is also a comate controlled bathroom facility with showers right there. It is a very nice park. If you are inclined to go and want details chat with any of us about it. If you just want to go and check it out, that too is fine. The more the merrier.
- Prior to the solar event we worked on developing additional ham radio contacts in the geographic area surrounding Paris. Think of a wagon wheel with the center of the spokes being Paris. We added over a hundred email contacts. We still

have 99 of them and I am working to combine them into our standard email list, which consists of 160 people. Quite literally we have 250 people getting our email and a large percentage of them are reading the messages that we send.

- Website usage:
 - Depending upon the content that our site has our weekly traffic ranges from 500-1000. We recently had a week where traffic was quite literally over 1000 visitors.
 - Why do we care? Because it is all about eyeballs. Kim Ledbetter (KI5VLH) and I are developing a list of local businesses and their decision makers, along with high net worth individuals, so that we can begin meeting with them to solicit ongoing monthly giving. Rather than the Club surviving on member dues and donations it is Club leadership's goal to leverage the website into a revenue source to support our vision for the Club going forward.
 - Weather Radar Hole – The Club leadership secured permission from the Washington Post to reprint in whole an article titled Radar gaps threaten millions as severe weather season ramps up in U.S. by Dan Stillman. Have you read it? Do you know how to get to it? How cool is it that our little ham radio club got permission to reprint an article by a national news operation – into perpetuity no less! It is a fantastic article and if you have not read it or even know of its existence then that brings up some additional points:
 - This article is important. It does a great job of pointing out the holes in radar coverage not just here, but nationally.
 - You do know that we are in a hole here, right? National Weather Service radar shows the weather at about 18,000' above the ground in Paris. While interesting, we don't really care about what is happening at 18,000', we care about what is happening on the ground.
 - There is one local radar source with data that is supposedly forthcoming, but I have been exploring another option. The Fannin club is looking at a solution that involves perhaps putting up a marine radar unit at the Sheriff's office and use that to fill in the gap in the Bonham area, perhaps out to 30 miles depending upon the elevation of the radar mount. I have been exploring options via written requests to radar manufacturers and developers that

implement marine radar solutions for yachts and ships. Right now I anticipate that a turnkey solution might be obtainable for less than \$20,000 for the hardware. It would also require some computer development work because currently marine radar is meant to be tied into chart plotters and likes. I want a data stream we can port into our website to use as a layer on our map. More on that in future briefings.

- How to find things on the Club website – Rhetorically, do you know how to operate on our site? Do you know where the “Unofficial” Call Sign List is? Speaking of that list, v14 is available and was laid out. If you didn’t grab one or two, please do before you go. How about our Library? Did you know that we host manuals for many of the most popular radios? I have been asked to do a presentation with graphics showing how to use the website and we will add that as a presentation at a future date.

That is it for now, but lots of exciting stuff is going on with Red River Valley Amateur Radio Club.