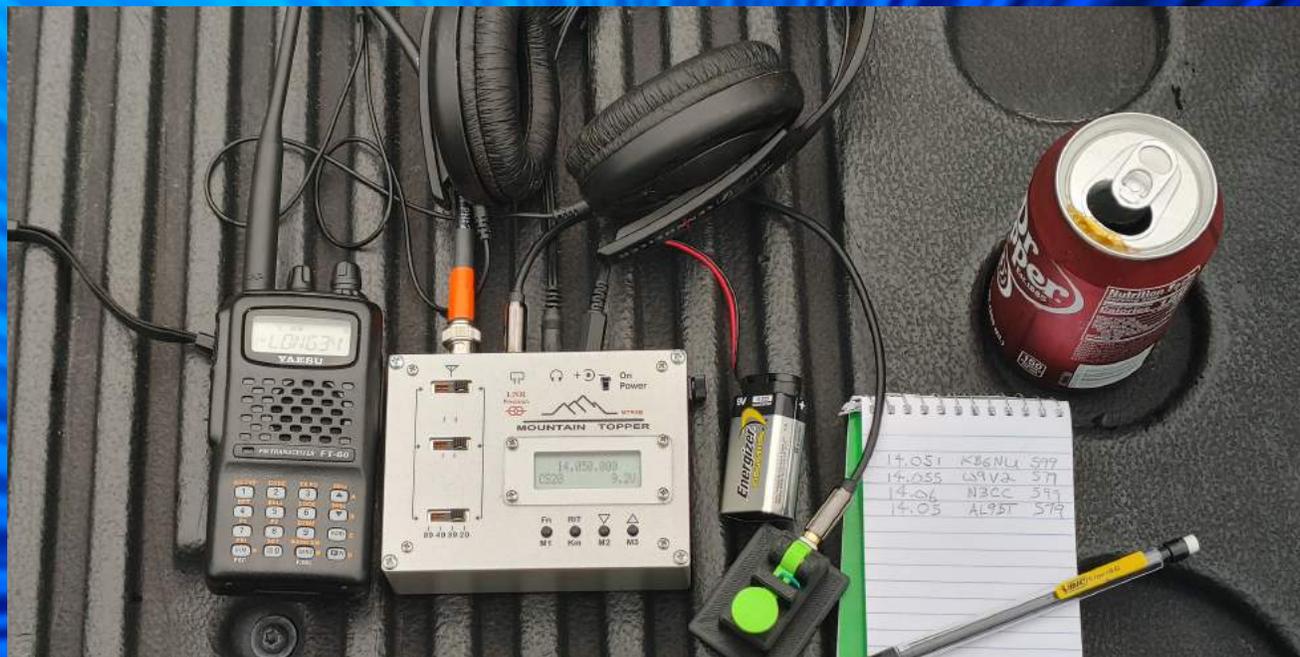


JULY 2021

PROPAGATION

Newsletter of the Longview East Texas Amateur Radio Club



**Portable
Radio
Issue**

In this issue

LETARC interviews Adam Kimmerly K6ARK

Get ready for the 13 colonies special event!

Book review: ARRL's Portable Operating



**Join us at the next LETARC
meeting July 24th at 9AM at the
Longview Fire Training Center.**

LETARC activities

LETARC had our first "2nd Tuesday of the month" dinner at Cotton Patch cafe in Longview on June 8th. LETARC had suspended the tradition since the beginning of the pandemic and it was nice to get together again. Our next dinner will be on **Tuesday, July 13th 6:30 P.M.** at... you guessed it, Cotton Patch cafe again on McCann Street in Longview. All are welcome including spouses and friends.

LETARC had a business meeting on June 19th at the Fire Training Center to discuss Field Day. It was decided that we would operate at Mims Volunteer Fire Dept. Thanks go to Jim Perry KA5BCM and Mims VFD for being such kind hosts. I would like to apologize to Lance McNeel W5TWM and to Bill Hale KI5PJS regarding incorrect directions to Mims VFD.

On June 26th K5LET operated from Mims using the Yaesu FT-991As. The hexbeam worked fine business and cut through pileups well. We had a bit of trouble with the trapped dipole but Ross Bennett KI5SR was able to make contacts on CW with it. Several LETARC members came by and contacts were made on the 20, 40, and 80 meter bands.

In ARRL VE testing news Chester Sanders II of Longview, TX and Sterling McDermott of Gilmer, TX passed their technician class tests. LETARC would like to congratulate them and welcome them to the world's greatest hobby!

LETARC Field Day 2021



New LETARC member Rhett Pilcher KG5NWI celebrates making his first HF contact on 20 meters sideband while El Presidente Ross Bennett KI5SR works CW on 40 meters.

June 19th meeting minutes

I. Opening Ceremonies

Call to order at 0902.

Prayer and Pledge by Paul Little.

Introductions.

Welcome from President Ross Bennett.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Meeting agenda adopted.

III. Adoption of Minutes

Reading of minutes and finances from May meeting. No objections.

Minutes adopted.

IV. Reports from Officers.

- 1. President Ross Bennett - Field day discussions with some members. No board meeting, one is needed.**
- 2. Vice President Ron Case - not present.**
- 3. Secretary/Treasurer James Bray - nothing to pass.**
- 4. Media Director Don Gamble - working on brochure and talked about where to pass it out. Has brochures for current and possible hams. Should have all for by next meeting.**
- 5. Communications Director Jim Rogers - not present.**

V. Reports by Committees - none

VI. Reports by Members - none

VII. Recess

Meeting minutes continued

VII. Reconvene

IX. Program: None

X. Unfinished Business

- John Zenter needs dates to give Letourneau for tailgate sale. Trades Days may be coming back so may work with them. Will decide at board meeting.

XI. Plans for ARRL Field Day of June 26-27, 2021

- Field day starts at 1300 local time Saturday and runs 24 hours.
- Room can be open all night if wanted.
- Provide your own food.
- Logging will be done on paper and turned in to Ross Bennett.
- Will open door at 1100.

XII. VE Testing Headcount for Field Day Weekend - complete group!

XIII. Monthly dinner - Cotton Patch July 13th 6:30pm

XIV. Adjourn at 1001

Thank you to **James Bray KG5OFX** for recording the minutes and sharing them with the Propagation. We hope to see you at our next meeting on July 24th.

LETARC would like to congratulate **Lloyd Jackson WO5W** for earning his Tribune award from the Straight Key Century Club (SKCC.) Lloyd is a founder of LETARC. Congrats Lloyd! If you would like to try CW we have slow speed frequencies at 7.12 MHz and 14.114 MHz. For more information on SKCC visit skccgroup.com.



13 Colonies special event



The Annual 13 Colonies Special Event

<i>GB13COL</i>	<i>TM13COL</i>	<i>WM3PEN</i>	
	<i>NY - K2A</i>		
<i>VA - K2B</i>	<i>DE - K2E</i>	<i>MA - K2H</i>	<i>NH - K2K</i>
<i>RJ - K2C</i>	<i>MD - K2F</i>	<i>NJ - K2I</i>	<i>SC - K2L</i>
<i>CT - K2D</i>	<i>GA - K2G</i>	<i>NC - K2J</i>	<i>PA - K2M</i>

The 13 Colonies special event will be held July 1-7. All HF bands except 60 meters will be utilized and 6 meters and 2 meters are encouraged. If you work a 13 Colony station you are encouraged to spot the frequency for others on DX Summit. The event accepts donations. For more information on this special event go to <http://www.13colonies.us/>

YOTA (Youth on the air) camp will stream events online this year.

Neil Rapp WB9VPG has set up a camp for young hams to operate HF and learn about radio. Tim Duffy K3LR of DX Engineering is the guest speaker. A scheduled QSO with the International Space station (ARISS) is scheduled for Wednesday, July 14, at 1503 UTC. For more information visit <https://youthontheair.org/>

ARRL Webinars

Designing Coiled Coax "Ugly" Baluns -- John Portune, W6NBC / Thursday, July 8, 2021 @ 8 pm EDT and

Learning with High-Altitude Balloons -- Jack McElroy, KM4ZIA, and Audrey McElroy, KM4BUN / Thursday, July 22, 2021 @ 3:30 pm EDT are available for ARRL members. For more info visit <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-learning-network>

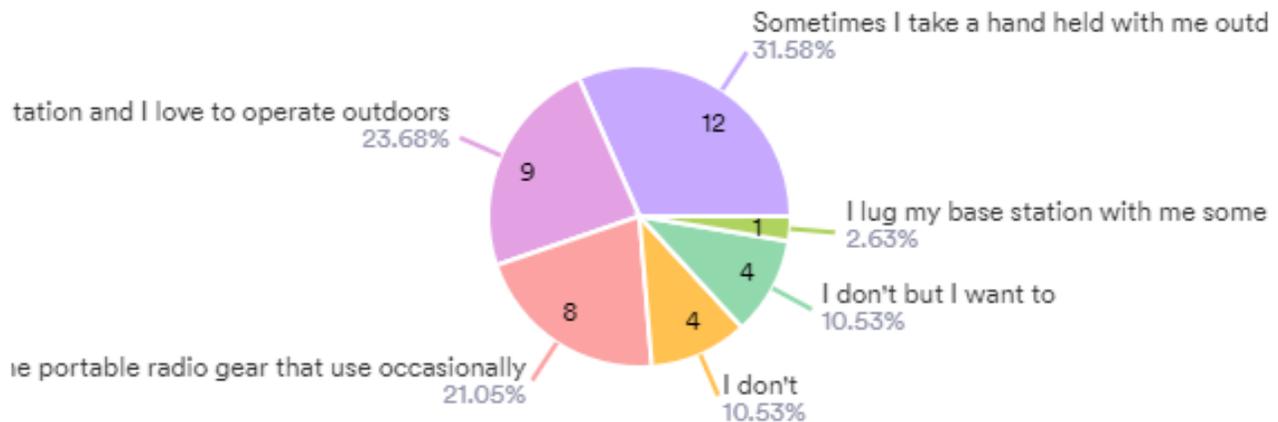
LETARC survey

"How do you operate portably?"

- 31.6%** Sometimes I take a handheld with me outdoors
- 23.7%** I have a portable station and I love to operate outdoors
- 21%** I have some portable gear that I use occasionally
- 10.5%** I don't but I want to
- 10.5%** I don't
- 2.6%** I lug my base station with me sometimes

How do you operate ham radio portably?

38 Responses- 0 Empty



Data	Response	%
Sometimes I take a hand held with ...	12	31.58%
I have a portable station and I love t...	9	23.68%
I have some portable radio gear that...	8	21.05%
I don't	4	10.53%
I don't but I want to	4	10.53%
I lug my base station with me somet...	1	2.63%

Portable radio tips

- **Make a checklist of all the equipment you will need. Pay close attention to coax cable and any needed adapters. (*Ask me how I know this.*)**
- **Charge your batteries and double check the charge.**
- **Check the forecast and make plans to keep yourself and your gear safe, secure, and comfortable.**
- **Think about where you will set up and how you will deploy your antenna. If you can scout the area ahead of time and check out the RF noise level you may save some headache.**
- **<https://www.voacap.com/> is a good site to look at before you select a band to operate.**
- **Bug spray and citronella candles can be useful.**
- **How are you going to log your contacts? Is there cell service or wifi at the location? This will be important if you participate in SOTA or POTA and would like to spot yourself. You can post these ahead of time.**
- **Stay hydrated! Snacks are nice too.**
- **Take pictures and share with LETARC! Have fun!**



Using a small receiver that can tune HF may help you discover noise ahead of time if you scout a location. Pay attention to antenna polarization, vertical antennas often find noise.

LETARC interviews Adam Kimmerly K6ARK

Adam Kimmerly K6ARK has a very popular youtube channel where he demonstrates portable ham radio and innovative field antenna designs. Adam was kind enough to let us interview him.

1) Are you a member of a local radio club? If so, what is your favorite part of being in the club?

I am not a formal member of any local clubs, but I am a regular presenter and act as one of the regular net control operators for a local weekly net called the Sam Diego Ham Forum. The informal group has a Facebook page and holds net-based presentations every Monday night on a local repeater covering a variety of amateur radio related topics.

2) How did you get started in portable amateur radio?

I got into amateur radio thanks to my involvement in Search and Rescue, and primarily operated mobile as a Technician. A combination of factors pushed me into portable operation: 1) becoming an HF operator while living in an apartment, and 2) making my first Summits on the Air contact without realizing it.

After a couple of years of operating on local repeaters and 2m simplex as a technician, I purchased a 10m Radio Shack HTX-10 and built a wire dipole. With the dipole strung up across my porch, I tuned across the band on a few occasions and never really heard much of anything. Then, one evening while tuning around, I heard a station calling CQ. I replied, and with a little patience and help on his part, I had my first longer distance propagation contact in the log from my home QTH in San Diego to his station in Chicago. I was hooked.

Soon after, I began studying for my general class license. And one day, while out on a hike, I made a 2m simplex contact from a local summit. The operator on the other end asked if I was doing a SOTA activation. "SOTA" I said? "What's that?"

I got a bit more info about SOTA, earned my General class license, and purchased a Yaesu FT-817 as my first real HF radio. My portable operating quickly expanded and grew more into SOTA. And I started filming some of my adventures.

3) Please tell us about your youtube channel.

My YouTube channel, K6ARK Portable Radio, is all about my adventures in portable operating and my projects building and tinkering with gear that suits my needs. The channel has grown immensely over the past year, and the the feedback, comments, and support I receive from watchers has been amazing motivation to keep producing videos. Most of all, I get reward out of stories and feedback from those who took the info I provided in a video and used it to build an antenna or activate a summit. I love having the opportunity to inspire people to learn, build, and experiment through my videos.

4) What advice would you give someone new who wants to get started in portable HF operations?

Yes, plan on doing lots of listening. One of the best things about portable ops is the low noise level. Enjoy it!

5) You have some incredible antennas you have built. Please tell us about how you design, create, and build them.

Well, I'm always trying to figure out a better way to make a tool - a portable antenna - that suits my needs. Small size and weight, portability, and performance are top priorities to me, and not many commercial antennas are designed to effectively address all of those. It all starts with a need, then I look through commercial options and designs others have created, and then I try to figure out how I can make them smaller, lighter, and more portable while maintaining performance. I also typically model them in MMANA-GAL to verify the design, then do some prototyping and eventually building of the final product.

6) Do you have tips or strategies that you think would help other hams operating portably?

Absolutely! I have a few tips and pieces of advice that may help new portable ops.

1) Don't push yourself on multiple aspects of radio and non-radio factors at one time. What I mean by that is to keep it simple and low-commitment on your first portable efforts. Avoid hiking a long distance to a remote peak, on a hot day, with a new radio, unfamiliar antenna, in an area with marginal cell reception. Instead, pack up gear you're familiar with and bring it to a nearby park, or even just out to your back yard.

Practice setting up your system in a place where you can easily resolve issues - like your back yard, then perhaps at a park nearby. If you forgot something, or if something goes wrong, you can much more easily resolve it.

2) Start out using the gear you hve. Generally speaking, the gear you use at home will work fine out portable. The system doesn't need to be anything crazy small or light. Just get out and operate. Each time you operate portable, you'll discover different items and bits of gear that you'll want to make your setup easier, you'll build or buy new equipment, and your capabilities will grow.

7) Is there any gear that you strongly recommend or any gear you would advise others to stay away from?

Equipment is so personal and based so much on personal preferences, priorities, and interests, that I can't think of many items that I would say that an operator shouldn't buy without first asking more questions. For ultimate portability, I have become a huge fan of the Mountain Topper MTR-3B. A rig the size of a deck of cards allows me to work the world on CW. It is ridiculously power-efficient, receive sensitivity and filtering is fantastic, and coupled with an ultralight end fed halfwave, the whole rig weighs less than a pound. It's incredibly fun. Learn morse code if you haven't already, and get yourself a Mountain Topper if you're really interested in portable HF.

But one common recommendation of gear to avoid that I often hear, and generally agree with, is that QRP, particularly on SSB, is difficult and requires a great deal of patience. Compromised portable antennas that some operators choose to use make QRP even more of a challenge.

So I generally recommend that SSB operators consider buying a 100W radio if they don't already have one, and using a full-size antenna like a 1/4 wave vertical, linked dipole, or end-fed halfwave.

8) How much advance planning goes on before you head out for a radio trip?

It actually varies a lot. As you probably know, the more you do an activity, the easier the planning gets. My portable rigs are already built into kits with all I need, and everything has its place so it's very easy to visually scan the gear and verify everything I need is there.

When I'm headed out to climb a new mountain, I do a bit more planning. I research routes and access on peak bagging websites and the SOTA website, review satellite imagery, and plan a route on a computerized map. I download maps to that area for my cell phone, and typically print a paper copy as well. I also research the weather forecast, and identify nearby repeaters for emergency and non-emergency comms.

9) What is your favorite part of amateur radio?

My favorite part of amateur radio is the endless set of learning opportunities. Amateur radio constantly challenges me and drives me to continual building and learning. I don't see that coming to an end anytime soon.

Thanks,
Adam
K6ARK

Click [here](#) to visit
Adam's youtube
channel

**Thank you to
Adam K6ARK!**

Tony Day KC4AUF shares an Island on the Air story with LETARC

I was teaching a weekly Amateur Radio class over a local repeater I called " The Elmer Hour" so we had progressed to the point where I decided " These folks need to learn the skills to accomplish a DXPEDITION." So in the summer of 2001 me and my rag tag bunch of "Elmer Hour" dxpeditioners went off to conquer "New Point Comfort Island". New Point Comfort Island was a 100yd x 300yd sandbar off the coast of Virginia in Matthews county. It was within sight of the New Point Comfort Lighthouse.

Early one morning we all met at the dock where the boat would take us and all of our gear over to the island. The boat ride was lighthearted and adventurous as we thought of what it must have felt like when Capt. John Smith charted this same place to create his map of the Chesapeake Bay, "Yo, Ho, Ho and a bottle of rum".

As we unloaded the last piece of gear off the boat and watched it sail away, I thought " Oh My God we're stuck here on this sandbar in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay with no way to get back. Thankfully I had assigned what is called in Dxpedition terms two "Pilots" for our trip. Pilots in this case are Amateur Radio Operators on the mainland who keep track of you and can be called on during times of emergencies (keep that thought). In this case my wife Becky KS4RX located at our house and Rob Smith K4MAU in central Va were our two official pilots.

Now the real work started, setting up our Dxpedition station. One tent was for our operating station to keep us and the gear shaded and out of the rain if needed. (remember that part). We had the usual equipment you would imagine: radios, antennas, coax and all the stuff in between, but we had an advantage as we had two 50ft military tubular towers that supported a Buckmaster 7 band no-tune antenna for 6 meter thru 80 meter.

The afternoon of that day and all of the next was spent making contacts with Island Hunters all around the world. With our 15th contact we officially qualified New Point Comfort Island as an official island hunters island. We were assigned VA007 certification number. Considering who I used to work for I found that quite amusing.

All of us got our turn at the mic making one contact after another trying to fill the log with as many contacts as possible during our stay there. Sometime during middle of the day I saw a kayak coming from the mainland (I love being able to say that word "Mainland") to our little island. You don't think they could have thought we were the Robinson family who needed to be rescued do you? (remember that too). No, it was a reporter from a local newspaper who came over for a visit and to take pictures so he could write a story about us. That went over well and we made sure he got everyone's picture.

THEN IT HIT, in the dark and dead of night I'm suddenly awakened by a clap of thunder. I get up out of my sleeping bag, unzip the front door of the tent and WOOOOSH!!!

A huge wave of water fills the tent almost taking me and my friend Guy Carlsen K4CNF out to sea. I got outside of the tent to see all hell was breaking loose in the form of a huge Chesapeake Bay storm. I got to the tent where the hf rig was and called on my two pilots to get in touch with the Coast Guard to come rescue us. While waiting for the Coast Guard we packed up all of our stuff the best we could and waited for them to arrive. We went back to the mainland in two shifts. There were three of us on the second boat, I was up front with the Captain keeping a close watch on the radar screen. He said "See the two big red dots? They are the center of two big storms. See where they converge into one even bigger red dot? That's where the island I took you off is "WAS".

Needless to say if any island hunter ever worked New Point Comfort Island then you worked me and my friends on the K4L "Elmer Hour Group" Dxpedition.

73 es good DX de Tony Day KC4AUF

Thank you Tony KC4AUF

Here are some links to a few portable operating groups:

[Parks on the Air](#)

[Texas State parks on the air](#)

[Summits on the Air](#)

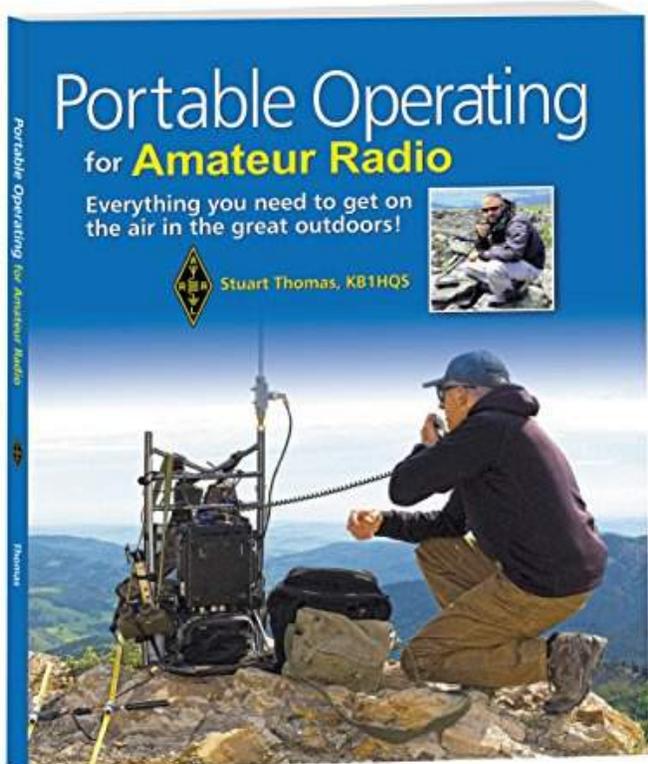
[Islands on the Air](#)

Book review:

Portable Operating for Amateur Radio by Stuart Thomas KB1HQS

This book was published by the ARRL in 2018. The author collaborated with several other amateurs for pictures and tips to cover several facets of portable radio. In the book you will find types of operating, how to get organized, radio selection, portable antennas, power sources, propagation and spotting, on the air activities, accessories and tools, logging contacts, and online resources.

I purchased the book shortly after the release and enjoyed reading it. You can buy it from the ARRL [here](#) or from Amazon [here](#).



Ham radio quote

Successful radio clubs are a joy to experience. Easy to spot, they are usually populated by enthusiastic, gung-ho members who are involved with a full agenda of interesting things. They are generally at the center of most Amateur Radio activities in town.

- D. E. "Dee" Logan W1HEO

LETARComic



Our next meeting - 9:00 A.M. July 24th at the Longview Fire Training Center

LETARC's next monthly meeting will be 9:00 A.M. on July 24th at the Longview Fire Training Center located at 411 American Legion BLVD Longview, TX 75601. Don't forget that you can attend our meeting virtually via phone or internet. Phone # 601-516-5566 Pin 206-446-183# or [google.com/mds-ndwd-cwo](https://www.google.com/mds-ndwd-cwo). Anyone interested in amateur radio is welcome to attend.

There will be a VE test session at 2:00 P.M. that same day at the Glaske science building of LeTourneau University. Walk ins are welcome. Testing costs \$15.00 (soon to be \$35) and you will need a government issued identification such as a driver's license, a valid email address and an FCC issued FRN number. LETARC VEs can help you get your FRN that day if you need help.

For more information about VE testing please contact John Zenter AE5OY at j.zenter@w-rg.com.

We hope to see you there!



July 24th meeting agenda

- I. **Opening ceremonies**
 - A. **Invocation**
 - B. **Pledge of Allegiance**
 - C. **Welcome and Introductions**



- II. **Adoption of Agenda**
- III. **Reading and Adoption of minutes and treasurer's report**

James Bray

- IV. **Reports by Officers**
 - A. **President**
 - B. **Vice President**
 - C. **Secretary/Treasurer**
 - D. **Media Director**
 - E. **Communications Director**

Ross Bennett

Ron Case

James Bray

Don Gamble

Jim Rogers

- V. **Report of the Board**
- VI. **Reports by Committees**
- VII. **Reports by Members**
- VIII. **Recess**
- IX. **Reconvene**
- X. **Program**
- XI. **Unfinished Business**
- XII. **New Business**
- XIII. **VE testing headcount**
- XIV. **Adjourn**



Thank you to

Adam Kimmerly K6ARK

Tony Day KC4OUF

Mims volunteer fire department

The Longview fire training center on American Legion BLVD

Jim Perry KA5BCM for our radio room

John Zenter AE5OY and our VE team

Marty Duplissey N5KBP for his great work on the ARRL audio news

Ross Bennett KI5SR - Gregg County ARES

Jim Liberacki N5TQI - Upshur County ARES

Tom Noe W5TDN - Gregg County SKYWARN® coordinator

Jim Rogers N5VGQ - Repeater trustee

Ron Case W2RLC - letarc.org webmaster

Jim Quinn AJ1MQ - groups.io coordinator

Dr. Hoo Kim AG5ZS - Letourneau university liaison

Dr. Ron Morton KF5GMA and Carolyn Morton KF5GLT Longview CERT

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We hope to see you at our meetings and dinner gatherings and we hope to hear you on our nets. If you would like to contribute to the PROPAGATION please email Don at gambledon@gmail.com.

Visit our website at letarc.org.

Happy Independence Day!

73 de Don Gamble KG5CMS.

Dit Dit



LETARC July 2021

Meetings

Our meetings begin at 9AM at the Longview Fire Training Center at 411 American Legion BLVD, Longview, TX, 75601. There will be a VE test session at LeTourneau University at 2:00 PM on the same day.

Repeaters & Nets

LETARC nets are Wednesday nights at 8:30 PM on the 147.34 repeater with at tone of 136.5

Upshur ARES nets are Thursday nights at 8 PM on the 146.9 repeater with a negative offset and tone of 107.2

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Upshur ARES net 8 PM	2	3
4  Happy Independence Day!	5	6	7 LETARC net 8:30 PM	8 Upshur ARES net 8 PM	9	10
11	12	13 LETARC dinner at Cotton patch 6:30 PM	14 LETARC net 8:30 PM	15 Upshur ARES net 8 PM	16	17
18	19	20	21 LETARC net 8:30 PM	22 Upshur ARES net 8 PM	23	24 LETARC meeting 9AM
25	26	27	28 LETARC net 8:30 PM	29 Upshur ARES net 8 PM	30	31

Upcoming amateur radio events

- July 1-7 13 Colonies special event**
- July 10 IARU HF World Championship CW, Phone**
- July 17 YOTA Contest CW, Phone**
- July 17 North American QSO Party, RTTY**
- July 31 Missouri QSO Party**