MARCH 2024

PROPAGATION

Newsletter of the Longview / East Texas Amateur Radio Club

In this issue

LETARC helps support the Rusk county ARC with 5K/10K race in Henderson

LETARC does a POTA activation and foxhunt at Martin Creek SP

LETARC interviews foxhunt expert Joe Moell K0OV

LETARC Activities

LETARC held their monthly meeting on Saturday, March 25th 2024. Apologies for the lack of meeting minutes, most of LETARC missed the meeting in order to help provide a public service as race communications for a 5k/10K race in Henderson, TX. A thank you to the Rusk County Amateur Radio Club for inviting LETARC and thank you to race coordinator and Rusk County ARES manager David Chenault W5CWT.

During the meeting LETARC decided to hold their March meeting in Kilgore at the Back porch cafe as they will be providing support for another race in Kilgore on their April meeting date. It seems the 4th Saturday of the month is a good weekend for races. Thanks to Jason Turcyn KE4CPC for coordinating that race.

LETARC had a nice dinner at Papacita's in March, pics are later in the newsletter. Thanks to Dave Luchak KL7BX for coordinating our dinners.

LETARC had a POTA activation and foxhunt at Martin Creek SP in March. Dave W5CWT from the Rusk County club joined us. Wyatt W5IQE was the first to find the Fox and won a custom cup with both clubs logo and a fox on it.

In ARRL VE news Kelly Hughes and Chris Davis of GIlmer, TX both earned their Technician licenses. LETARC would like to congratulate both of them and welcome them to the world's greatest hobby! Thank you to our ARRL VEC John Zenter AE5OY.

In March the HAM radio world lost Dr. Bob Heil K9EID. Dr. Heil was an incredible man and he was kind enough to do a program for LETARC in 2021. RIP K9EID.

POTA @ Martin Creek State Park

Left to right: Rhett KG5NWI, Wyatt W5IQE (Mr. Foxhunt), Chris KG5SMZ, Charles KI5WWH, and Leland N5DGH

If you have not joined us at a POTA join us next time!

Left: LETARC President Bert KJ5W operates his Icom 7300 and Buddihex

Top Right: LETARC secretary/treasurer Rhett KG5NWI operates his Yaesu 891

Bottom Right: Charles KI5WWH operates his Icom 7300

Dave W5CWT operates his incredible custom digital QRP station

Bert KJ5W and Wyatt W5IQE set up the portable Hex-beam antenna

LETARC dinner at Papacita's on March 14th, 2024

Thank you to Dave KL7BX for coordinating and advertising our dinners each month. If you don't get his emails visit with Dave at our next meeting or Wednesday evening 2 meter net.

LETARC helps the Rusk County ARC at the Resurrection Run 5K/10K

You can read more at the Rusk County club's website by clicking here.

Amateur

RUN WITH

LETARC interviews Foxhunting expert Joe Moell K0OV

Joe Moell K0OV is the publisher of homingin.com, an outstanding transmitter hunting site. He has written book and QST articles about transmitter hunting. Joe was kind enough to visit with LETARC.

LETARC: Are you a member of a local amateur radio club? If so, what is your favorite activity or part of the club?

Joe K0OV: I have been a long-time member of the Fullerton Radio Club. This club began sponsoring transmitter hunts around 1976 and I joined because of that. Of course it's my favorite club activity.

LETARC: How did you get started in transmitter hunting?

Joe K0OV: I went on my first transmitter hunt as a pre-teen with the Homesteader Amateur Radio Club in southeast Nebraska. It was for mobiles on 80 meters. My Dad had to drive, of course, but I set up the equipment, which was a Hallicrafters SX-100 receiver powered from a vibrator and an antenna made from the multi-turn loop from an AM table radio.

LETARC: Please tell us about your book and your website.

Joe K0OV: Tom Curlee WB6UZZ and I decided that we needed to tell everyone about the fun of transmitter hunting and how to do it, so we write "Transmitter Hunting -- Radio Direction Finding Simplified" and got it published by Tab/McGraw-Hill. Tom took most of the photos and I wrote most of the text. As new technologies and techniques came along, I realized that continuing updates were needed, so in 1988 I began writing the regular HOMING IN column, first in 73 Magazine and later CQ-VHF and CQ Magazine. To supplement that, I started the HOMINGIN.COM Web site in the 1990s. This became very important as the USA began to participate in international-rules on-foot hunting.

LETARC: What is the biggest misconception or pitfall that you notice in beginner fox hunters?

Joe K0OV: New foxhunters realize that they need a receiver and a directional antenna. But they often forget that as they get close to the transmitter, they need some way of knocking down the signal level so they can continue to get bearings. Adding an RF attenuator is the easiest and most effective way to do this.

LETARC: There is a lot of equipment available to construct of purchase for transmitter hunting. Do you have any favorites? Is there gear that you would recommend to avoid?

Joe K0OV: For two-meter weak-signal competitive mobile hunting in southern California, a home-built cubical quad antenna and resistive attenuator seems to be ideal. For tracking VHF/UHF jammers and other strong signals, a Doppler can work well. My favorite is the MicroFinder by AHHA Solutions, but this is no longer sold. The KN2C Doppler (Global TSCM Group) works OK also. For on-foot hunting on two meters, the preferred set in the USA is the Sniffer4 by VK3YNG, which is not available now due to supply chain problems. There is a high-end set by RigExpert (FoxRex 144) that works very well but will probably be unavailable for a long time due to the war in Ukraine. For 80 meters, there is another high-end RigExpert set (FoxRex 3500) and at the other end, a nice beginner set from Canada (RX80M).

LETARC: As amateur radio operators we sometimes put all our attention on the radio part of foxhunting. How do you recommend we improve and learn the orienteering part?

Joe K0OV: The best way to improve orienteering skills is to get involved with a local orienteering club. For instance, many foxhunters here is southern California go to events of the Los Angeles Orienteering Club.

LETARC: Please tell us about the planning that should go on before an event for the fox hunter and the fox.

Joe K0OV: There are many things to consider when planning a challenging mobile transmitter hunt. I just wrote a column about this that is scheduled for the May 2022 issue of CQ. One of the most important things to remember is to put each transmitter in a place that is safe and legal to access. Having someone get hurt on a transmitter hunt is very important to avoid. Whether hiding or hunting, make a checklist in advance of every piece of equipment and clothing to take and check it before departing. Charge all batteries well in advance. Have a restaurant in mind for after the hunt, if that is the custom, and make sure it is open when people will want to go there. (We like Sizzlers here in southern California, but they are constantly opening and closing in various locations.)

LETARC: What are some unique was that we can vary a transmitter hunt to change things up?

Joe K0OV: Some clubs like a consistent set of rules for mobile T-hunts, but I think it's fun to vary things. Have a first-finder-wins hunt one month and a lowest-mileage wins hunt the next. Change the starting point and boundaries from time to time. Try a hunt-when-you-can all-weekend hunt for an unattended foxbox with a sign-in sheet for finders.

LETARC: What advice would you give an amateur radio club?

Joe K0OV: Give transmitter hunting a try. Survey the members to find out which they would prefer for starters: Mobile hunting or on-foot park hunting. Then appoint a huntmaster to arrange things and publicize. A good time for the first hunt might be the CQ Worldwide Foxhunting Weekend on May 14-15.

LETARC: What is your favorite part of amateur radio?

Joe K0OV: I have tried many aspects of ham radio from HF to UHF. I particularly like the satellites. But of course my favorite part is transmitter hunting.

-73 Joe Moell K0OV.

Thank you to Joe K0OV!

A special thank you to

Joe Moell K0OV
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
Steven Lott Smith KG5VK - ARRL North Texas Section Manager
JoAnn Keith KA5AZK - ARES Section Manager
David Chenault W5CWT - Rusk County ARES
John Keith W5BWC - 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
Our Wednesday night net control stations -
Jim Rogers N5VGQ
Dave Luchak KL7BX
John Zenter AE5OY
Rhett Pilcher KG5NWI

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.

Please visit our website at letarc.org.

73 de Don Gamble KG5CMS.

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