

Key City Amateur Radio Club

September Newsletter

Officers

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ARRL-VE Test Session, Saturday Sept 5th, 2009 @ 1 p.m.

Berry Lane Baptist Church, Corner of Lakeside Drive & Berry Lane.
Other test sessions will be held in November, January, March and May
Dates and times TBA

The **September meeting will be held at 7 pm, Monday September 14th**. at Chavez South Park Recreation Center, 1002 Cherry Street.

Technician class will be starting in the fall, if interested in taking this class
Contact Randy Robinson 325-338-0939

BALLOON FEST Volunteers needed Contact Kendall Thomas 325-665-1048
This year's dates are Friday, September 26th and Saturday, September 27th

We had 25 in attendance at our August meeting, including visitors, Jonathan Spencer and Lance Bachman. They expressed interest in taking the upcoming Tech Class. Let's all encourage and help them as much as possible.

Lynn Bailey K5AVJ told us about the Ratchet Jaw Club and invited any of us that could to join in with their early morning chats. The club website is at...<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ratchetjawclub/>

Freq - 3934.5 KHz
Pre-club - 0530 (Central Time)
Club start - 0600
3 Rounds - typical

- a) Good morning round w/greetings & weather info
- b) Topic round - topic chosen by club control
- c) 73 round

Number of check-ins varies from about a 12 - 18....sometimes as high as 20 or 22
Club will run from 30 - 45 minutes typically with sign off around 0640

Next social was set for August 22nd, 4pm at Belle's Chicken House. We had 14 people at the social. Jeana Shaw and I dated ourselves by knowing titles and artists of the songs played on the juke box. Food was delicious and plentiful, lots of conversation and laughter. The waitresses lined up and did the chicken dance.. If you weren't there, you can see you missed out on a lot of fun!

D-Star meeting and information submitted by Howard Collier (WB5EKW)

D-STAR (Digital Smart Technologies for Amateur Radio) is a digital voice and data protocol specification developed as the result of research by the [Japan Amateur Radio League](#) to investigate digital technologies for [amateur radio](#).

A new D-Star repeater system with the callsign of KC5OLO was placed into service during the first weekend of August 2009. The repeater is on the frequency of 444.175 Mhz in Digital Voice mode, transmitting from the KTAB television transmitting tower just off highway 36, East-Southeast of Abilene. And currently there are over 400 other D-Star repeaters on the air from around the world. Talk about doing some easy DX contacts via an HT radio set, the D-Star repeater system is at your service.

The KC5OLO D-Star repeater was built by Howard Collier, WB5EKW; Brent Morris, N5TEQ; Chris Robinson, KC5PYL and Lance Tolar, KD5EFB.

Because of the disaster conditions witnessed by hurricane Katrina, it was the U.S. Army MARS program and the Department of Homeland Security, who saw first hand of what digital voice and digital text messaging could do for emergency communications. It is our very own KCARC repeater system that we offer this very same high quality digital voice communications to the Abilene, Sweetwater and Brownwood areas for local service. Right now you can enjoy excellent voice quality communications thru the repeater that has a coverage area of at least 100 mile diameter circle coverage! With a D-Star radio, you can also send text messages, like that of the NTS format, or IS-213 formatted messages at the same time that you are talking thru the repeater, with the same radio, at the same time! This system can also handle GPS data from your mobile radio that will be sent on to the worldwide APRS database. This is to say that you do not have to tie up one half of your dual band radio, the VHF side, just to provide standard APRS positional reports. On D-Star, all GPS/APRS data is transmitted on the same repeater frequency, at the same time that you may be using the repeater for voice communications. You do not need an external TNC to format transmitted text messages because D-Star is Digital RF to start with.

KC5OLO D-Star Repeater

The KC5OLO D-Star repeater is free to use for any general QSO's and if needed, it will be open to ARES, RACES, Skywarn and the American Red Cross to use during emergency communications needs.

With the approach of the annual hurricane season now upon us, it is expected that we will be able to listen in on the National Hurricane Center's conversations to other D-Star Gateway Repeaters in the Southeastern US States. Additional nets may be called up that will cover the Gulf Coast area states, as needed. You will need to have access to an Icom D-Star type UHF transceiver, set to the KC5OLO repeater frequency of 444.175 Mhz to listen to the nets and traffic.

To see a D-Star Gateway Repeater listing by country and state bring up your computer browser and view this page: <http://www.dstarusers.org/repeaters.php>

To see a graphical world wide repeater listing that you can zoom in on, view this web site: <http://www.jfindu.net/DSTARRepeaters.aspx>

While there are other digital on-air technologies being used by amateurs that have come from other services, D-Star is one of the first on-air standards to be widely deployed and sold by a major radio manufacturer that is designed specifically for amateur service use.

D-Star compatible radios are available on [VHF](#) and [UHF](#) and microwave amateur radio bands. In addition to the over-the-air protocol, D-Star also provides specifications for network connectivity, enabling D-Star radios to be connected to the Internet or other networks and provisions for routing data streams of voice or packet data via amateur radio callsigns.

The system today is capable of linking repeaters together locally and through the Internet utilizing callsigns for routing of traffic. Servers are linked via TCP/IP utilizing proprietary "gateway" software, from Icom. This allows amateur radio operators to talk to any other amateurs participating in a particular gateway "trust" environment. The current master gateway in the United States is operated by the K5TIT group in Dallas, Texas, who were the first to install a D-Star repeater system in the U.S.

Another important aspect of D-STAR technology is its ability to send large quantities of data to emergency responders in the event of a disaster. Served agencies can instantly relate to sending "email" or a "word files" to someone. The data sent can be high-volume, where traditional amateur radio "modes" are capable of getting a message through, D-STAR can place documents into the

hands of those that need them most—fast image, text and document data exchanges.

During the September 14th KCARC club meeting, there will be a demonstration of both the digital voice and digital text messaging capabilities of the D-Star repeater system. You are encouraged to attend this months club meeting and see the D-Star system in use, first hand.

Howard Collier
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There will not be a social in September as we will be working the Balloon Fest.