October Issue

PLANO AMATEUR RADIO KLUB

OCTOBER WWW.K5PRK.NET 2025

Understanding our star.

In This Issue

PARK HERE

Officers

(your answers begin here)

President	Tim Johnson, K5TCJ	president@k5prk.net
Vice President	Anthony Burokas, KB3DVS	vp@k5prk.net
Secretary	B. J. Watkins, K5BJW	secretary@k5prk.net
Treasurer	Mike Tharp, KG5TJF	treasurer@k5prk.net
Activites	Richard Seitz, KG5HCJ	activities@k5prk.net
Communications	Miranda Schwarck, KE5YZP	communications@k5prk.net
Webmaster	James McCormick, KG5KBP	webmaster@k5prk.net
Public Relations	Rob Forson, K5WFR	pr@k5prk.net
Newsletter	Lonnie Webb, KG5WHQ	newsletter@k5prk.net

EXPERIMENT AND HAVE FUN WITH YOUR RADIO

Learn more about the club at https://k5prk.net

Interact with the club at https://www.facebook.com/groups/k5prk

Have a groups.io conversation with the club at https://k5prk.groups.io/g/main

Are you ready to read the content in the newsletter? It's all technician accessible.

YOU HAVE BEEN DEPUITIZED AS ROVING JUNIOR NEWSLETTER REPORTER EXTRAORDINAIRE!

Go photograph, experiment, solder, attempt to antenna your lawn chairs. Just write it all down and send the information to newsletter@k5prk.net

PARK REPEATERS

The Plano Amateur Radio Klub operates five repeaters, which are located in Allen, Texas about 180 feet above ground level. All licensed amateur operators are welcome to join us on the air.

Our repeaters are open.

147.180 MHz + PL 107.2
K5PRK VHF
Voice Repeater

444.250 MHz + PL 79.7
K5PRK UHF
Voice Repeater

441.575 MHz +
DStar UHF
Digital Voice Port B

1295.000 MHz – 20.000
DStar 23cm
Digital Voice Port B

1255.000 MHz
DStar 23cm Digital Data

Broadcastify
K5PRK 444.250
K5PRK 147.18

If you notice problems with any of the club's repeaters, contact communications@k5prk.net via email with a detailed descriptiion of the issue.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Tim Johnson K5TCJ
president@k5prk.net

It's Election Time

Every Odd numbered year at the October General Meeting PARK elects our President, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Activities Director. Additionally, this year we will be holding a Special Election to confirm appointees filling the unexpired terms for Vice President and Secretary. Important positions all.

This year, we are holding this election online on HamClubOnline. All members in good standing will have already received notice of the ballot online. If by the time you are reading this newsletter and have not voted, please go to HamClubOnline and VOTE.

For those few who may not be able to vote online, there will be paper ballots at this month's meeting.

Position Current -- This Years Ballot

President Tim Johnson K5TCJ (term limited out) Mike Tharp KG5TJF

Treasurer Mike Tharp KG5TJF (term limited out) BJ Watkins K5BJW

Activities Richard Seitz KG5HCJ (not running) OPEN

Newsletter Lonnie Webb KG5WHQ (running again) Lonnie Webb KG5WHQ

In addition to the regular ballot above, the following Board positions are being vacated and the appointees filling the unexpired terms must be confirmed by a vote of the membership.

Position Current -- Filling Unexpired Terms

VP Anthony Burokas KB5DVS(personal / work) Bruce Cameron K6BWC

Secretary BJ Watkins K5BJW (to run for Treasurer) Damon Koch K5OCH

As you can see, the Activities Director position is open. Nominations / Volunteers will be gladly accepted at the October meeting.

Being my last "From the President" I will repeat what I said in my first "From the President" in 2021:

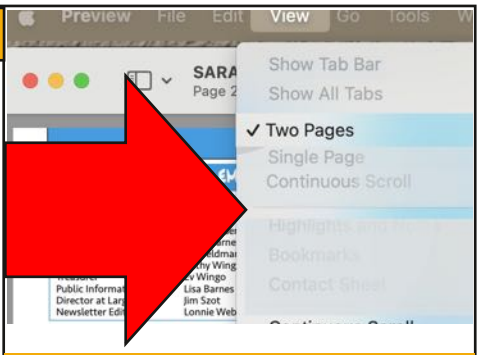
"Thank you for the confidence you the membership has shown in selecting me as the next President of PARK. Together we can make the most of the many opportunities for community service, many opportunities for getting on the air, and getting those elusive DX QSO's in our logs. 73, Tim K5TCJ"

Thank you everyone for contributing to the success of PARK. Board Member or not, each of you has helped make PARK what it is today.

During my term we celebrated PARK's 50th Anniversary, I look forward to our new leadership team taking us into the next 50 years. Like is says on our klub logo "50 years and counting".

73, and see you at our next meeting, and on the air.

Tim



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Fourth Thursday Lunch: October 23, 2025 Poor Richards @ 11:30a

Next Meeting: October 20, 2025

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

By KG5WHQ

This month I am really looking forward to having **Jason of Ham Radio 2.0** present at our club meeting. Be sure to vote according to the instructions in your inbox. And don't fret as we allow voting in person as well.

Don't forget Fourth Thursday Lunch @ Poor Richards where a few of us will get together and tell great lies and solve world peace.

There will again be a newsletter RadioQuest giveaway for highest submitted score at the next meeting! You can submit both the Technician AND the General tab score.

There are no submissions yet. If you pass a license exam, check the box and submit by email—right now, you win!

Last point to bring up: we still have an open office. Someone needs to step up and do the jobs of running the club. Younger people I am hoping. If we don't have enough then drag your grandkids in and we can have a tech class for them!

Re: Elections are going on!

At the time of writing, there are 54 members who have not voted in the upcoming election.

Please vote for the candidates of your choice or write in or abstain in each of the offices. Balloting will close at 5:00 p.m. on election day, October 20th.
—B.J. Watkins K5BJW

Re: Hams helping hams

Good evening Lonnie.

Are you familiar with the Hams Hepling Hams idea? If so, I was thinking about maybe brainstorming together to somehow get it off the ground and get people to volunteer to occasionally help older hams. Many senior hams may have disabilities that aren't readily noticeable but need help with ham related problems. These can be antenna installations, repair, tuning or trimming wire antennas and may sometimes require someone to climb up on a ladder or tower. We did it several years ago and it worked for a while. I got great satisfaction from helping the older hams because these people did the same thing when they were young. I'd like to get it going within the club.

What do you think? What are your thoughts?

If everyone on the board gets behind it and will help support, maybe I would. I can't help except for talking about it. My days are over. I'll support it as best I can, but someone will need to take it over and get volunteers and someone to be a point of contact and coordinate the volunteers. I can't do it.

I gave it my all back then, but I'm running on fumes now. We need a much younger person to run it.

Let's think about it
—Michael Payne K5MFP

Michael raises an important challenge. We do need younger men that can help on antennas, perhaps with some of us older elmers to advise. Are you up to climbing a ladder?
—Ed.

Re: Random email

Are you there one behind the email a while ago about the net? If not, know who it was?

It was me and it was in error. I was meaning to advertise the N5SAC net on another group. It was a happy accident as Miranda saw it as an invitation to solve a signal problem for me!

Thanks for the error!!! Can we keep it going?

The net or the happy accidents? ;)

The net advertising.
—Michael Payne K5MFP

Way over in the calendar I post every net I know about. You can print those two (or four) pages and hang them in your shack. Keep the corrections and updates coming.

Scare the kids with the halloween radio story Page 32.

What did we get SO wrong about the SUN? Page 12.

Hams Helping Hams can be found on Page 20.

WHERE DID PARK COME FROM?

The Plano Amateur Radio Klub (PARK) was founded in 1973 by local Hams **Dick Sander K5QNY** and **Bill Newland WB5ETZ**.

Charter Members include **Harry Johnson WA5YCM**, **Bill Swan K5MWC**, **Jack Freeman WA5EDK**, **Gerald Williamson W5SID**, **Ed Lawrence WA5SWD**, **Bill Niles K5MVB**, **Carole Allen W5NQQ**, and **Bill Allen W5NQR**. The klub was established to bring together local Hams to serve the local community and its organizations with communications services - something it still does to this day.

Affiliating later in 1973, PARK continues to be proudly affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the National Association for Amateur Radio.

Plano Amateur Radio Klub volunteers have used their special skills to help local community organizations manage large events. In recent years, some of these events included the Plano Turkey Trot, Meals on Wheels, the Plano Balloon Festival, and even the sprawling Dallas Marathon, where members from many clubs work together to provide a safe environment for the public.

Additionally, the club provides communication services for Civil Defense, Red Cross, State, County and City Law enforcement agencies, or other charitable organizations during times of emergency, distress, national disaster, or public interest. One notable event was assisting in canvassing remote East Texas for debris after the 2003 Space Shuttle Challenger disaster.

Many of the 1973 Founding members were also the first members of Collin County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (CC-ARES), which started its development in 1975.

Even today many klub members are members of CC-ARES that use klub repeaters to relay vital storm spotter information on the CC-ARES Weather Net, which is monitored by the National Weather Service in Fort Worth. So, when weather announcers on TV say that "storm spotters" are reporting quarter sized hail ... that information very likely came from local Hams volunteering their time and equipment to the public interest.

CAN YOU NAME THESE MEMBERS FROM 2011?

MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

September 15, 2025
General Meeting Minutes

Call to Order at 7:00 p.m.

Officers Present:
Secretary
Public Relations Director
Newsletter Editor
Communications Director
Activities Director
VE Coordinator

Officers Absent:
President
Vice President
Treasurer
Webmaster

There were 17 members present and 4 guests.

President's Report:
Absent – No Report

Vice President Report:
Absent (Resigned) No Report

Secretary Report:
Upcoming Presentations:
October 20th – Jason Johnston host of You Tube Channel Ham Radio 2.0
November 17th – Judge Chris Hill – Collin County Judge
December 15th – Christmas Party
Elections to be held next month. Balloting will be thru Ham Club On-Line with online balloting and results. Nominations accepted thru Board Meeting,October 6 th. Board will approve ballot and election will be opened at a time determined by the Board.

Treasurer's Report is available on HamClubOnline.com

Public Relations Report:
No current report

Communications Report:
Repeater site at Medical City – Plano has been delayed due to construction and unavailability of the site.
Question from Secretary regarding two projects Palisades and Metrocrest in regards to **Funded projects carried on Treasurer's report.

Explanation by Comm. Director Schwark and Kip Moravec that Palisades is the location of the Richardson club's repeater and we are cooperating in an interlink with our repeater principally for Skywarn. Metrocrest is another club in the West Plano area where we have a "dead spot" that we also will link into to improve communication. The amount for funded projects was for these two projects, but due to the time that has passed since approval and possible changes in the items to be purchased, both suggested that these funds be reallocated back to the General Fund and a new proposal and related costs be submitted for approval at a later date. Board will address in subsequent meetings.

Activities Director:
Plano Balloon Festival on September 18th – 23rd.
Usual monthly activities reviewed as well as Sidewalk Sales at McKinney and Garland

Newsletter Editor:
Announced winner of this month's ParkingTickeT quiz – B J. Watkins (only entry)
Needs photographs of HT, Base Radios, Shacks, etc.

Webmaster – Absent – No Report

VE Coordinator
1 person tested and passed technician exam – Mike Wilson – Signed up for membership

New Business:
The following people are seeking the following offices for the October election.
President - Michael Tharp
Treasurer - B. J. Watkins
Activities - Currently No Applicant has filed
Newsletter Lonnie Webb (Incumbent)
Additionally, two more positions are being vacated:
Vice President – Bruce Cameron has been appointed by the Board to complete this term
Secretary - incumbent is resigning to run for treasurer – Damon Koch has been appointed to complete this term
These appointments will be confirmed by ballot during October election.
Any club member in good standing (dues are current) are eligible to serve on the Board.
Please your nominations for any of these offices before or during the September General Meeting.

50/50 drawing – no drawing as Treasurer was absent

Presentation: Mestastic - Andrew Fowler KJ5CQI – Assisted by Dick Thiot N5FCB
Adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

ADDITIONAL INFO ON HAMCLUBONLINE.COM

Wondering about the Treasurer's report? Missing something from the minutes? Go log in at **HamClubOnline.com** using the email address you already gave the secretary and set a new password if you need to.

HamClubOnline
Amateur Radio Club Management System

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING

Plano Amateur Radio Klub Board of Directors Meeting October 6, 2025

Present: (On-Line)
Tim Johnson, President
B. J. Watkins, Secretary
Mike Tharp, Treasurer
Rob Forson, Public Relations Director
Richard Seitz, Activities Director
Lonnie Webb, Newsletter Editor
James McCormick, Webmaster
Miranda Schwark, Communications Director (Joined 815)

Meeting Start: 7:10 p.m.

President
Upcoming Meeting Programs:
October – Ham 2.0
November – Collin County Judge Chris Hill
December – Christmas Party

Treasurer
Current Cash Balance is Approx. $15,000.00
Monthly Expenses 150.00
Reserve 4,000.00
Committed Projects 1,729.51
Available Funds Approx. 6,000.00
Petty Cash 180.00

Allstar Link Donation Request
It has been requested of the users of this service to make an annual donation of $12.00 per node for maintenance and enhancement to this service. We currently have 3 active nodes and 1 reserved.
Motion made by President and 2nd by Treasurer to donate $12.00 per active node in January of each year until future action of that current Board of Directors. Motion Carried.

Secretary
Ballot for October General Election is ready to post. Paper ballots will be available for those members who do not have current e-mail address listed with Ham Club On-Line. Ballots will be electronically filed and results reported at beginning of General Meeting.
Instructions to open ballot after Board Meeting.
Note: Ballot was opened and send with explanatory email on 10/7/25. Election procedure also posted on Groups.io Main.

Communications Director
RepeaterTrustee needs to be changed from Kipton Moravec as he is relocating out of state and will be trustee for a repeater in new location.
Discussion regarding previous commitment to Communications Director to also assume role of Trustee or to have 2nd person in that role.
Motion by Secretary and 2nd by Activities Director to have Communications Director serve as Repeater Trustee. Motion Carried.

Newsletter Editor
Need submissions for next newsletter.
Need information regarding P.A.R.K. history

Webmaster
Will need officer changes and biographies after General Meeting

Activities Director
Reservation for Christmas Party has been made. Location is Spring Creek BBQ in Richardson. Reservation is for December 15th from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Meal on your own beginning at 6:00 and meeting/party to begin at 7:00.

Public Relations
No Current Projects

New Business
President make recommendation because of the club's financial condition, that the expenditure for the prizes for the Christmas Raffle be set at $1,500.00 subject to the Membership approval at the General Meeting.
President makes motion for Board to approve $250.00 for purchase of 5 Raspberri Pi Ham Clock by Newsletter Editor for the Christmas Raffle. 2nd by Treasurer. Motion Carried.
President makes motion for Board to approve $300.00 for Christmas Raffle prizes to take advantage of upcoming prime sale. 2nd by Activities Director. Motion Carried.
Secretary notes that this com-

bination of expenses for the Christmas Raffle exceeds the Board limit for spending authorization, so to avoid any possibility of violation of the Constitution, the original approval for $250.00 was rescinded. The total amount now approved is $300.00. This amount will be deducted from the recommended amount for expenditure if the total $1,500.00 is approved by the membership, hence, the committed amount will be $1,200.00 for a total of $1,500.00

Adjourned at 8:30.

TALES FROM THE ANTENNA FARM

By B.J. Watkins K5BJW
bjwatkins@ymail.com

I was cleaning out a closet in my shack today, actually I was looking for a mounting bracket that I have hidden from myself, and I found the first HT that I got when I was first licensed. I don't remember if it was the very first or if my Vertex 150 2 meter HT was the first, but if not it was the second.

Right after I got my license, a friend of mine called and said "I heard you passed your ham test". I replied that I had in fact passed and he told me to come up to his office that he had something for me.

I had no clue but when I got there, he handed me a Realistic HTX-404. Made by Radio Shack in the early 1990's is is commonly referred to as "the brick". He told me that it needed a new memory battery but that it was easily installed. I believed him, silly me, but was grateful for a free radio. He said it was mine if I could get it to work.

When I turned it on, sure enough, it had the familiar ERR1 displayed on the screen...off to the internet I go. Fortunately, there is a lot of information and resources for most all of the old Radio Shack ham radios as well as the CB radios that they offered at the time. Sure enough a new 2032 battery and a soldered in holder put that rig right back on the air!

But a little history about these "brick" radios. The original model was the HTX-202 which was a derivative of an Icom design that they bought from Icom, but with some enhancements developed by Radio Shack. This radio was introduced in 1992 with the HTX-404 coming online in 1994. The radios were actually built by Maxon in Korea. They made a variety of ham, CB, public safety, and other personal communications radios. Maxon marketed their own label of this radio as the Maxon HR-146.

(1)

2-meter FM Ham transceiver

(1) **HTX-202.** Proven performer! Selective 2-meter (not wideband) receiver fights interference. True FM transmit provides excellent voice clarity and efficiency on packet. You get a high-capacity Ni-Cd pack, subaudible tone (CTSS) encoder and decoder, Touch-Tone (DTMF) dialer and five memories for autopatch, DTMF decoder, multifunction scanning, hi/lo power switch, 16 frequency memories, jack for 12VDC operation (5W output). Tunes 144-148 MHz. Includes AC charger and pack for "AA" alkaline batteries. 6⁹/₁₆ × 2⁹/₁₆ × 1⁷/₈".
(TSP) **19-1120** 259.99

440-MHz FM Ham transceiver

(2) **HTX-404.** All the features of radios costing much more. Selective receiver cuts interference even in crowded downtown RF environments. True FM modulation delivers superior clarity on transmit. Provides 2.5-watt output with included 7.2V Ni-Cd pack, up to 5W on 12VDC. Has built-in subaudible tone (CTCSS) encoder and tone squelch, Touch-Tone (DTMF) encoder and nine memories for autopatch, a DTMF decoder for Touch-Tone page, high/low power button, 16 frequency memories, multifunction scanning. Tunes 440-450 MHz FM. With AC charger, "AA" alkaline battery pack. 6⁹/₁₆ × 2⁹/₁₆ × 1⁷/₈".
(TSP) **19-1440** 299.99
IMPORTANT: You Must Have an FCC Amateur Radio Li-

(2)

As you can see from this ad from the Radio Shack catalogue in 1995, they were pricey for the time. They are still available on E-bay and bring anywhere from $50.00 for a nonworking model to $150.00 for a pristine used one. The battery packs are still available from numerous sources or they can be rebuilt at places like batteries plus or DIY at home.

What they lack in features, they make up for with extreme longevity and durability. They will even do packet radio. Some actually use them with the Radio Shack HTA-20

Linear Amplifier and an external antenna to turn it into a 30 watt base or portable station.

Congrats to B.J. on his very first newsletter article! Send him a comment on groups.io and do what hams do best: Tell him what he got wrong!

Plano Balloon Festival

Photos by Rob Forson, K5WFR

The beaver and the barn balloons traveled all the way from Montana to be at the 2025 Plano Balloon Festival.


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WERE WE WRONG ABOUT THE NATURE OF SOLAR CYCLES?

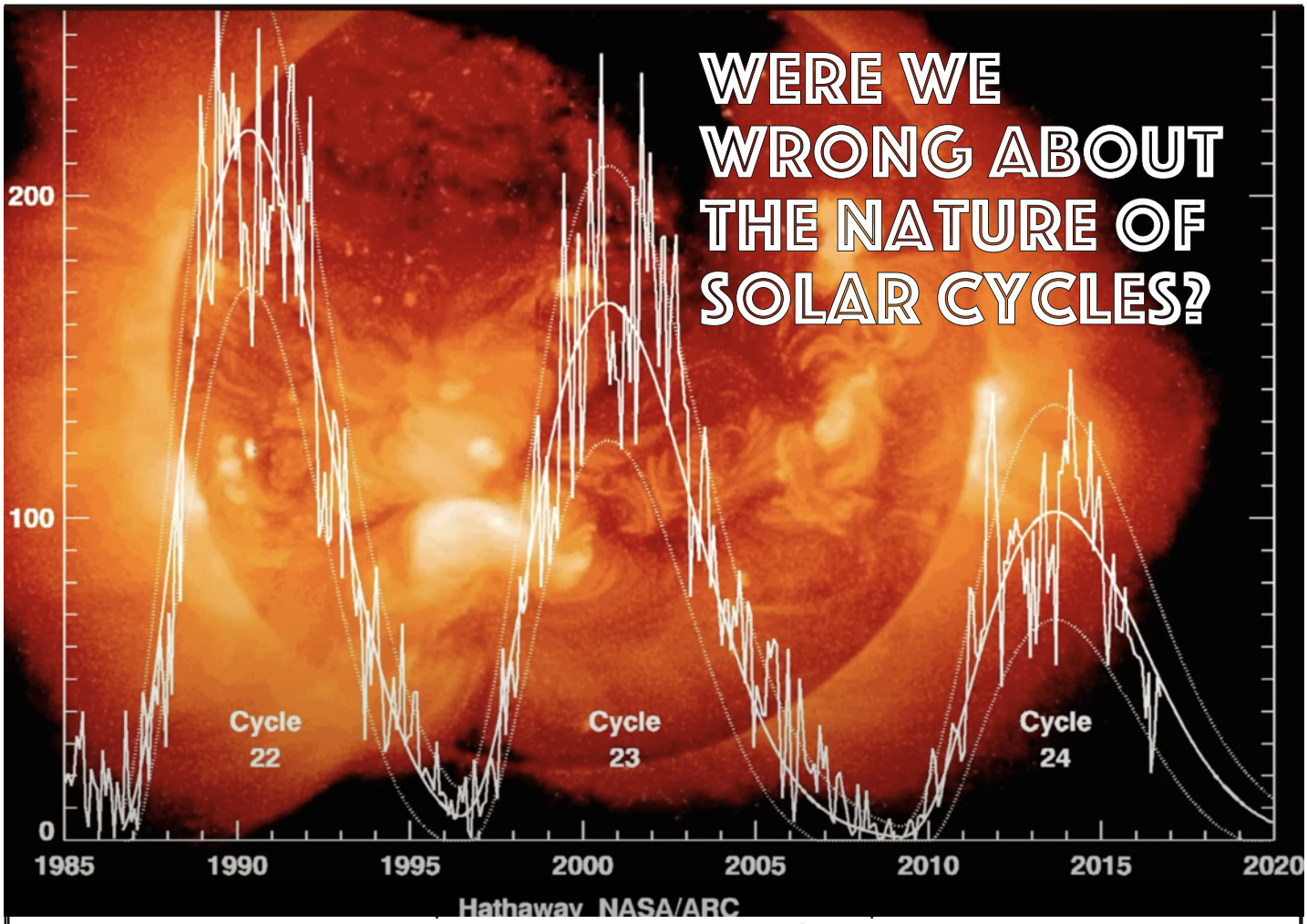


Figure 1. Solar activity observations before 2025

Based on a YouTube talk by Anton Petrov

Our Sun is being a bit weird

There are discrepancies between what scientists predicted the sun should be doing and how it should be acting during its 25th solar cycle compared to what's actually being detected. Compared to what we've observed since the sun became super active in the last 3 years. Solar cycles are typified by what we usually expect to happen pretty much every 11 years.

Roughly every 11 years, the sun goes from being somewhat calm and I guess somewhat sleepy, the phase we refer to as the solar minimum, to a very chaotic, very fiery phase, referred to as the solar maximum. And this very active solar maximum is usually defined by the number of sunspots we see on the surface. They normally represent a lot of magnetic activity on the surface and very often result in very powerful storms.

We have this map of observations going back several centuries showing us the overall sunspot activity and showing us certain minima and certain maxima even when it comes to decades long periods. For example, during the 1600s and 1700s there was something known as the maunder minimum when, for some reason that's still not really clear to us, the sun seemed to have almost no sunspots on the surface.

Where since the mid-1800s there was something known as the modern maximum when the sun became much more active and produced a lot of sunspots every 11 years. But based on these observations, a lot of NASA researchers and solar scientists predicted the solar cycle 25 to be relatively mild. That was because compared to solar cycle 22, 23 was weaker, 24 was even weaker. Accordingly, 25 was expected to be very weak.

Not all scientists agreed, however, with this resulting in a slightly different proposition based on even larger cycles. At least one study predicted cycle

25 to be super powerful. To most scientists' surprise, most solar scientists were incorrect. Solar Cycle 25, in that one study, turned out to be almost spot on.

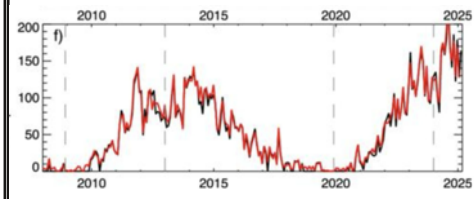


Figure 2. Actual Cycle 25 observations break the "very weak" trend projected.

First of all, 2025 solar maximum arrived much sooner. Second of all, it was way more powerful than expected. Both NASA and NOAA, the two big space weather agencies, officially confirmed that we're now in that solar maximum. This cycle is measuredly to be one of the strongest in the modern memory.

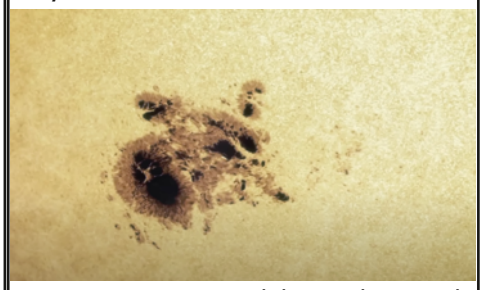


Figure 3. Sunspots, each larger than Earth.

Based on the number of sunspots, it dramatically exceeded previous predictions and actually exceeded initial forecasts for 30 months in a row. In August of 2025, the average daily sunspot count was the highest in almost 23 years—more than double what was predicted.

Initial predictions by NOAA suggested that on July 2025 there would be approximately 115 sunspots, similar to cycle 24. The real number, though, was double—being at least 33% higher compared to cycle 24 and compared to what's predicted. And this is on top of extremely strong solar flares and several coronal mass ejections. You likely already know those CMEs produced a lot of beautiful aurora in the last few years.

What effects this usually produces

In this cycle, we have had multiple X-class flares(the highest-powered category), multiple ge-

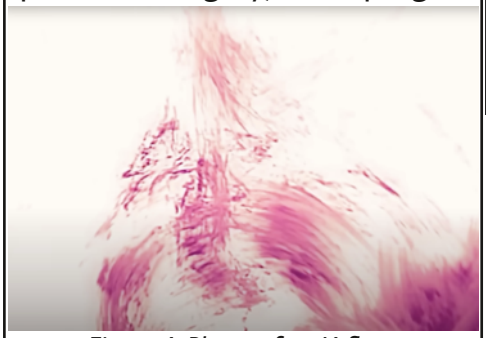


Figure 4. Photo of an X-flare.

omagnetic storms, and a lot more than predicted. Additionally, we have no idea how many more we're going to experience until the end of the cycle in 2030. This is really the important part because, apart from surging sunspots, this also involves a lot of potentially powerful flares.

Bright flashes of light and a lot of radiation coming from the sunspots which very often interact with the ionosphere and can cause radio blackouts, disrupt satellite communication and can deform the Earth's upper atmosphere. Obviously as a side effect produces quite a lot of radiation danger for astronauts and various satellites. And the most powerful flares are referred to as the X-class flares.

This year, we already had 11 X-class flares, with the total number of all types of flare dramatically increased from around 400 in 2020 to nearly 3,000 now. Not only are there more sunspots, some of them are really massive. For example, one of them, AR 3354 was essentially 10 times wider than our own planet and formed in just 48 hours.

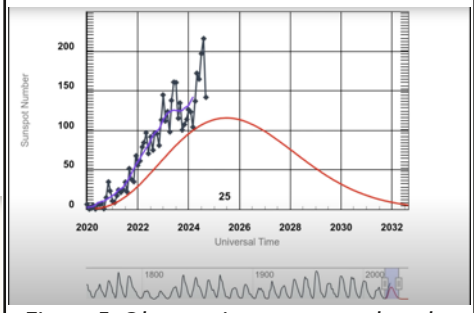


Figure 5. Observations compared to the expected trendline.

These gigantic sunspots are also very often linked to very powerful geomagnetic storms or coronal mass ejections(CMEs). The powerful CMEs very often affect us here on planet Earth. Large discharges coming from the sun very often caused by the snapping of the magnetic fields when huge amounts of clouds of charged particles blast into outer space and then travel toward various planets. CMEs by themselves are usually not that dangerous. In some cases, especially when several happen all at once, this is when we sometimes get enormous geomagnetic storms, such as the one that shut down the province of Quebec in 1987.

What's more, during this cycle, researchers have also identified what we usually refer to as cannibal CMEs. A cannibal CME—where one CMEs overtakes and swallows the other one, creating a bigger and more powerful storm that heads toward planet Earth.

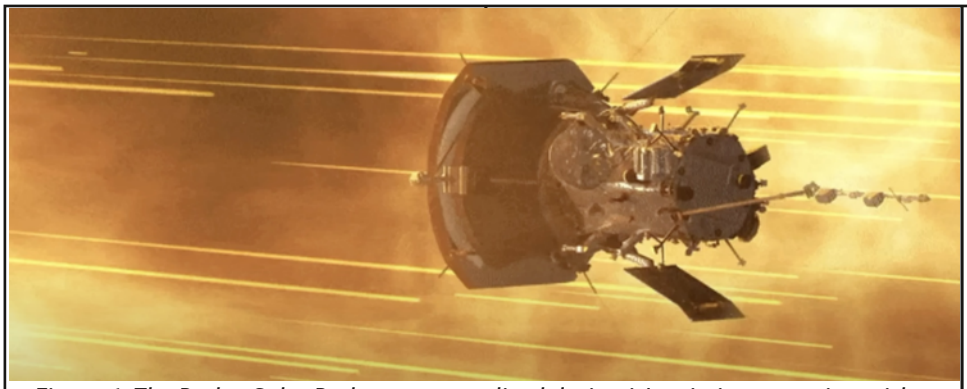


Figure 6. The Parker Solar Probe conceptualized during it's mission engaging with a CME.

Intriguingly enough, a few months back, the Parker Solar Probe, the probe whose purpose is to investigate the sun, literally flew right through one of these, capturing a lot of data and revealing everything we feared about them. They are ridiculously powerful. If one of them does head toward planet Earth, we can expect something similar to a Carrington event once again.

Luckily for us, nothing like this has happened yet. Although, since the cycle is still going on, there's still a chance it might happen.

Bizarre prominences and strange tornadoes

During the cycle, researchers have also seen a lot of really bizarre structures around the

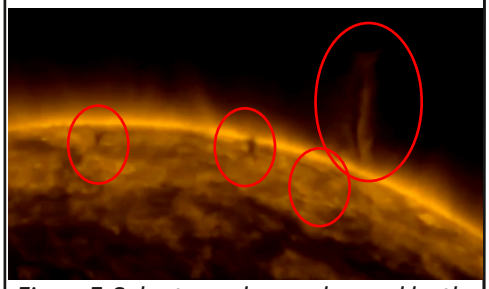


Figure 7. Solar tornados as observed by the Parker Solar Probe.

sun. Some of which we've never seen before. Most of these are referred to as prominences, but in this case, a lot of them were absolutely enormous. For example, one of the more bizarre ones was referred to as the beast, a gigantic Galactus dragon cloud of

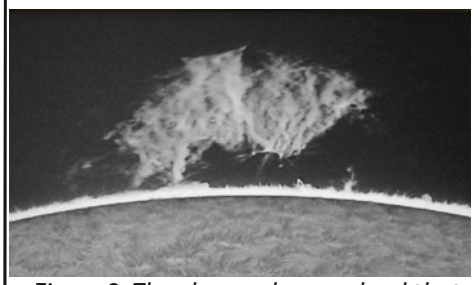


Figure 8. The plasma dragon cloud that hovered for several hours over the sun.

shape-shifting plasma approximately 13 times the size of Earth that hovered over the sun for hours. This was one of the biggest such events ever observed and has no explanation.

We've also detected incredible formations such as solar tornadoes, many of which have the largest we've ever seen. At least one of them was 14 times the size of Earth. These have been seen before. Scientists have also noticed that there seems to be some kind of a massive polar vortex forming around the northern pole of the sun. This vortex lasted for 8 hours representing a massive storm.

The plasma waterfall

This was about 60,000 mi high or about 100,000 km from top to bottom. These were captured in the last 2 years and were a

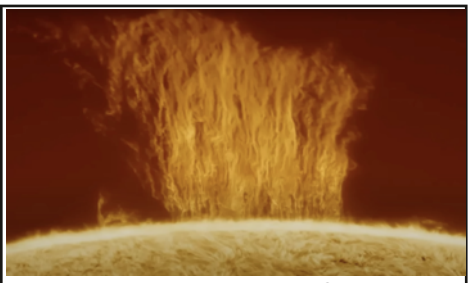


Figure 9. The plasma waterfall observed over the sun.

strong indicator that the sun seems to have reached its maximum and is way way more active than we have ever detected before.

Obviously this is because we have so many more observatories and so many more means of observing the sun. But this doesn't change the fact that the sun is super super active right now.

What does this mean for us on Earth?

The most obvious consequence is going to be even more aurora for at least two more years. We're going to be seeing more and more aurora in regions that haven't seen aurora for a very long time and even in places much closer to the equator than usual. This is of course what happened in 2024 and might happen again really soon. Likewise, there are going to be more unusual phenomena such as eerie aeroglow. This usually creates

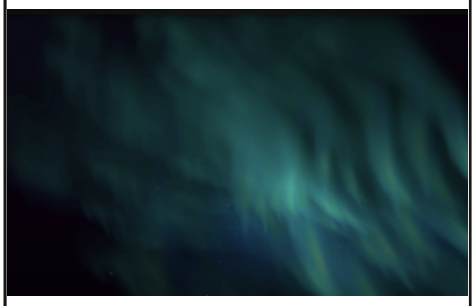


Figure 10. Aeroglow, rivers of green and red that look much like an aurora.

Coronal Mass Ejection

A CME, or Coronal Mass Ejection, is a massive burst of solar wind and magnetic fields released into space from the Sun's corona, often during solar flares. These events eject billions of tons of plasma and can impact Earth's magnetosphere, potentially causing geomagnetic storms that disrupt satellites, power grids, and communications, while also enhancing auroras.

various slowmoving rivers of green and red and though usually looks like aurora is technically a different phenomenon. This aeroglow comes from the sun's more gradual radiation and is a kind of a natural emission of light by the Earth's upper atmosphere that basically increases when the sun is more active.

But it's not just about visual effects. It's also about atmospheric effects as well. For example, we expect less nctulus clouds. These are rare sparkling night shining clouds that you might have seen in the past. But we expect a lot less of them because the increased solar radiation warms the upper atmosphere and reduces the amount of water vapor required for these clouds to form. Naturally, this also affects the reflectivity of the planet and thus affects the weather and the climate.

Exactly how, we are not sure yet. Normally these clouds reflect solar radiation, making the atmosphere just a little bit cooler. In this case, the temperatures should rise during the remainder of the cycle.

And because the Earth's upper atmosphere or thermosphere is being heated up, it's also going to expand. This expansion creates more drag for satellites, especially the ones in the low Earth orbit(LEO), which basically gives them more drag and sometimes may cause them to fall back to Earth. This is exactly what happened with these 38 Starlink satellites during a geomagnetic storm in 2022.

Confirming the 70 year old theory

Why exactly is all of this happening and what do we know or what have we learned about the sun in the last few years? There are no real answers yet. Although we are getting really exciting propositions. But in essence, it seems to be all the result of bizarre magnetic effects somewhere on the solar surface.

For example, in one of the recent studies, scientists tackled a magnetic reconnection mystery that has now been officially confirmed by the Parker Solar Probe. For decades, scientists theorized that solar flares and coronal mass ejections mostly get all of their energy from something called magnetic reconnection. This is when magnetic lines, formed around the solar spots, break apart and then reconnect in a slightly different arrangement. And this ends up releasing huge amounts of energy and produces these powerful burps referred to as CMEs. But the problem is that nobody has ever seen it physically or at least we had no direct data pretty much.

Until now. And so based on the Parker Solar Probe observations which flew extremely close to the sun flying through the regions where these explosive processes were occurring. This confirmed the 70-year-old theory with a direct observation of the reconnection—helping scientists understand this process better which will hopefully create better models in order to predict powerful storms.

There then a discovery of something that was not expected.

Origin of magnetic fields and solar rotation

The question of where exactly does the sun produce its magnetic field. In previous propositions, this was assumed to be somewhere deep inside, possibly over 200,000 km below the surface. But some of the new computer simulations and some of the new data from the Parker Solar Probe suggested it to be very close to the surface. Possibly only 20,000 to 30,000 km deep

Parker Solar Probe

The Parker Solar Probe is a NASA spacecraft launched in 2018 to study the Sun up close. It's designed to fly through the Sun's outer atmosphere, the corona, to gather data on solar activity, including coronal mass ejections (CMEs), solar wind, and magnetic fields. It's the first spacecraft to enter the Sun's corona, reaching speeds up to 430,000 mph and enduring temperatures over 1,800°F. Its mission is to improve our understanding of solar processes and their impact on Earth, like space weather affecting satellites and power grids.

and seems to be the result of powerful cyclical plasma flows very close to the surface which will hopefully once again help create better models for future predictions.

Additional studies also tackled the idea behind the strange rotation of the sun in this case because the solar rotation is actually different on the poles compared to the equator. The equator usually rotates faster, taking approximately 24 days per rotation, whereas the poles rotate every 34 days. With this new theory suggesting that the long period sound waves very deep inside the sun, the sound waves that actually cause a lot of the convection, seem to play a major role in controlling the rotation and thus controlling what happens on the surface—including a lot of these magnetic interactions.

Or just to rephrase this, a lot of the activity on the surface seems to be the result of very powerful acoustic oscillations deep inside the sun. And so all these powerful sound waves seem to transport the heat from the poles to the equator influencing the spin of the sun and producing all of these emissions on the surface.

But obviously the biggest mystery is so why exactly is the sun so much more powerful than predicted and why is there so much more solar wind?
Why is there so much more solar wind?

The sun's constant outflow of particles referred as solar wind has also been getting much stronger since 2008. And this was once again unexpected because once again earlier predictions suggested that the sun should be headed for less activity and a prolonged phase of low activity with very low solar wind.

By measuring the solar wind in terms of speed, density, temperature, and magnetic field strength, researchers confirm that solar wind is indeed getting much stronger. This also suggests that measuring solar activity in just sunspots may not be an entirely correct standard. We may need to look at other solar activity and combine it to create a much bigger picture.

At least one study asks are there multiple cycles.

For example, in solar physics, there's something known as the Hale's law and Hale cycle. The idea that the solar cycle is not just 11 years long, it's also 22 years long, comprising two consecutive 11-year cycles. That's because during a single cycle, the sun flips its polarity with the south becoming north and vice versa. To return to the original position, the sun needs two cycles.

More importantly, there's a much longer 100year cycle referred to as CGC, centennial glyceberg cycle. Several studies published in 2024 and 2025 suggested that the cycle might have just restarted, possibly explaining the intensity of solar activity and the intensity of the solar wind. If this cycle is ramping up, Earth could experience decades of heightened solar activity, potentially posing a lot of future activity and risk to satellites, astronauts, and global technology while producing a lot of beautiful aurora.

Based on what we know about this cycle, it's potentially anywhere from 80 to 100 years long and seems to be characterized by long-term fluctuations in solar activity, which then interacts with the 11-year cycle and the 22-year Hale cycle with the studies in this case suggesting that the quiet sunspot cycle 24, which ended in 2020, corresponded to the CGC minimum, basically making this the end of the cycle, which is why 2020 was so calm in terms of solar activity. The assumption is that now the cycle restarted and that means that cycle 26 and cycle 27 might be even more powerful as the sun might experience even more activity for decades to come.

The maximum in this case is only going to be reached in approximately 40 to 50 years during the cycle 28 which might be the most powerful yet with studies predicting the solar activity to be at least twice as intense as in 2025.

But for us here on Earth, this might not be an issue.

Conclusions

It will just be an issue for all of these communication constellations and all of these massive satellite swarms. Since this is going to result in atmospheric swelling and increased space radiation, this is mostly going to be dangerous for astronauts and satellites.

We still have to be cautious because in this case, we don't really know what's going to happen and the data is very limited with effects remaining poorly under-

stood. Once more data is available in the next few years, there will be a much clearer picture.

Sources:
Anton Petrov [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxgS9aR1bkU]

Supporting papers:
[https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.3847/2041-8213/adefe3],
[https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.3847/2041-8213/adf3a6],
[https://www.aanda.org/articles/aa/full_html/2025/07/aa54241-25/aa54241-25.html],
[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0273117724008524],
[https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1029/2024SW004238?campaign=woletoc]

How does solar activity affect ham radio comminications?

Solar activity can both enhance and disrupt ham radio communications, depending on the event and frequency used. High solar activity can boost long-distance HF propagation but also risks signal loss during flares and geomagnetic storms. Operators adapt by monitoring space weather and adjusting frequencies or modes.

Solar activity, particularly coronal mass ejections (CMEs), solar flares, and sunspots, significantly impacts ham radio communications by affecting the Earth's ionosphere, which is critical for radio wave propagation. Here's a concise breakdown of how: Ionospheric Effects: The ionosphere, a layer of Earth's atmosphere (50-600 miles above the surface), reflects and refracts radio waves, enabling long-distance ham radio communication. Solar activity alters its density and structure: Solar Flares: These sudden bursts of X-rays and UV radiation increase ionization in the ionosphere's D-layer, which can absorb high-frequency (HF) radio signals (3-30 MHz), causing signal fade-outs or complete blackouts, especially on the sunlit side of Earth. This is known as a "radio blackout" and can last minutes to hours.

CMEs: These massive plasma clouds, often following flares, can disrupt the ionosphere when they hit Earth (1-3 days later). They cause geomagnetic storms, which disturb the F-layer, leading to erratic signal propagation, reduced maximum usable frequency (MUF), and degraded or lost HF communications.

Sunspots: Higher sunspot numbers, which peak during the 11-year solar cycle, increase ionospheric ionization, enhancing HF propagation by raising the MUF, allowing signals to travel longer distances. However, during solar minimums, lower ionization can weaken HF signals.

Frequency Band Impacts:HF Bands (3-30 MHz): Most affected by solar activity. During high solar activity, strong ionization can improve long-distance communication (DXing), but flares and CMEs can cause absorption or scattering, leading to signal loss or distortion.

VHF/UHF Bands (30 MHz and above): Less reliant on the ionosphere, these bands are less affected, but strong solar events can cause sporadic E-layer propagation, enabling rare long-distance contacts or interference.

Geomagnetic Storms: Triggered by CMEs, these storms disrupt the Earth's magnetic field, causing auroral activity that absorbs radio signals, particularly in polar regions, and introduces noise or fading on HF bands.

Practical Impacts for Ham Operators:Signal Loss: Blackouts from flares or CME-induced storms can make HF bands unusable for hours or days.

Noise and Interference: Solar activity increases static and noise, reducing signal clarity.
Enhanced Propagation: During high sunspot activity, operators can achieve global contacts with lower power due to stronger ionospheric reflection.

Auroral Effects: In high-latitude regions, auroras can scatter signals, creating fluttery or distorted communications.

Monitoring and Mitigation:Ham operators use space weather forecasts (e.g., from NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center) to predict propagation conditions via indices like the K-index (geomagnetic activity) or solar flux index (SFI).

Switching bands (e.g., moving to lower HF frequencies during absorption events) or using digital modes like FT8, which are more resilient to noise, can help maintain communication.

The Parker Solar Probe's data on CMEs and solar wind helps improve space weather models, indirectly aiding ham operators by enhancing prediction accuracy.

What is required of a trauma kit?

We conclude the month set aside for preparation with a note about the most minimalistic trauma kit needs.

A minimal trauma kit(because hams are cheap)should include essential items to address life-threatening injuries in emergencies, focusing on controlling bleeding, stabilizing wounds, and supporting basic life-saving measures until professional help arrives. Based on current guidelines and best practices for first aid and trauma care, here are the very most minimal components:

1. Tourniquet: A commercial tourniquet (e.g., CAT or SOFTT) to stop severe bleeding from limb injuries. It should be easy to apply, durable, and designed for one-handed use.

2. Sport Tape: To secure dressings or improvised bandages.

3. Trauma Shears/Knife: To cut clothing and access wounds quickly without causing further injury.

4. Chest Seals (Vented): At least two vented chest seals for treating penetrating chest wounds (e.g., HyFin or Asherman) to prevent tension pneumothorax. As an alternative, have plastitic bags on hand to tape and seal wound—for very temporary, short term use.

Optional:

5. Fire Source: Lighter, fire starter to provide heat and light.
6. Burn cream: toothpaste works(not the gel).
7. Flashlight

As for containers, lunch bags from Costco or the cheapest container from Harbor Freight is all you need. There is no added magic to high-dollar trauma containers that cost $100.

Most importantly do your research and TRAIN.

How would you build out this core?

[ARRLNTX] RADIO BALLOON LAUNCH - OCTOBER 18TH - NORTH TEXAS

By Andrew Koenig KE5GDB via Robb Forson
ke5gdb@gmail.com

Good evening!
[Please forward this to any other interested clubs/groups/parties]

Once again, the Richardson Area Balloonatics / Richardson Wireless Klub will be launching a high-altitude weather balloon on Saturday, October 18th (weather and upper atmospheric conditions permitting). This is our last major launch of the season; as the winds aloft will soon start moving the balloons quicker than we can drive under them. The launch will be just north of the DFW metroplex. Near apogee we expect coverage to include most of Texas and Oklahoma and some of Arkansas and Louisiana. The flight is expected to last around 2.5 hours total. Ascent will be from 9:00AM to 11:00AM. We expect the balloon to be back on the ground before noon. Stations beyond line-of-sight are encouraged to make contact with the onboard 20m FT-8 payload; look for the "K5RWK" callsign on the waterfall.

Launch Site

The launch site is tentatively planned to be at an RC Airfield in Denton near the North Lakes Dog park at 808 W Windsor Dr, Denton, TX 76207 https://maps.app.goo.gl/8giL1CWATM7brzsk6. This may change if winds shift.

Flight path predictions (automatically updated every 6 hours): https://predict.sondehub.org/?launch_datetime=2025-10-18T14%3A00%3A00Z&launch_latitude=33.2441&launch_longitude=262.8529&launch_altitude=200&ascent_rate=5&profile=standard_profile&prediction_type=single&burst_altitude=33000&descent_rate=8

Special QSL Card

Earn a special event QSL card by receiving images or tracking data directly from the balloon or by making contacts through the onboard repeater. Visit https://k5rwk.org/balloons to request your QSL card. Aim for the coveted Worked All Payloads ("WAP") award. If you requested a QSL card for prior launches, they are in the queue and will be sent out shortly.

Flight goals

* Test improved launch methods -- new scale, new balloon neck mechanism
* Finally capture some 360° camera footage from launch to burst -- had battery issues on our 8/23 launch, WILL WE GET IT THIS TIME?!
* Measure balloon pressure delta with fancy Honeywell sensor
* Demonstrate 20m FT-8 payload, hopefully with stations local and afar
* Demonstrate Pi Pico W bluetooth interpayload communication
* Collect data from inertial sensors in neck of balloon to determine balloon burst status (for use in future cutdown payload)

Ways to participate from afar

* Make contacts through the crossband repeater - 147.435MHz PL 67.0 uplink, 446.0 (no PL) downlink
* Watch as images arrive via Wenet at https://ssdv.habhub.org/KE5GDB* Track the payloads at https://amateur.sondehub.org/ (look for K5RWK, K5UTD, and KE5GDB-Wenet)
* Receive SSTV pictures in real-time - 432.5 MHz / Robot 36
* Decode our tracking payloads - "Horus Binary v2" on 432.7 and 432.9 MHz (decode using upper sideband and Horus GUI or https://horus.sondehub.org)

Participate in person

* Launch site (tentative) https://maps.app.goo.gl/8giL1CWATM7brzsk6* Launch prep begins at 8:00AM with a target launch time of 9:00AM
* Launch and chase coordination is on 146.54MHz and the onboard crossband repeater -- bring an HT to listen in to the fun!
* If chasing, please carpool - We've had congestion issues before.
* Chase crew should bring boots, long pants, plenty of bug spray, and lots of water! Be prepared for a bit of a hike and high temperatures!

I'll be sending more details regularly to k5rwk@groups.io and parkballoon@k5prk.groups.io. The final update will go out on Friday October 17th to this group.

We love to see your setup pics and hear your stories! Please send them to balloon@k5rwk.org.

73 de KE5GDB

HAMS HELPING HAMS

By KG5WHQ

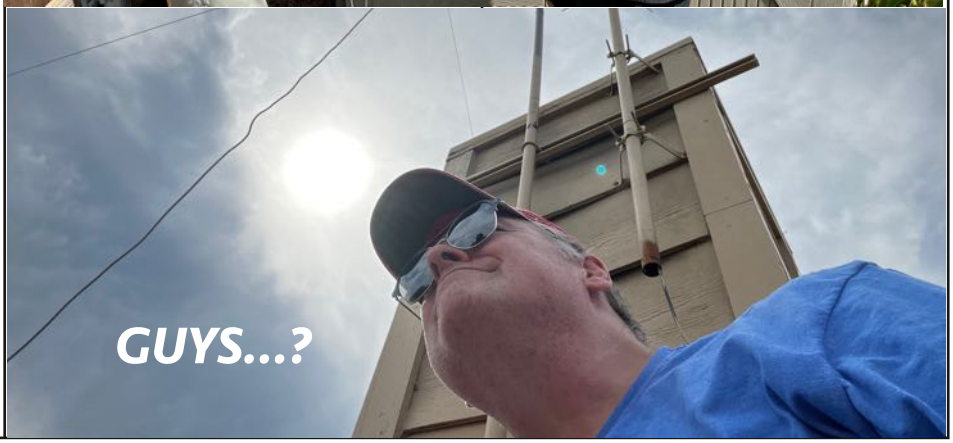
Recently, Michael Payne K5MFP reached out to the club asking for help with his antenna.

K5MFP is mobility-hindered for the time being and depends on his hobby time with the radio. But the most recent storm knocked the HF wire into the slack of his 2m antenna.

Tough guy, B.J. Watkins K5BJW organized Brian Trant KF5VFM and I to get on top of the roof and adjust the antenna. This is an ongoing task we need more young men for. Beginning with one good organizer.

One this day, it meant he and our helper Brian watched me climb the roof and untangle the wires of the antenna. Then the hams on the ground went inside to play radio.

If you see them ask them if they ever let me come down...



FOURTH THURSDAY LUNCH

Poor Richard's Cafe at 11:30a on the Fourth Thursday of the month. We who are able to get away join up and dine on the fine local diner food.

It's a fun time and topics are random.

(It's also where I get a lot of ideas for ham radio cartoons!)

Fourth Thursday Lunch:
October 23, 2025
Poor Richards @ 11:30a

THE FIRST PARK-ING TICKET IN 1973

Hello to all PARK members! This is a brief document telling about the history of Plano Amateur Klub through the writings by others and recorded into the Klub newsletters. Many thanks to Bill Swan for the information and documents. The first set of three documents ae the Volume 1, Issue 1 from 1973. The name given to the newsletter was THE PARK-ING TICKET. It was started in June of 1973.

THE PARK- ING TICKET

Official publication of the Plano Amateur Radio Klub

VOLUME I - ISSUE I JUNE 1973

NEXT MEETING - WEDNESDAY EVENING - JUNE 13 - 7:30 p.m.
COMMUNITY ROOM OF FIRST NATIONAL BANK, PLANO

Don't miss this very important meeting! Field Day plans will be discussed plus a pro-and-con report on affiliation with ARRL. They're be coffee and refreshments, too, and a change to pay your dues if you forgot! Come on down and meet the gang!

Is Wednesday night a bad meeting night for you?.....When you sign in at the June meeting, there will be a column where you can indicate your meeting night preference.....Do keep in mind that Wednesday nights are the only nights when we will be able to use the bank Community Room which is a top-notch place to meet and FREE!

CD anyone?.....Public service communication has been a traditional responsibility of hams since 1913 when the first known emergency communication was donducted by an amateur.....It seems that Plano or Collin County has no organized emergency corps to report severe weather conditions or serve in times of need. An executive meeting was held May 17 with the EC of Dallas County regarding future plans for Plano. There will be a report at the June 13 meeting. Don't miss it!.

FIELD DAY FUN!.....Mark down June 23 and 24 on your calendar. The PARK will observe its first Field Day operation at Schell Park (just across from Memorial Elementary). Various committees are hard at work to make the first FD alot of fun. If you want to operate or log (no matter what class license you have), contact Bill Niles, K5MVB, at 423=2917 and he will put you on the list. Ed Lawrence, WA5SWD, is in charge of Site and Antennae; K5QNY, Dick Sander, in control of Equipment with able assistance from Bill Swan, K5MWC and Collins Radio; Bill Newland doing the Public Relations work (who else) and Pat Runkel and Carole Allen making signs and various plans. Bill Allen, W5NQR, is chairman until he leaves on vacation June 9.....

LADIES: Plan a picnic for Saturday evening, June 23, for the whole family at Schell Park, at 6 p.m. Bring what your family wants to eat plus eating utensils and maybe folding chairs and card table. Let's all get acquainted and watch the Field Day operation with a big picnic Saturday evening!

AND BE SURE TO WORK W5SID/5 from your own QTH on Field Day. The call belongsto Gerald Williamson but he has cheerfully offered it to the club for one weekend!

NEWS AND VIEWS OF NQQes.....Do you know why my OM, W5NQR, calls me "Watergate?".....He says I'm always bugging him.....Plano is going to have several XYL hams before long. Saundra, XYL of K5QNY, and Pat Runkel, XYL of W5PRJ, are awaiting their novice calls, and Cleo Bellew, WA5UDI, is an active worker with the Dallas Club. There may be others, too!.....One of the future plans of the club is to sponsor a novice class especially for family members. Let us know if you're interested or know someone who is.....We'll be needing cookies or snacks for each club meeting so if your XYL wants to bake something for a specific month, just give me a call at 423-6398 so we'll know who is in charge of the sweet tooth for a particular month. That's about all the news from here. Happy Birthday on June 23 to WA5SWD, Ed Lawrence, and ME, TOO!

73, Carole, W5NQQ.

* *

MEET THE OFFICERS! (Although we planned to begin this series with the president, this writer couldn't contact him over the Memorial Day weekend, so we proceeded to lasso the treasurer when he appeared on 10 meters one afternoon and was willing to talk about himself.)

Bill Swan, K5MWC, is a native Texan and has held his call letters since September 1957. Born in San Antonio on August 20, 1943, he was first a member of the Brazoria County ARC and then held posts as Treasurer and member of the Board of the Houston ARC for five years. A graduate of Texas A. & M., he is a Systems and Project Engineer with Collins Radio and has traveled all over the place in the Far East for them. His current rig is an NCX-3, 75S-3, and a 30L1 with a vertical. "But I'm in the process of putting up a tri-band beam," says Bill. In addition, he is installing a 2 meter rig (GE Progress) in his car and building a transverter for his receiver so he can meet the club net on 28.6.

He and his XYL, Pam, were married in 1965 and are the parents of two tiny daughters - Donna, almost 6 and Deborah, almost 1. They live at 1400 Sherrye where he likes to rag-chew and work traffic nets. "I like almost everything about ham radio except a "Hello-Goodbye" contact," says Bill, "or someone using high power when they don't need it." K5MWC has also volunteered to be EC of Collin County!

Nice to meet you, Bill!.....Tune in next month for another chapter of the MEET YOUR OFFICERS STORY!

If you want to appear in the PARK-ing TICKET, get your material to W5NQQ at 3120 Rockbrook about 2 weeks before the second Wednesday of any month (that's club meeting night, y'all)....We'll be glad to print your article or any news you might have!...

DON'T FORGET THE MEETING - WEDNESDAY NIGHT - JUNE 13 at 7:30 p.m.
COMMUNITY ROOM OF THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK

QRV de K5MVB.....I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the 22 hams and prospective hams who showed up for the first official meeting of the PARK. We had a very fast pac meeting despite the tasks of approving a constitution and electing officers. The atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly and enough dues were collected to meet our current expenses with a little left over. The big topic of the evening was Field Day 1973. The PARK decided to field a portable station in Schell Park this summer. Committees were established for antennas, gear, operations and publicity with Bill Allen, W5NQR, taking overall coordination responsibility. We're off to a great start! Collins has loaned us a KWM-2 to use; we have a couple of four-band verticals, but we're still in need of assistance in a bunch of places - particularly in the area of warm bodies to come out and help us celebrate this pagan ritual by hollering CQFD and logging QSOes. We're going to work out alot of the fine points at the meeting on June 13 and we would greatly appreciate your help. 73es, K5MVB.

NOTE!!

We are very pleased to announce an outstanding and timely program for our June 13 meeting - one you will not want to miss. The Richardson Wireless Klub will share some of their members with us to present a program called "Organizing and Carrying Out Successful Field Day Operations." The following RWK hams will present many interesting facts: Stu Bonney, W5PAQ; Terry Burkh W5LUJ; and Lynn Schriner, W5EQT. They made this presentation to a large crowd at the West Gulf ARRL Convention in April.

The fellows will hang around after the meeting to answer questions and assist the PARK with its first Field Day. Let's have a big turn-out!

FLASH!!!! Also at the next meeting will be the new Collins digital receiver closely guarded by Bill Swan who will bring it!

See You
June 13
7:30 P.M.

I DARE YOU!

Take a stab!

I dare you to beat my score. It isn't necessary to hit my score quickly. Just share your score on QRZ or facebook.

We'll enjoy growing along with you.

If my math is right I scored 20 points while I was a technician.

The glove is thrown, my radio friends.

YOU can do it!

—KG5WHQ

RADIO QUEST

TECHNICIAN LEVEL

☑	Found an Elmer(someone to answer how-to questions)
☑	Listened on a frequency before talking
☑	Used your call sign on your handy talkie(HT)
☑	Spoke to another person on a regular (simplex) frequency)
☑	Spoke on club repeater
	Sent an APRS update
☑	Logged in on QRZ.com and created a logbook
	Made a contact via satellite/ISS on an HT
☑	Got my grid location
☑	Gave a signal report
	Send a CW/Morse code CQ
☑	Attended a ham club meeting
☑	Joined the ARRL
☑	Checked-in on a club info net
☑	Asked a question on a net or a club meeting
☑	Joined breakfast Eyeball QSO on Saturday
☑	Passed a license exam
☑	Signed up for EchoLink
	Bought a cheap Chinese radio
☑	Bought an expensive Japanese radio
	Built a radio
☑	Built a j-pole/2m antenna
	Made a balun
	Made an RF choke
	Made a go-bag/go-box
	Went on a POTA expedition
☑	Asked a new contact what radio/ antenna they were using
☑	Was asked what radio/antenna you are using
☑	Served as a net control operator
	Join the ARRL

CHECK ALL THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED. HAVE YOU FULFILLED THIS MONTH'S QUEST?

DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH'S RADIOQUEST?
LET ME KNOW HOW YOU DID. POST SCREENCAPS ON FACEBOOK FOR BRAGGING RIGHTS!

RADIO QUEST

TECHNICIAN LEVEL

	Found an Elmer(someone to answer how-to questions)
	Listened on a frequency before talking
	Used your call sign on your handy talkie(HT)
	Spoke to another person on a regular (simplex) frequency)
	Spoke on club repeater
	Sent an APRS update
	Logged in on QRZ.com and created a logbook
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	Passed a license exam
	Signed up for EchoLink
	Bought a cheap Chinese radio
	Bought an expensive Japanese radio
	Built a radio
	Built a j-pole/2m antenna
	Made a balun
	Made an RF choke
	Made a go-bag/go-box
	Went on a POTA expedition
	Asked a new contact what radio/ antenna they were using
	Was asked what radio/antenna you are using
	Served as a net control operator
	Join the ARRL

CHECK ALL THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED. HAVE YOU FULFILLED THIS MONTH'S QUEST?

DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH'S RADIOQUEST?
LET ME KNOW HOW YOU DID. POST SCREENCAPS ON FACEBOOK FOR BRAGGING RIGHTS!

newsletter@k5prk.net

RADIO QUEST

GENERAL LEVEL

	Tuned up your first HF frequency
	Made a DX contact(out of the continental US)
	Joined a traffic net
	Sent a radiogram
	Worked a Field Day contact
	Participated in a contest
	Used a digital mode
	Sent an email over the radio
	Connected your radio to the computer/internet
	Used a SWR meter
	Grounded your station
	Grounded your antenna
	Applied a lightning arrestor
	Drove a ground rod
	Computed RF emissions for your station
	Ran your station on a battery
	Powered your station from a car power supply
	Created your first scratch paper log
	Installed logging software(such as hamrs/n1mm)
	Logged on to LOTW
	Used a pi*star
	Used a Watt meter
	Made a counterpoise
	Threw a wire up in a tree for an antenna
	Know who Dave Cassler is
	Have given a Roger Roger (RR)
	Stood on a ladder and wondered *"Will it antenna?"*
	Joined RACES
	Listened to a weather net

CHECK ALL THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED. HAVE YOU FULFILLED THIS MONTH'S QUEST?

DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH'S RADIOQUEST?
LET ME KNOW HOW YOU DID. POST SCREENCAPS ON FACEBOOK FOR BRAGGING RIGHTS!

newsletter@k5prk.net

I DARE YOU!

Take a stab!

I dare you to beat my score. It isn't necessary to hit my score quickly. Just share your score on QRZ or facebook.

We'll enjoy growing along with you.

If my math is right I scored 27 points while I was a general.

The glove is thrown, my radio friends.

YOU can do it!

—KG5WHQ

Email your scores to NEWSLETTER@K5PRK.NET There will be a prize.

CLUB CALENDAR

OCTOBER

Sunday 28	Monday 29	Tuesday 30
1p Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **2p** Texas RACES Net (HF) @ 7.255MHz **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **7p** K1USN SST	**7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8:30p** MARC (McKinney) Simplex Net @ 146.54	**7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B
5 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **7p** DARC (Dallas) Meeting on the Air **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **9p** Collin County ARES @ WD5ERD **7p** K1USN SST **Collegiate QSO Party** **Worked All Provinces of China DX** **Oceania DX Contest, Phone** **Russian WW Digital Contest** **IARU Region 1 UHF/Microwaves** **K1USN Slow Speed Test**	**6** **7p K5PRK Board Meeting @ Jits** **7p** GARC (Garland) Club Meeting **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **7:30p** RWK -- Meeting on the Air @ 147.12, PL 110.9 **8:30p** MARC (McKinney) Simplex Net @ 146.54 **RSGB 80m Autumn Series, CW**	**7** **7p** DARC (Dallas) General Meeting **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B
12 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **2p** Texas RACES Net (HF) @ 7.255MHz **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **7p** K1USN SST **EME - 50 to 1296 MHz** **Makrothen RTTY Contest** **Nevada QSO Party** **Oceania DX Contest, CW** **Scandinavian Activity Contest, SSB** **Arizona QSO Party** **Pennsylvania QSO Party**	**13** **7p** DARC (Dallas) Geek Net @ W5FC **7p** GARC (Garland) Club Meeting **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8:30p** MARC (McKinney) Simplex Net @ 146.54	**14** **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **DARC RTTY Sprint**
19 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **7p** DARC (Dallas) Meeting on the Air **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **9p** Collin County ARES @ WD5ERD **7p** K1USN SST **JARTS WW RTTY ContestNCCC Sprint** **10-10 Int'l Fall Contest, CW** **New York QSO Party** **YLRL DX/NA YL Anniversary Contest** **Worked All Germany Contest** **Stew Perry Topband Challenge**	**20** **6p VE Testing @ K5PRK** **7p K5PRK General Meeting** **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8p** American Legion Post 315 Radio Club Net @ W5SRA **8:30p** MARC (McKinney) Simplex Net @ 146.54 **School Club Roundup** **YLRL DX/NA YL Anniversary Contest**	**21** **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **School Club Roundup**
26 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **2p** Texas RACES Net (HF) @ 7.255MHz **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **7p** K1USN SST **Classic Exchange, CW**	**27** **7p** DARC (Dallas) Geek Net @ W5FC **7p** GARC (Garland) Club Meeting **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8:30p** MARC (McKinney) Simplex Net @ 146.54 **RSGB FT4 Contest**	**28** **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B

OCTOBER

Wednesday 1	Thursday 2	Friday 3	Saturday 4
6:50p NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **UKEICC 80m Contest**	**11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **7p** HAM (Mesquite) Monthly Meeting **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **UKEICC 80m Contest** **SARL 80m QSO Party** **NRAU 10m Activity Contest**	**3p** K1USN SST **UKEICC 80m Contest**	**12p** Garland "Hands-On" Gathering **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A **Collegiate QSO Party** **Worked All Provinces of China DX** **Oceania DX Contest, Phone** **Russian WW Digital Contest** **IARU Region 1 UHF/Microwaves**
8 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **8:30p** NTx ARES Net @ 3860 **432 MHz Fall Sprint**	**9** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **432 MHz Fall Sprint**	**10** **3p** K1USN SST **10-10 Int'l 10-10 Day Sprint**	**11** **9a** W5SRA Laurel VE Test Session **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A **EME - 50 to 1296 MHz** **Makrothen RTTY Contest** **QRP ARCI Fall QSO Party** **Nevada QSO Party** **Oceania DX Contest, CW** **Scandinavian Activity Contest, SSB** **Arizona QSO Party** **Pennsylvania QSO Party**
15 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **7p** Murphy CERT Net @W5SRA **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening** **RSGB 80m Autumn Series, Data**	**16** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest** **NTC QSO Party**	**17** **3p** K1USN SST **Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest**	**18** **9a** W5YI VE Test Session @ Wylie **9a** GARC (Garland) ECC Open House **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A **JARTS WW RTTY ContestNCCC Sprint** **10-10 Int'l Fall Contest, CW** **New York QSO Party** **YLRL DX/NA YL Anniversary Contest** **Worked All Germany Contest** **Stew Perry Topband Challenge** **Feld Hell Sprint** **Argentina National 7 MHz Contest**
22 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **School Club Roundup** **IRTS 80m Counties Contest**	**23** **12p Fourth Thursday Ham Lunch** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **School Club Roundup** **RSGB 80m Autumn Series, SSB**	**24** **3p** K1USN SST **School Club Roundup**	**25** **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net @REF029A **School Club Roundup** **CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB** **902 MHz and Up Fall Sprint**
29 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **UKEICC 80m Contest**	**30** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet	**31** **3p** K1USN SST **Zombie Shuffle**	**1** **12p** Garland "Hands-On" Gathering **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A

NOVEMBER

Sunday 26	Monday 27	Tuesday 28
1p Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **7p** DARC (Dallas) Meeting on the Air **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B	**7p** DARC (Dallas) Geek Net **7p** GARC (Garland) Club Meeting **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8:30p** MARC Simplex net	**7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **8p** Lucas Open Net
2 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **7p** DARC (Dallas) Meeting on the Air **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **9p** Collin County ARES @ WD5ERD **November Sweepstakes (CW)** **IPARC Contest, SSB** **EANET Sprint** **High Speed Club CW Contest** **Classic Exchange, Phone**	**3** **7p K5PRK Board Meeting** **7p** GARC (Garland) Club Meeting **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **7:30p** RWK -- Meeting on the Air @ 147.12, PL110.9 **8:30p** MARC Simplex net **November Sweepstakes (CW)** **Classic Exchange, Phone** **K1USN Slow Speed Test** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **OK1WC Memorial (MWC)** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **RSGB 80m Autumn Series, Data**	**4** **7p** DARC (Dallas) General Meeting **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **8p** Lucas Open Net **Classic Exchange, Phone** **Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest** **ARS Spartan Sprint** **ICWC Medium Speed Test**
9 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **2p** Texas RACES Net (HF) @ 7.255MHz **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **EME - 50 to 1296 MHz** **PODXS 070 CLub Triple Play Low Band** **WAE DX Contest, RTTY** **ARRL EME Contest** **10-10 Int. Fall Contest, Digital** **JIDX Phone Contest** **SKCC Weekend Sprintathon** **OK/OM DX Contest, CW**	**10** **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8:30p** MARC Simplex net **PODXS 070 CLub Triple Play Low Band** **CQ-WE Contest** **KUSN Slow Speed Test** **4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **OK1WC Memorial (MWC)** **ICWC Medium Speed Test**	**11** **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **8p** Lucas Open Net **Worldwide Sideband Activity** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **DARC FT4 Contest**
16 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **7p** DARC(Dallas) Meeting On The Air **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **9p** Collin County ARES Training Net @ W5MRC **Nov Sweepstakes-SSB** **AWA Bruce Kelley 1929 QSO Party** **Ham Spirit Contest** **All Austrian 160-Meter Contest** **South American Integration Contest CW** **FISTS Sunday Sprint** **Homebrew and Oldtime Equipment Party**	**17** **7p K5PRK General Meeting** **6p VE Testing @ K5PRK** **8p** American Legion Post 315 Radio Club Net @ W5SRA **Nov Sweepstakes-SSB** **AWA Bruce Kelley 1929 QSO Party** **Run for the Bacon QRP Contest** **KUSN Slow Speed Test** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **OK1WC Memorial (MWC)** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **RSGB FT4 Contest**	**18** **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **8p** Lucas Open Net **Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest** **ICWC Medium Speed Test**
23 **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **2p** Texas RACES Net (HF) @ 7.255 MHz **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **LZ DX Contest** **North American SSB Sprint** **1p** Military Veterans D-Star Net @ REF026A **7p** Intl D-Star Net @ REF001C **8p** K5TIT D-Star Net @ REF33B **CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW** **30**	**24** **7p** DARC (Dallas) Geek Net **7p** GARC (Garland) Club Meeting **7:30p** Texas ARES Net @ 3.873 MHz **8:30p** MARC Simplex net **K1USN Slow Speed Test** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **QCX Challenge** **OK1WC Memorial (MWC)** **ICWC Medium Speed Test**	**25** **7p** HAM (Mesquite) InfoNet @ WJ5J (145.310 PL 110.9) **7:30p** Ark-La-Tex D-Star Net @ REF048B **8p** Texas D-Star Net @ REF004B **8p** Lucas Open Net **Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest** **ICWC Medium Speed Test** **QCX Challenge**

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 29	Thursday 30	Friday 31	Saturday 1
6:50p NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **8p PARK Informal Net @ 147.180+ MHz, (107.2)** **8p Simplex Net @ 146.54 MHz**	**11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **7p** HAM (Mesquite) Monthly Meeting **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **8p** Denton County ARES Training Net	***8:30,9a*** North Texas Hospital Radio Club weekly check in	**12p** Garland "Hands-On" Gathering **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A November Sweepstakes (CW) YBDXPI FT8 Contest Silent Key Memorial Contest IPARC Contest, CW UK/EI DX Contest, SSB
5 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **8p PARK Informal Net @ 147.180+ MHz, (107.2)** **8p Simplex Net @ 146.54 MHz** Classic Exchange, Phone Phone Weekly Test A1Club AWT CWops Test (CWT) Mini-Test 40 VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	**6** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **8p** Denton County ARES Training Net Walk for the Bacon QRP CWops Test (CWT) SKCC Sprint Europe	**7** ***8:30,9a*** North Texas Hospital Radio Club weekly check in Walk for the Bacon QRP NCCC FT4 Sprint Weekly RTTY Test NCCC Sprint K1USN Slow Speed Test	**8** **9a** W5YI VE Test Session @ Wylie **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029 EME - 50 to 1296 MHz PODXS 070 CLub Triple Play Low Band FISTS Saturday Sprint CQ-WE Contest
12 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **7p** Murphy CERT Net @ W5SRA **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **8p PARK Informal Net @ 147.180+ MHz, (107.2)** **8:30p** NTx ARES Net **8p Simplex Net @ 146.54 MHz** Phone Weekly Test A1Club AWT CWops Test (CWT) VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	**13** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **8p** Denton County ARES Training Net CWops Test (CWT)	**14** ***8:30,9a*** North Texas Hospital Radio Club weekly check in NCCC FT4 Sprint Weekly RITY Test NCCC FT4 Sprint K1USN Slow Speed Test	**15** **9a** W5SRA Laurel VE Test Session **9a** GARC (Garland) ECC Open House **9a** GARC Swap Shap @ GARC Clubhouse **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A Nov Sweepstakes-SSB AWA Bruce Kelley 1929 QSO Party Ham Spirit Contest All Austrian 160-Meter Contest REF 160-Meter Contest South American Integration Contest Feld Hell Sprint
19 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **8p PARK Informal Net @ 147.180+ MHz, (107.2)** **8p Simplex Net @ 146.54 MHz** Phone Weekly Test A1Club AWT CWops Test (CWT) Mini-Test 40 VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest Mini-Test 80	**20** **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **8p** Denton County ARES Training Net Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest NAQCC CW Sprint CWops Test (CWT) NTC QSO Party	**21** ***8:30,9a*** North Texas Hospital Radio Club weekly check in Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest NCCC FT4 Sprint Weekly RTTY Test NCCC Sprint K1USN Slow Speed Test	**22** **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A LZ DX Contest
26 **6:50p** NTx Readiness QST Net @ 7.27750 MHz LSB **8p** N5SAC Weekly Info Net @ W5SRA **8p PARK Informal Net @ 147.180+ MHz, (107.2)** **8p Simplex Net @ 146.54 MHz** SKCC Sprint Phone Weekly Test A1Club AWT CWops Test (CWT) Mini-Test 40 Mini-Test 80	**27** ~~12p Fourth Thursday Lunch~~ **11a** GARC (Garland) Crony Lunch @ Judy's Cafe **8p** GARC (Garland) InfoNet **8p** Denton County ARES Training Net CWops Test (CWT) RSGB 80m Autumn Series, CW	**28** ***8:30,9a*** North Texas Hospital Radio Club weekly check in NCCC FT4 Sprint Weekly RTTY Test NCCC Sprint K1USN Slow Speed Test	**29** **12p** Garland "Hands-On" Gathering **7p** DARC (Dallas) Tech Net **9p** Saturday Night D-STAR Net@REF029A CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW

THE HISTORY OF SKYWARN (PART 3 OF 3)

By Scott Whitfield KE5AYC
scott.whitfield@icloud.com

Present Day

Technological advances such as the Internet, weather radio, pagers, and cell phones have made spotter activation quick and efficient; however, the basic goal of spotting has remained relatively unchanged to this day. In making these reports, spotters use a specialized set of jargon and slang to describe their observations.

The primary group responsible for storm spotting in the U.S. is known as Skywarn. Many individuals hold Skywarn certification and/or amateur radio licenses. Other spotters are part of organized and highly trained local spotter groups, reporting their observations to the local emergency management office or National Weather Service office responsible for that area. A Skywarn group is either directly or indirectly affiliated or associated with the local weather office, and in many cases other agencies responsible for the well-being of individuals. Today, amateur radio still plays a key role, as most spotters opt to attain their radio licenses; however, cell phones are an ever increasingly popular means to directly relay information, along with other on-line spotter reporting protocols such as The Spotter Network.

Other spotters groups have formed in various countries. Canwarn is the Canadian spotter program run by Environment Canada and similarly the Australian Bureau of Meteorology runs the ASP (Australian Storm Spotters) program in Australia. In the United Kingdom, the TORRO has operated a network of observers since the 1970s.

Since the 2000s, about a dozen European countries (including the UK) operate autonomous storm spotting organizations under the auspices of Skywarn Europe.

Scott Whitfield KE5AYC is an American Banjo Museum Hall of Fame Inductee of 2021, a weather junkie, teacher, and serves the ham radio community as a weather spotter and storm chaser.

All typos are intentional & have secret meanings...


Welcome


Welcome


2018

Ghost In the Noise

Also, read in the voice of Vincent Price. Details on last page.

by Lonnie Webb KG5WHQ

Dark skies flash with blue-green lightning in the howling winds and pelting rains of the hurricane. My name is Thibodeaux Ray, a storm spotter in a tow truck as the newest blow inches by. Leather smells in my truck contrast with the cold swampy thunderstorm odors outside. I kicked the heater on to keep the fog off the windscreen. My hands were freezing in the air blast. I hadn't noticed how tightly I must have been gripping the wheel.

Hurricane storm spotting In the swamps of the south often becomes an effort to search out victims and I suppose my nerves had gotten excitable. Spotters serve the needs called for. Admittedly, I used that as an excuse to drive when the state police closed the roads. Radars can't see below tree level so someone has to report what the storm is doing on the ground.

Drumming windshield wipers kept me company as I watched the roads for activity. The storm had turned away from my location, it had been as bad as it would get. I was now following it.

My scanner crackled to life over the sound of the howling wind, startling me.

"Mommy?" it said. The AM light flashed while the voice spoke. It must be a wireless landline overpowering my mobile setup. Nobody but talk radio and airports use AM in this century.
Odd, though. I had thought all the power was out with the rural power
lines being down.

"Is anyone there? I'm all alone," the voice called again, almost drowning in the hiss of static. The static continued for a long moment, tempting that more would follow.

"Call Dan," I spoke into my cell phone but all cell service was out. The towers were truly down or without power from the winds and floods. Not to worry, my handheld radio was connected to my truck antenna. I tuned up my partner on the handi-talkie.

"Anybody using this frequency? November Zero Tango, Dan? Are you there? Over," I called.

"November Zero Tango here. That you, Thibodeaux? Lots of noise on the bands. I can barely make you out. Over to you."

Wind blew a branch rolling across the road and continuing off the other side. I struggled to keep the truck straight in the rain.

"Yessir. Look, I hear a transmission in AM on the scanner," my teeth chattered mildly. "I might go check it out. Over."

"I'm not getting it here. You're just hearing a ghost in the noise. The static is playing tricks on you. Over."

"Is anyone there?" the scanner cracked, barely audible.

"I don't think it's my imagination, Dan. Sounds like she's in trouble. Over."

"'She'?" quoted Dan. "Could be a siren in the noise, ha!"

"What gets me is the signal is coming in on the AM band," I told him.

"That would have to be an airband or commercial these days. Who is it? An airplane? Over."

"I don't know. Kinda thought it was a phone at first. But it sounded like a kid. Must be close to me."

"There might be money in it. Airlines pay a lot for recovery done right. Over."

The scanner continued hissing on the AM band. No voice was discernable for the moment.

"My radio will do AM but I'll lose you for a while. Especially, if I have to go direction-finding. How's the storm look? Over."

"I only have relay info but it looks like the worst has passed. Stay to the high ground though. A flash flood could still happen. Over," said Dan.

"Copy that. I am clear," I said, letting others know I was done using the frequency. Assuming, anyone was listening.

"Is anyone there? It's so dark," the child's voice called.

I pulled off the road and switched over to AM.

"All stations, please repeat that transmission."

"Hello?" cried the voice. "I didn't think anyone would ever answer me!"

I spoke into the mic. "My name is Thibodeaux. What's your situation?"

"It's dark here and I am all alone," she said.

"What is your address?" It was hard to see through the rain but there were no houses in the area.

"I'm at the house."

"House? What road?" I asked, making no effort to show radio etiquette.

"On the farm," said the crackly voice as though any idiot could tell which farm she was talking about. I needed that idiot to navigate for me.

"How do I...get the farm?" I asked.

"On the farm road to the house," she said. There was a hint of sarcasm in her transmission. I opened my map. Off the road were tire shops, storage centers, and bait shops but no residential. Any fair sized farm should be visible since the range of the signal is too limited for my buddy to hear.

"My mommy likes to walk down the road when she goes to walk the swamp."

"How do I find your farm road?" I asked with measured words. We've all heard stories of deeper-than-country folk wandering through the swamp. Of course, I haven't met anyone buck-toothed enough to fit the description. Yet.

There was crackling. I wanted to get out and use my handie-talkie antenna to locate the transmission. That is, my truck insulates signals so I put on my raincoat and hat. Unscrewing the antenna cable from my handheld, I replaced the shorter "rubber ducky" antenna. Then I added a gap between the fitting and the body of the radio just big enough for one thumbnail.

I hopped out of the truck for better reception and said, "Talk to me! I am finding your direction but I need you to keep talking."

"What should I say?" she asked.

"Tell me about the road," I said. "When do I turn off the main highway?"

"There is a tractor by the bend in the road with the big tree. That tree is where the tractor was held up by a rope while men were working on it."

Turning in a tight swivel, I could hear her talk when I faced the direction opposite that which the truck was facing.

While she talked about trees and tractors she had seen by the road, I got back in the truck and stuck the short antenna out the window.

Hastily, I turned around and drove back the way I came. She talked about a gas station and a big red gas truck. I had no idea what she was saying but at least I had a sort of bearing.

"That was the summer when we bundled hay. We took the bundled hay to a hay baler," she said in that scratchy transmission. I didn't understand what she meant. Hay balers are pulled by tractors. Must be the simple error of a child. I smiled to myself when it occurred to me that she had no mic fright.

The direction quickly led off to the right so I looked for a turn. A numbered parish road went off namelessly so I followed it for a while.

The road immediately turned to gravel and ran by an old concrete slab. I almost missed it.

Beside the slab was a rusted-out hulk of a wheeless tank truck. The frame was so frail it might as well have been a station wagon. This had to be the remains of a gas station and the transmission went off behind it on a fork. This path was grassy and the memory of ruts was no longer held by the ground here but there was an unmistakable vehicle-wide gap in the trees.

My lights picked up a dog trail leading up the dark lane. I followed that around a bend and soon passed through an open gate to an old chicken house and barn. On the other side of the road, where the signal had led, was a row of weeping willows dangling moss from above my head. I got out with my light and radio. The girl stopped talking but I was going in the right direction.

I found the house easy enough after peeling back the Spanish moss layers that draped around an open area like a fragmentary curtain. The faint light from the overcast moon was not strong enough to illuminate the grassy patch so I brought up my lantern to light the way.

"Can you hear me? Talk to me so I can find you," I swung the radio around at an angle in front of me.

"I'm still here. It's still so dark," said the quivering voice in the noise. "Have you seen

mommy? She likes to go for walks in the swamp."

"In the swamp? During this weather?" I said with amazement. "I haven't seen her."

Rain was lighter now but still falling. It rode the currents of the air and fell predestined to land on the earth at my feet.

"I'm close now. Keep your nerve," I said with my mind going back to my boomstick in the back of the tow truck.

The strongest position was dead ahead—in the dark stood an overgrown dwelling. It was hard for me to make out where the vegetation ended and the structure began. It wasn't clear if the structure remained sound at all but I doubted the storm had harmed it; although, It made creaking noises just bearing up to the wind and rain. Louisiana swamps were notorious for consuming man-made homes, schools, and churches left abandoned. The hurricanes certainly drove people away regularly enough.

Jutting up out of the ground, this stucco and clapboard Scooby-Doo house showed hints of being influenced by, not surprisingly, French architecture. The windows were so dark they looked like gaunt features more than elevations of the house. A tiny glow reflected from two upper windows that protruded from the sinking roof. The light did not come from inside, being a pale imitation of the moonlight, combined with the belfry over the porch, it looked like the face of a skull complete with a gasping mouth. I walked away from the dilapidated front porch. It smelled of rain and rotten wood. Rickety boards dangled from above what might have been a porch swing once. In addition to the creaking sounds, it did not look safe.

To the right, there was a side entrance. Beside it, an electric meter loop on the side of the house with the pitted metal lever that had been pulled down and drooped to one side. The cloth and asbestos-wrapped mains were disconnected from the house. The brownish fuse box was open and the rusty screw-in fuse receptacles revealed power-conducting connections were long gone.

I pulled gently on the screen door, but it was too much tugging the latch out of the rotted jamb. Dust and dirt fell from the frame the door sat in.

The interior door was badly weathered and unlocked. The tin or bronze fittings squeaked as I eased it open. A musty, rotten wood smell rose from the inside also. Unsettling groans came from the structure.

"Hello," I called out. "Anybody hear me?"

Not only was there no answer, the house ceased groaning.

A hand-woven bread sack mat lay beyond the door into the kitchen. I pressed my feet gently on the floor as I walked in. I could hear the wood moving against nails in the floor under my careful paces. It held me up well enough but I confess to a certain weakness in the knees.

"Hello?" I then said into the radio. "I am in the house."

"I hear you, Thibodeaux!" said the child's voice through my radio.

"Why can't I hear you? Are you in the cellar?" I asked.

"I don't think so," she said. "We don't have a cellar in the house."

Looking for the signal, I waved the radio again. I moved in the strongest direction, into a big room with a fireplace. Grapevines reached in from a pane-less window bearing no fruit.

An old piano stood against the wall opposite an infested and chewed-up couch. Stoneware crocks sat under it with no corks—empty vessels.

Beyond that stood a sewing table and a large chair. On the table stood an ancient spark set. With the transmitter on my left and the receiver on my right, I leaned into the Telimco. A layer of dirt and grime clung to it but it was clearly a 1930's contraption. Being a spark radio it needed no electricity.

I grasped the stalk of the microphone horn and said "Radio check, can you hear me?"

My own voice crackled in my radio.

"I can hear you," came the child's voice from my HT.

"The signal is coming from right here. Where are you? Is there another radio in the house?"

"No," she said. "There is only the one radio."

A bang rattled the house and the faint moonlight was extinguished by the house shutters slamming shut. The air smelled of dirt and wet leaves. A door flew open revealing a ragged skeletal shape of what had been a woman standing in the doorway, with moss hanging off it. Her leathery arm reached out with a meatless hand. Hollow eyes looked in my direction putting

a terrible fright in me stifling a scream in my throat!

A glimmer of light seemed to glow in the back of the skull's interior. Any thing but holy glared into my face with an absence of soul.

With one stride it was upon me! I backed into the corner behind the sewing table looking for any escape.

The frail wood of the shutters now stood like iron bars in my hands, refusing to budge regardless of my desperation to open them!

"Is mommy there?" said the child. "I hear mommy in the noise."

For the produced audio(disclaimer: a tiny amount of money might be sent to the author)

https://play.google.com/store/audiobooks/details/Lonnie_Webb_Ghost_In_The_Noise?id=AQAAAEByXhlecM

or

https://www.audiobooks.com/audiobook/ghost-in-the-noise-spooky-ham-radio-entertainment/833328

Fourth Thursday Lunch: October 23, 2025
Poor Richards @ 11:30a

Next Meeting:
October 20, 2025