

Public Service Events

Public service events are an excellent way to hone your communicating skills so you can be a valuable resource in an emergency situation. If you are a first timer let the coordinator know and you will be assigned accordingly.

Upcoming Events

Monday, September 7 is the second Annual Blacklands Triathlon. Last year they had nearly 500 participants for the first year. This year they hope to be better organized, and have more people.

Radio operators are needed from about 6:00 a.m. until Noon. We will know more as the event gets closer, but we need about 6 shadows, 18 on the course, and 2 for net control. Reserve the date.

Contact Kipton Moravec - AE5IB at kjp@kdream.com or 214-929-8121.

Saturday, September 12 is the Tour De Cure Bike Ride benefiting the American Diabetes Association and its research. The ride will be held at Texas Motor Speedway. The event website is here: tour.diabetes.org/site/TR/TourdeCure/. HAM ops interested can contact Greg Evans at kd5mno@yahoo.com.

The Plano Amateur Radio Klub invites you to come out this September 18, 19 and 20 for the Plano Balloon Festival.

PARK and other amateurs from the area have been providing communication support for this event for over 20 years. The primary reason for this support is to provide support to the balloonists and organizers of this event. With this event spanning three days it requires a rather significant effort to coordinate and administer. Operators are required in two general categories. Field operations and recovery. We also provide weather monitoring support and liaison to many of the Public Safety agencies supporting the event. In the past we have also used this event to deploy new technology and techniques to validate their operational capabilities.

Sign up: www.n5oom.net/events/plano_balloon_festival/volunteer/

Information: www.w5adc.com/PBF/PBF.html

Check the Plano Amateur Radio Klub for [additional info](#).

ISSUE

08

August
2009



K5QHD

Garland Amateur Radio Club

Where Amateur Radio

is fun again!!!

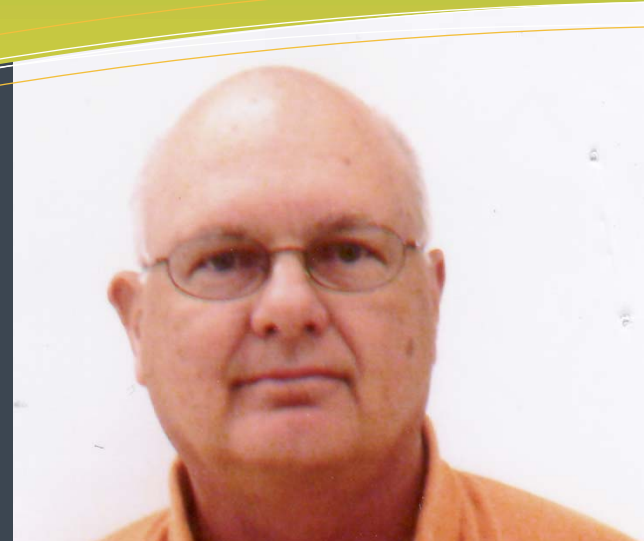
The Arclite

Repeater News

The club operates two open repeaters for use by any licensed amateur radio operator. One is on 146.660 MHz with a negative 600 KHz offset and the other is on 442.700 MHz with a positive 5 MHz offset. Both repeaters require a PL tone of 110.9 Hz. Additionally the 146.660 repeater transmits a tone of 110.9 Hz to enable use of tone squelch found on most receivers. The backup two meter repeater that is occasionally put into service does not have this feature.

The issue with the repeater keying up when receiving a signal without a PL tone has been fixed thanks to Ralph. We are continuing to learn features of the controller and will be testing them from time to time.

If you are not familiar with the Club's guidelines for usage of our repeaters please take a few minutes to look them over. They are accessible on our web site under "Club Information" then "Repeater Use Guidelines."



President's Pen

We're going to start something new at the club meetings beginning this month. We will have a table (or tables) set up for members to sell their ham radio things they no longer need. This will replace the auction at our October meeting. We ask that the seller make a voluntary donation to the club of a suggested ten percent of the sale receipts if possible. So bring what you want to sell to the monthly meeting and some \$\$ if you're looking to buy something.

We've been offered a 900 MHz repeater as a gift from Roger White W5RDW. We are looking for a member or members with an interest in that band to spearhead the project of getting it installed at the club. Please contact me if you can help. I don't want to get the repeater and just have it sit there.

I was saddened this week by the death of Mickey WO6T, better known in December as Santa W6S. I've worked W6S a few times, but was never able to make contact with the grandchildren

this issue

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The Arclite Issue 08 August 2009



Garland Amateur Radio Club
Emergency Communications Center
(ECC)
1027 Austin Street Suite B.
Garland, TX. 75040-5608
Where Ham Radio is Fun Again!

**K5QHD is the Bill Folsdtadt
Memorial Station**

Donate your excess goods to the GARC. Don't forget the club is a 501(C)(3) organization and that all your donations can be tax deductible.



Mickey "Santa Claus" Hicks, WO6T (SK)

(Aug 11, 2009)(ARRL Home Page) -- Mickey Hicks, [WO6T](#) -- known to many amateurs and their children as Santa Claus -- passed away Sunday, August 9. He was 79. For the past 38 years, Hicks, a ham for almost 50 years and a long-time Amateur Radio instructor, would get on the air for 10 days each December as W6S (Whiskers-6-Santa). ARRL Youth Editor Duncan MacLachlan, KU0DM, [profiled Hicks in December 2008](#): "The Amateur Radio community has been quick to embrace the W6S operation. Mickey says that the first year operating as W6S was 'a hit with the operators of all ages and their children.' Mickey noted that most children are a bit apprehensive of talking over the radio, let alone to Santa! He said one of the most challenging parts of operating is when he hears 'This one is shy and won't talk.' That's not a problem for Mickey -- he says after a few warm-up questions (such as 'Can you say hello to Rudolph?'), he can strike up a conversation that lasts a few minutes. He has even heard back that the parents weren't able to get the microphone away from the kids afterward!" Hicks [told the ARRL in 2001](#) that his Santa's Workshop has been a great ham radio recruiting tool. One of his most memorable experiences was when a young girl he'd once spoken with on the air as Santa came by with her ham ticket in hand to thank him in person for getting her interested. "I had tears in my eyes, of course," he said. Mark Slater, WI6J --Hicks' QSL manager -- said Hicks was an avid DXer, contester and rag chewer: "He had a passion for radio and making new friends through the hobby he enjoyed so much. Mickey will be greatly missed." Slater said that he will continue to confirm WO6T/W6S QSL requests "indefinitely." Hicks, of Bakersfield, California, was a member of the ARRL A-1 Operator Club and a long-time member of the ARRL, the Northern California DX Foundation, the Central Valley DX Club and the Kern County Central Valley Amateur Radio Club.



President's Pen Continued

Check the ntms-hsmm Yahoo group for more info or see the item posted on the K5QHD group. I will attend the overview and the hands-on session.

Club meeting this month on the 24th. Speaker is Dick Sander K5QY on phased antennas. See you there.

73,
Bill



HMMM... Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The ceremony wasn't much, but the reception was excellent.



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INTERNET:

See us at <http://www.k5qhd.org>
 also on Yahoo groups

Newsletter:

The Arclite is published monthly for the members of the Garland Amateur Radio Club. The contents of this newsletter are copyrighted the date of publication, but may be reprinted without permission in any Amateur Radio Publication provided proper credit is given and the motive is the advancement of amateur radio. The deadline for Arclite materials is the 3rd weekend of each month.

MEMBERSHIP:

Membership forms are available at the GARC monthly meetings or the GARC website. Members can be voted in at each meeting. Club Rosters for non commercial uses can be obtained by club members by contacting a board member.



The first Wednesday of each month are the emergency warning siren tests in Garland and Rowlett. Ham operators are needed to visually inspect the sirens and report on their operation. You need not be affiliated with RACES to perform these tests and you can do either the Garland test at noon or the Rowlett test at 1 pm or both. Siren locations and signup are on the Rowlett RACES web site <http://www.rowletttraces.us/> or you can e-mail Ian DiFranco KE5FOM at ian.difranco@verizon.net.

As always, public service event information can be found on the web at John Galvin's public service web page at <http://www.qsl.net/>



GARC July 2009 Meeting Minutes

The July GARC Meeting was called to order by Bill Engle K5DHY on the 27th at 7:32 with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Bob Jones W5BJ. Introductions were made and we were pleased to have a couple of guests. The minutes were approved as printed and the Board members made their reports. Swank will probably be out of commission recuperating for another month or so and Alan Yoder is also having some health issues so keep both of them in your thoughts and prayers. There are a large number of events coming up, so be sure and check out all of N5TIM John Galvin's public service requests available from the club website (www.k5qhd.org). Be sure you have activated your Kroger PLUS card and have signed up with Tom Thumb for their public involvement contribution program. There was some work done on the Weather Station at the July third Saturday morning get together and hopefully mounting it upon the tower at the ECC for those of you who can show up on Saturday, Aug 15. There was a vote on spending about \$320 for club liability insurance, which passed. Larry Essary KX5G gave a very informative program on Grounding- why, how and where.

The August Board Meeting was held on Saturday the 8th at 9AM. There are some minor problems with the repeater PL tone that are being worked.. Bob Brunskill, KC5GMZ reported on the treasury and wanted to thank Wayne Dalton for his contribution to the Repeater Fund. We discussed the lack of a great response for the annual October auction and it was decided to have a table in the back of the room for each monthly meeting. We would like to continue the tradition of donating 10% of any sales made back to the club. The Citizens Firefighter's Club has a "Pancakes with Santa" event in December at the Garland Fire Department Central Station and we have been asked, and readily accepted, to the offer to open our ECC and have a "get on the air" in conjunction with their breakfast. There was some rag chewing about towers and antennas that various members are in different stages of putting up. The large dead back-up batteries have been removed from the ECC and replacements are being negotiated. Mesquite is having "Preparedness At the Park" 5 PM on September 12 at Travis Williams Athletic Complex. Details can be found at <http://cityofmesquite.com/documents/mainstream2009-8.pdf>

Respectfully Submitted, Lowell Allen, Jr. KD5RFD



Emergency Ham Radio Portable Go-Kit

Posted by [I.besing](#)

Published in [Bragging Rights](#), [Disaster Preparedness](#)

((Reprinted with premission, <http://www.reactintl.org/blog/?p=372>))

Once upon a time, in a department store not so far away, were some lonely Stanley Mobile Work Centers who dreamed of becoming more than just a rolling toolbox when they grew up. Fortunately for one of them, one day a ham radio operator strolled down the aisle and said "this little guy would make a fantastic portable emergency ham radio go-kit!" That ham radio operator bought the Mobile Work Center and took it home to be modified. This is its story...

Seriously however, this rolling toolbox (Stanley Model #01880H) was chosen because of cost and several physical factors. The low cost was a bonus, about \$20 at multiple locations including Home Depot and Wal-Mart. I've seen this unit offered on eBay for more than twice the price, plus shipping.

Physical factors include being a one-piece molded heavy duty vinyl, not two separate pieces latched together like some of the other toolboxes were. This means the bottom is not as likely to fall off when you pick it up. **The attached wheels were heavy duty and the axle was a one piece solid steel rod that ran from wheel to wheel.** In other words, the wheels were not simply attached to each side, and thus it would hold up better over the life of the project.

Access to the bottom half was via a sliding front door, very convenient to be able to drop in some batteries and other items as we'll later describe and show photos of, and close when access wasn't desired. The heavy vinyl construction was easy to drill with my cordless drill, or cut using a heavy box cutter, when installing items in the side that required holes.

The top half can serve as a toolbox including a parts lid or have room to install a radio and other items. I chose to use it as a toolbox with parts lid for storage, and place my radio(s) outside the unit on a folding table for actual operations. Because the handle to lift the unit, or roll the unit was integral to the lid, and thus only connected via the rear hinge and two front clips, I used a metal carabineer clip to act as a safety clip just in case the clips decided to fail and pop the lid when least convenient. Okay, now on to the project!

Portable radio operation requires power from someplace; like a



AREA VEC TEST

27-Aug-2009
Sponsor: K8DNE VE TEAM
Time: 7:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: WILLIAM H REYNOLDS
(972)475-3854
Email: WH.REYNOLDS@VERIZON.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: FREEMAN HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH
1120 N GARLAND AVE
BETWEEN WALNUT & BUCKINGHAM
GARLAND, TX 75040

12-Sep-2009
Sponsor: DALLAS ARC
Time: 9:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: LARRY W HERRING
(214)614-8980
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: BUSINESS JET CENTER
8611 LEMMON AVENUE
2ND FLOOR CAFETERIA
DALLAS, TX 75209

13-Sep-2009
Sponsor: NORTH TEXAS VE TEAM
Time: 2:00 PM (No walk-ins)
Contact: RICHARD M RAITT
(972)881-0380
Email: WA5VKS@WT.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: 4TH HOUSE ON LEFT EAST OF AVENUE P
1713 ARMSTRONG DR
PRE-REG 24 HRS AHEAD OF TIME
PLANO, TX 75074

19-Sep-2009
Sponsor: IRVING ARC
Time: 8:30 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: CHARLES J BEAUPRE
(972)745-8456

Public Service September and beyond

Saturday, September 26 is the 2009 Junior Diabetes Expanded 3 Walk Event (One Day - 3 Walks - 3 Locations - Simultaneously!) Thanks to the great job the Amateur Radio Community has done supporting the Dallas JDRF walk in the past few years, we have been asked this year to expand our involvement and provide communications for all the Dallas and Collin County JDRF Walks! In addition, the Dallas walk has outgrown the AA Center and is being split into two walks, one along the Katy Trail starting at the AA Center and another larger walk at a second location in Los Colinas on the combined Birds Fort Trail and Spring Trail Parks. Contact Steve Darrah at jsdarrah@verizon.net to sign up for the Los Colinas Walk. The Collin County Walk starts at the Granite Park location near HWY 121 and the Tollway. Contact Tony Campbell at w5adc@yahoo.com to sign up for the Collin County walk. All three walks are 5K in length. As two of the walks are on trails, this will present some new challenges and opportunities for the operators, one example are the possible uses of bicycles or foot operators for lead and tail positions on the trail courses. Each walk will have between 3-4 rest stops to support and numerous shadow positions. It's too early to tell for sure but we hope most all positions can use HT's. We are in need of a lot more volunteers this year to cover all three simultaneous s walks, the AA center walk has needed about 16-18 operators each year and it's likely the two additional walks will need close to those numbers as well. Each walk will require a site communications coordinator and net control so if you have an interest in helping to assist with the planning and execution of these events or filling a net control position please let me know as soon as possible. For more information please contact John Will at w5ej@arrl.net or phone 214-316-5563.

Wish 100 - Make-A-Wish Foundation Bike Rally Greetings fellow Hams and public service enthusiasts of Allen, Frisco, Plano, Carrollton/Hebron, Richardson and other surrounding communities, A new bike rally has come to town. This rally begins at the Frito Lay campus in Plano and travels around the southwest portion of Collin County.

What? 100K or 10, 30 and 45 mile routes.

When? October 3, 2009

Where? Plano, Texas

Why? To help us grant wishes for children battling life-threatening medical conditions

Here's a great opportunity for persons along the route to work in a familiar setting and get the youth and family involved.

If you would like to work the event, please follow this link and fill out the information asked for and you will receive an acknowledgment shortly thereafter: Please visit: <http://wish100.org> for more event information

The event organizers and I thank you in advance.

Chadwick Stelzl-KD5UMO

www.k5prk.org
www.qsl.net/n5tim

Friday, December 4 is the Garland Christmas on the Square. No parade but we will need the usual switch operators. Rehearsal is on the third. Contact Clay Orchard at kc5mxn@verizon.net.

Sunday, December 13 is the Dallas White Rock Marathon. Save the date. More detail information coming soon. If you want to reserve your position from 2008, sign up on our Marathon Yahoo Group page and email Bob Jones, W5BJ at w5bj@arrl.net. You can also use the web signup form at <http://www.qsl.net/n5tim/whtrock.html>. As this event grows we most definately need more communicators each year. At minimum you need to be a Communications Resource Function S. All current and prospective Marathon Communicators can stay up to date, post activity reports, download files and ask questions regarding any aspect of Marathon Communications via the yahoo group <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/d-wrm/>.

The first Wednesday of each month are the emergency warning siren tests in Garland and Rowlett. Ham operators are needed to visually inspect the sirens and report on their operation. You need not be affiliated with RACES to perform these tests and you can do either the Garland test at noon or the Rowlett test at 1 pm or both. Siren locations and signup are on the Rowlett RACES web site <http://www.rowletttraces.us/> or you can e-mail Ian DiFranco KE5FOM at ian.difranco@verizon.net.

As always, public service event information can be found on the web at John Galvin's public service we page at <http://www.qsl.net/n5tim/uplist.html>.



Email: CBNETT1@SBCGLOBAL.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: BETCHA BINGO #2/MAPSCO 31A-Q
2420 W IRVING BLVD
MAY CALL DENNIS @ 972-255-8187
OR: DOYLE@ 972-579-9089
IRVING, TX 75061

19-Sep-2009
Sponsor: PLANO AMATEUR RADIO TESTING
Time: 1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: JOHN C SCANLAN
(972)442-2592
Email: JOHN.SCANLAN2@VERIZON.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: WYLIE METHODIST CHURCH
1401 FM 1378
WYLIE, TX 75098

24-Sep-2009
Sponsor: K8DNE VE TEAM
Time: 7:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: WILLIAM H REYNOLDS
(972)475-3854
Email: WH.REYNOLDS@VERIZON.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: FREEMAN HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH
1120 N GARLAND AVE
BETWEEN WALNUT & BUCKINGHAM
GARLAND, TX 75040

Go Kit Continued from page 3

battery, generator or a really long extension cord. You could use one or more 12 volt marine batteries, car batteries, sealed lead acid batteries, or gas power electric generator (don't forget to bring extra fuel). There are lots of choices, each with their own advantage or disadvantage.

I knew a local ham operator who had a source of slightly used 28 amp hour 12 volt sealed lead acid batteries that he offering for \$25 each. I bought two of them to put into the bottom of my kit **hooked in parallel** to provide 56 amp hours of 12vdc service. You can find these types of batteries new from www.batteriesplus.com or other sources because they are used in most UPS (Uninterruptable Power Supply) to supply the power for them.

That same ham (Bob K5AUW) had designed a home-brew charging circuit that would allow simultaneously charging the batteries while providing power to the radios or other devices, as long as there was an external source of 12vdc power. When the internal 12vdc power supply is turned on, it charges both the batteries and runs the radio, when off, the radios run from the batteries automatically.

That's a topic for a different post, but if you [contact me direct](#), I will email you the circuit diagram.

I added a sheet of plastic corrugated board (like you make political yard signs out of) to lay on top of the batteries, thus protecting them from shorting out accidentally if something metallic got dropped into the box. I insulated the terminals with electrical tape just in case, but the plastic liner looked good and allowed me to use the extra area for storage of extension cords, etc.

I exclusively used Anderson Power Pole connectors for the majority of my connections, other than the direct connections to the batteries and switches. The cables from the battery all had Anderson Power Pole connectors, then connected to the charging circuit and then to the external 12vdc connector block (described below) and to the internal 12vdc power supply.

To provide my 12vdc power, I bought a Pyramid 30 amp 12vdc power supply from Amazon.com for \$69.99 (with free shipping). I had shopped around multiple sources, and chose this unit for three reasons, the small size (flat rectangular that would fit behind the batteries), light weight, and reasonable price (plus free shipping). I installed it using double faced mounting tape and stuck it to the inside back of the bottom compartment, behind the batteries and above the axle area. It fit perfectly just as I had hoped it would.



Hi Swank,

We've received your sweepstakes entry into the Connect One Instant Win and Sweepstakes. For your best chance to win, come back to

<http://capitalone.promo.eprize.com/connect/>

and play daily for another chance to instantly win a \$25 donation to the non-profit of your choice! Each day you visit you'll earn a sweepstakes entry toward the \$10,000 grand prize for the non-profit of your choice!

Good luck!



I added a 2-outlet 12vdc power plug to let me use cigarette lighter style power plugs (like the one connected to my DC-AC power converter).

I mounted a 300 watt DC-AC power converter upside down inside the roof of the bottom compartment by drilling 4 mounting screw holes and screwing them in from the top compartment. I used this unit because I already owned it, but if I was going to buy one, I'd get one of the larger capacity units (1000+ watt) on sale from Harbor Freight or other store. Recently another local ham bought a 375 watt unit at a Hamfest for \$20, so keep your eyes open for bargains. I use the converter to provide temp AC power in the field to charge my portable radios or run my laptop computer, etc. It can't handle much of a load, depending upon the size converter installed, so be cautious what you plug into it.

Don't use a surge strip plugged into your converter, because it will cause problems. I promise. Something about the sine wave conversion of power by the converter messes up that surge function. Using a non-surge power strip is okay, but don't use a surge strip with the converter output.

You can use, and should use, a surge strip between your external AC source and the power supply, to protect it and to allow powering other AC devices without needing to use the internal converter. You can't run the 12vdc power supply **from** the converter to charge the batteries and run the radios and run the converter at the same time.

Perpetual energy doesn't work, I tried it. You could also set up and connect solar charger panels to trickle charge the batteries during daytime operations, but I didn't have that option.

Because it was inconvenient to always be reaching under to plug or unplug AC cords from the converter, I decided to install external power jacks on the outside of the box, and use a short extension cord to connect from the converter to that box. I went to Home Depot and bought the plastic outlet box, weatherproof lid, and other parts to install.

Now I could simply plug into the outside of the toolbox to get power. I added an inline overload fuse (from an old UPS) and an on/off illuminated rocker switch (from Radio Shack #275-013) to turn on the converter when needed.

I also installed a Red-Dee-2 Power Connector (PS8) from www.DCPWR.com to provide the ability to plug up to four (4) exterior Anderson Power Pole equipped cords to obtain 12 vdc power from the outside, for about \$28 plus shipping. I added some plastic clips to create a sort of strain relief mechanism for the cords, but that adhesive tape isn't holding up.

Because I wanted to keep an eye on the voltage of my batteries



Stanley Mobile Work Center Go Kit Continued

when not using AC power to keep them charged, I found a battery monitor from Harbor Freight that only cost \$4.95. I put Anderson Power Poles on it and used Velcro to attach it to the outside above the power outlets. Push the button and the LED's light up to indicate the state of charge or if it needs recharged. Yes, there are several other more expensive gadgets from West Mountain Radio or other sources that show you live readings with LED displays, but this was cheap and how often do you need to check it, anyway? When not in use, it gets put back inside the box for storage.

I added an external fan like you would find on a PC computer case because I was concerned about heat inside the lower compartment with 2 batteries, charging circuit, 12 volt DC power supply and DC-AC power converter. Yes, I could leave the door open, but I was concerned about rain. So I installed the fan and then added some flexible plastic that I cut to shape from something I had bought recently, and attached it so that the air could still blow outward, but rain was unlikely to blow in. I don't plan to operate this unprotected in the rain, but I wanted it to be reasonably rain resistant.

Okay, at this stage, I had all the external power outlets on one side of the toolbox, and the fan on the other side. Everything was mounted semi-permanently inside the box to avoid shifting around during transport by using double face tape or Velcro. Hard Styrofoam was placed between the batteries to keep them from shifting when the unit was being wheeled around.

It was time for the finishing touches. I added an exterior hook to hang a microphone on the front of the box, just in case, and I decided to decorate the exterior with reflective tape for safety purposes, to increase visibility during night operations and to spiff up the looks a bit. I added some decals to identify it as a REACT piece of equipment since I'm a REACT member, and added one of the logos from a mag sign that I use on my van when I'm doing the "turtle" function (bringing up the rear after the last rider / runner) at bike-a-thon or run-a-thon events. I also used my label maker to properly label all the cables inside, and all the connectors outside, so that folks would know what was what, and I'd remember it myself 6 months from now.

I'm using a portable home-brew 2 mtr on a tripod mount and a home-brew HF antenna with this kit, both antennas were built based on ideas found at www.w2ik.com. I currently store a 50 watt 2 mtr ham radio in the toolbox at all times, with extra coax for the antenna for faster deployment. I also carry a portable mag mount 2 meter antenna for quick operations. Antennas will be the topic of a different article a bit later on.

Tags: [Amateur Radio](#), [Emergency go-kit](#), [N5NTG](#)



ARRL President Harrison presents League's views on distracted driving laws

To ensure that Amateur Radio is not an unintended victim of the growing public debate over what to do about distracted drivers, ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, has written a letter to the National Safety Council (NSC), highlighting issues regarding the use of Amateur Radio emergency communications devices in vehicles http://www.arrl.org/news/files/NSC_Letter7-30-09.pdf.

Many states have outlawed the use of cell phones while driving; some states with these laws have ambiguous wording (such as "mobile communication devices" or "mobile electronic devices") concerning the use of Amateur Radio while driving.

According to their Web site, the NSC is "on a mission" to "alert the American public that different kinds of distractions have different levels of crash risk. Talking on a cell phone and sending text messages are much higher risk activities that occur for longer durations and with more people than most other actions engaged in while driving." They also seek to "lead a change in our nation's cultural norms, so people come to view cell phone conversations and text messaging while driving as unsafe and socially unacceptable. Calling for a legislative ban on these activities is the first step in a long-term process to educate Americans to their risk and change the culture".

Harrison explained to NSC President Janet Froetscher that Amateur Radio operators provide essential emergency communications when regular communications channels are disrupted by disaster: "Through formal agreements with federal agencies, such as the National Weather Service, FEMA and private relief organizations, the Amateur Radio volunteers protect lives using their own equipment without compensation. The ability of hams to communicate and help protect the lives of those in danger would be strictly hindered if the federal, state and local governments to not ensure that Amateur Radio operators can continue the use of their mobile radios while on the road."

According to ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, it boils down to the difference between simplex -- when only one message can be sent in either direction at one time -- and duplex -- a communications mode, such as a telephone system, that provides simultaneous transmission and reception in both directions.

Harrison, citing Sumner's 40-plus years of experience as an Amateur Radio operator, puts it this way: "Simplex, two-way radio operation is simply different than duplex, cell phone use. Two-way radio operation in moving vehicles has been going on for decades without highway safety being an issue. The fact that cell phones have come along does not change that."

Harrison attached a copy of the ARRL's Policy Statement on Mobile Amateur Radio Operation to the letter to the NSC. "Amateur Radio mobile operation is ubiquitous, and Amateur Radio emergency and public service communications, and other organized Amateur Radio communications activities and networks necessitate operation of equipment while some licensees are driving motor vehicles," the Policy Statement reads.

"Two-way radio use is dissimilar from full-duplex cellular telephone communications because the operator spends little time actually transmitting; the time spent listening is more similar to, and arguably less distracting than, listening to a broadcast radio, CD or MP3 player.

There are no distinctions to be made between or among Amateur Radio, public safety land mobile radio, private land mobile radio or citizen's radio in terms of driver distraction. All are distinguishable from mobile cellular telephone communications in this respect.

"Nevertheless, ARRL encourages licensees to conduct Amateur communications from motor vehicles in a manner that does not detract from the safe and attentive operation of a motor vehicle at all times."

See the Policy Statement on the ARRL Web site:

<http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/MobileAmateurRadioPolicyStatement.pdf>

Source: [The American Radio Relay League](#)



I added an illuminated on/off rocker switch (Radio Shack #275-013) to turn the fan on/off from the outside, then discovered that it could turn on accidentally very easily. So I cut a small 1" piece off a PVC pipe to glue around the switch, so that you had to reach inside the pipe to turn it on or off on purpose.