

Houston Echo Society Meeting
American Red Cross Building
June 12, 2006

Officers & Chairs

√_ President Marty Blaise, AG5T
√_ Vice President, Paul Rubin, N8NOV
√_ Treasurer Richard Banks, WC5O
√_ Correspondence Secretary Mike Nault, W5OFT
√_ Recording Secretary Lee Gaspard, WA5QXE
√_ Parliamentarian Phil Swartztrauber, W5GCT
√_ Web master Michael Urich, KA5CVH
__ Membership Chair B. Frank Secor, Jr., KB5VSY
√_ Newsletter Editor Frank Robichaux, N5EJX

Members and Visitors Present

Name	Call Sign	ARRL Member?
Howard Bingham	KE5APJ	YES
Charles Birkhead	AD5VQ	Yes
Marty Blaise	AG5T	YES
Mike Davidson	N5MT	YES
Lee Gaspard	WA5QXE	YES
Colin Jenkins	KU5B	Yes
Joe Judah		
Franz Laugermann	K3FL	YES
Kent Marshall	W5TXV	YES
Mike Martin	K5LAW	No
Charlie Matthew	N0XFD	Yes
Jeff McMillin	KE5BRC	No
John Moore	KK5NU	No
Paul Rubin	N8NOV	YES
Brian D. Shircliffe	AD5OS	Yes
Mark Tyler	K5GQ	YES
Michael Urich	KA5CVH	YES

The meeting was called to order approximately 7:15pm.

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Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Reading & Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Presentation – Video “Field Day Fever!”
- Field Day Coordinator – Charlie Matthew, N0XFD
- Q & A about Field Day
- Old Business
 - Announcements
 - Correspondence
 - Status of Repeaters
 - Web site and Newsletter
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Discussion of Field Day results
- New Business
 - Other business – Buying or Fixing 147.08 repeater
- Projects/ Demonstrations
- Adjourn

Welcome

We went around the room and everyone introduced himself or herself. Marty gave a brief account of his recent visit to the ham club in Albuquerque, NM, and the learning that he carried away was “be friendly to club visitors!”

Approval of Minutes

Lee had not prepared the minutes of the previous meeting. He should have a two-for next meeting.

Presentation

- Charlie Matthew, N0XFD, spoke about his involvement in the British Petroleum sponsored MS-150 Bicycle Ride to Austin for 2006, and showed pictures that he had taken of the event as a slide show. While there are many opportunities to volunteer with the MS-150 ranging from net control, staffing check-points, SAG wagons, and medical vehicles, Charlie focused on the role of the SAG wagon volunteer.
 - The MS-150 is the largest Multiple Sclerosis fund-raising bike ride in the US. This year, the participation was capped at 17,000 riders. Over 5,000 volunteers came together to raise \$11.1 million in aid to fight MS. Information about the MS-150 can be obtained from two web sites: <http://www.houstonhams.org/> or <http://www.ms150.org/ms150/>.
 - Radio volunteers start at 4 am on Saturday morning at the Highway 6 Park and Ride lot. Hams need a VHF or VHF/UHF mobile radio that has at least 25 watt capability to be able to raise the in-route repeaters from some of the “out-in-the-country” spots the ride traverses.
 - Charlie spoke that for the past two years he has staffed one of the many SAG (support and gear) vehicles. There are a number of communications systems that are installed in the SAG wagons to make it effective in the race context – including the Amateur Radio VHF/ UHF radios, APRS to identify vehicle location, Multi-Use Radios [MUR Radios are used around the rest stops/

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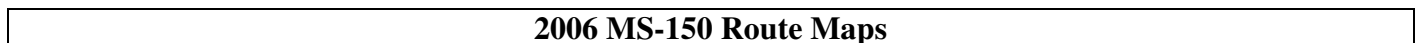
break areas], and Family Radio Service (FRS Radios) that are also used around break points and rider-to-rider communications.

- This year’s there were 75 SAG wagons used, hence a need for a large number of Amateur Radio volunteers.
- Charlie showed us his home-brewed mounting shelf/ box that all his radio fit. Charlie spoke of the need to unitize the radios and protect other vehicle riders from injury on the wires and “things.” Having a unitized radio package afforded organization and minimized the difficulty in setting up the radio systems at 4 am in the morning too!
- Charlie’s installation had two power runs to the battery each with battery clips and an auto fuse per connection for protection.
- All medical vehicles had Amateur Packet Radio Service (APRS) & Global Position System (GPS) equipment installed to that continuous reporting of medical vehicles’ position made their whereabouts known at the headquarter locations. Some of the key SAG wagons were also equipped with APRS units. Medical unit’s nick names are “Sick Puppies.”
- The Houston based MS-150 Event Control Center has links to all repeaters along the route either by linked radio, ECHO Link, or IRLP (Internet Radio Linking Protocol) connections.
- Useful information is shown below:

Frequency Plans for Non-Amateur Radio Units

Multi-Use Radio	http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/index.htm?job=service_home&id=multi_use	Family Radio Service	http://wireless.fcc.gov/service_s/index.htm?job=service_home&id=family
Frequencies	Authorized Bandwidth	Channel	Frequency (MHz)
151.820 MHz	11.25 KHz	1	462.5625
151.880 MHz	11.25 KHz	2	462.5875
151.940 MHz	11.25 KHz	3	462.6125
154.570 MHz	20.0 KHz	4	462.6375
154.600 MHz	20.0 KHz	5	462.6625
		6	462.6875
		7	462.7125
		8	467.5625
		9	467.5875
		10	467.6125
		11	467.6375
		12	467.6625
		13	467.6875
		14	467.7125

2006 MS-150 Route Maps





BP MS150 Bike Route - Saturday April 22, 2006



BP MS150 Bike Route - Sunday April 23, 2006

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Announcements:

- Field Day is the last “full” weekend in June. The dates are June 24 & 25, 2006.

Old Business

- Treasurer’s report: Lee gave a report that he had deposited the \$120 that had been collected in dues at the May meeting and when added to the \$3,212.86 reported by Richard Banks (WC5O) Echo should have \$3332.86 in the Bank. Richard has moved to Lockhart, TX and Marty has Richard’s email should anyone need to contact him.,
- Repeaters Reports: Replacement repeater hardware for 147.08 Repeater: Kent Marshall reported that he had gotten an estimate to convert the repeater as he proposed last meeting. The estimate was for 16 hours of work to integrate the repeater and controller at a rate of \$ 20/ hour. Kent estimated that the total labor was in the order of \$320 and a new crystals for the unit approximately \$20. Some other miscellaneous cost may be required, but it appeared we could have this unit setup for less than \$400.

Previously, Kent has discussed the fact that he had two Motorola repeaters units that needed crystals for the ham band and an interface to an existing controller or new controller to make operational. These repeaters were taken out of commercial service and were approximately 10 years old. This unit is less than half as old as our existing repeaters. Kent proposed going to a commercial shop and have them integrate our existing S-COM 6K controller with this commercial unit.

Lee Gaspard moved that we pursue the conversion used repeater for 147.08 replacement as Kent proposed and set a limit of \$400. Charlie, N0XFD, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- Lee, WA5QXE, reported that 147.08 back-up repeater is still being repaired. He has fixed the loose ground in power supply and cleaned up the RF transmitter deck. However, there was still some noise being introduced into the system that he has not found to date.
- Charlie Matthew lead a FD 2006 planning discussion as Field Day Coordinator
 - Charlie’s FD slide presentation covered the proposed setup and operator positions of the W5ECO 3F-STX station and the GOTA setup, N0XFD at the **Red Cross Houston Chapter House Radio room** and nearby secretarial desk, barring any early season hurricanes or other disasters that would affect the location’s availability
 - We again are planning to operate **3F** using **SSB/ CW/ and Digital Modes**
 - This year, Charlie continued, emphasizes the **G.O.T.A. station** and bonus.
 - Field Red Cross contact numbers:
713-313-5319, 5320, 5321
Talk-in will be on 147.00 repeater or 146.52 simplex
- Field Day Needs:
 - Wednesday, June 14 - Red Cross Communications Room cleanup day (5 pm till dark)
 - Monday & Wednesday, June 19 & 21 – more clean-up (5 pm till dark)
 - June 20 – pick up antennas from Kent Marshall
 - BBQ Grill & some food to cook on the grill!
 - SSB station captain
 - Public Relations table captain
 - Crew to arrive at 8 am on Saturday to set up antennas {1800 UTC}
 - Crew to clean up on Sunday afternoon about 1 – 2 pm

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- Copy of field day messages.

New Business

- None

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm after a motion was made by Frank Robichaux & seconded by Jeff Beniretto.