



Monthly ECHO

Volume 10, Issue 2

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February 2010

GENERAL MEETING

2nd Monday of the Month
7:00 P.M.

American Red Cross
2700 SW Freeway
Houston, TX 77098

PRE MEETIN EATIN

Goode Company
Mexican Restaurant
(s.w. corner kirby/westpark)
Meet at 5:30-5:45 P.M.
(same night as club meeting)

MAILING ADDRESS

Houston ECHO Society
717 East 8th Street
Houston, TX 77007-1719

WEB PAGE

www.w5eco.org

2009 Club Officers

President

Marty Blaise—AG5T
aq5t@ar1.net

Vice-President

Lee Gaspard—WA5QXE
wa5qxe@ar1.net

Correspondence Secretary

Newsletter Editor
Charlie Matthew—N0XFD
n0xfd@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary

Mike Urich—KA5CVH
ka5cvh@gamil.com

Treasurer

Mike Nault—W5OFT
w5oft@earthlink.net

Parliamentarian

—open—

MARCH Meeting

2010 ECHO Officer Elections

MONDAY—March 8

The 2010 officer elections for the Houston ECHO Society will take place on Monday, March 8 at 7pm at the Houston Red Cross, 2700 S.W. Freeway. Nominations were not finalized at the February meeting and remain open for additions at the March meeting.

The following officer positions are elected:

- *President
- *Vice-President
- *Treasure
- *Recording Secretary
- *Corresponding Secretary

*Parliamentarian

All current ECHO Society Members are eligible for nomination / election. Interested ECHO members may be nominated by any club member as well as by self nomination. More detailed information regarding the election process can be found in the ECHO Society By-Laws, a copy is available on the ECHO website:

www.w5eco.org

2010 Club Dues Now Due

RENEW Your Membership Today!

(only \$20 / year)

Coming Next Month...

Greater Houston Hamfest

Houston Marathon 2010 Recap

January marked another great Chevron Houston Marathon off the list. The Amateur Radio Community was again out in force to support this large public service event. Amateur Radio supports a number of communication needs including supply management, medical response, and key vehicle tracking.

Several members of the Houston ECHO Society were among the many Amateur Radio operators that lent a hand. Lee Gaspard-WA5QXE again reprised his role as net control operator for the 5k run, a position he has staffed for many years.



NEXT MEETING

MONDAY

March 8

7:00 P.M.

License Exams

The Houston ECHO Society sponsors VE Testing on the 1st Saturday and 4th Tuesday of each month. Sessions are held at the American Red Cross building at 2700 SW Freeway (Hwy 59). This is just west of Kirby Drive on the west bound feeder road.

1st Saturday — 9:00 A.M.
4th Tuesday — 7:00 P.M.

Please check the ARRL Web Site under "Licensing" and do a search for tests using the zip code of 77098 to verify dates, as some dates are skipped.

Franz Laugermann—K3FL is the coordinator of these sessions and can be reached at the following e-mail:

franzlaugerman@sbcglobal.net

December Test Update: 6 Technician, 4 General, and 2 Extra Class exams were administered.

Upcoming Meeting Presentations

MARCH	ARES Update & Opportunities Jeff Walter—KE5FGA
APRIL	Equipment and Setups for Public Service Events Charlie Matthew—NOXFD
MAY	—to be determined—
JUNE	—to be determined—

Schedule of meeting presentations is subject to change. Are you interested or know someone who would be interested in presenting a topic at an upcoming ECHO meeting? E-mail Lee Gaspard—WA5QXE wa5qxe@arrl.net

From the Editor...

Charlie Matthew NOXFD

Newsletter submissions are always appreciated and encouraged. You do not need to be a member of ECHO to submit an article or just pictures of a recent event you participated in.

Please send newsletter submissions to:

Charlie Matthew—NOXFD n0xfd@yahoo.com

Public Service Events

The following is a compiled list of known Public Service operating opportunities for the coming months. These events are a great way to get some hands on experience in operating your radio in a net environment, you also have some great fun. Additional updates on upcoming events can also be found on the BVARC web page at: <http://www.bvarc.org/publicservice.php>

MARCH 13 — SATURDAY—5am Meet Brookwood Benefit Ride, Brookshire
 15 operators Denny's, I-10/Fry Road
 Talk-in: 444.075+ t103.5
 Mike Hardwick 713-826-6917

MARCH 20 — SATURDAY—5am Meet B-geO Magnolia Miles Bike Ride
 15 operators Denny's, Tomball/FM2920
 Talk-in: 146.720 t123.0
 George O'brien 202-552-1760

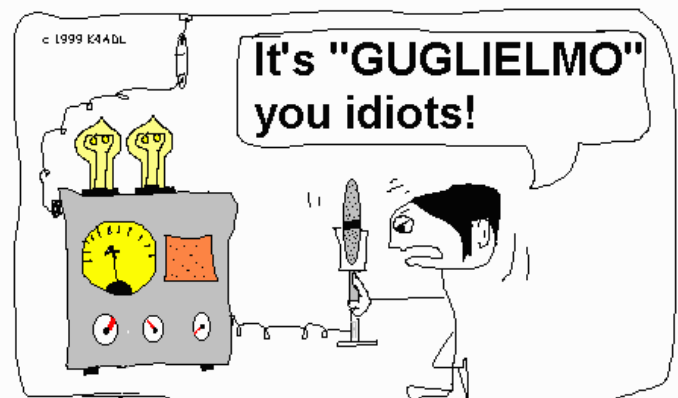


MARCH 28 — SUNDAY—4:45am Meet Bluebonnet Express, Hempstead
 15 operators Denny's, FM 1960/Hwy 290
 Talk-in: 444.075+ t103.5
 Mike Hardwick 713-826-6917

APRIL 17-18 — SATURDAY / SUNDAY BP MS150
 150 Operators
 Metro Park-n-Ride, Hwy 6/Interstate 10
 Talk-in: 444.600 t71.9
 Mike Hardwick 713-826-6917



MAY 2 — SUNDAY Tour Du Rouge—Day One Ride
 35 Operators
 Humble Civic Center, Will Clayton Pkwy
 Talk-in: 147.000 t103.5
 Charlie Matthew 713-498-9802 n0xfd@yahoo.com



THE ONLY REASON MARCONI INVENTED WIRELESS BROADCASTING WAS TO TEACH PEOPLE HOW TO PRONOUNCE HIS FIRST NAME.

<http://www.qsl.net/k4ad/>

ECHO/ARC Amateur Radio Classes—2010

The Houston ECHO Society is again teaming up with the Disaster Services Department of the GHAC American Red Cross to offer Amateur Radio Classes. Now is the time to take a Amateur Radio Class and **FINALY** get your license or **FINALY** get that upgrade to a General Class license! Come and work through the material in a classroom setting where you can get your questions answered first hand and learn the ins and outs of Amateur Radio Communications.

All Classes are FREE of charge to attend.

COURSE INFORMATION

Detailed course information is available on the ECHO website under "Classes & Licensing" or at this [LINK](#)

HOW TO REGISTER

All participants are asked to pre-register for the class they wish to attend to insure a spot is saved for them. Walk-ins will only be accepted on the **FIRST** day of each class provided there is space available.

To register for a class please send an e-mail to: register@hamclass.n0xfd.com

Please include the following information:
Name, E-Mail Address, a Phone #, and the Class # from the Schedule.

You may alternately call 713-498-9802 and leave a message with the same information. You will receive a e-mail or phone call back to confirm your registration

TECHNICIAN CLASS

Class #: 10-003Tech

GHAC – Main Chapter Building

Saturday	Mar 20	9am-4pm	Day 1
Saturday	Mar 27	9am-4pm	Day 2

(Testing Avail 4/3 9am, 4/27 7pm @ GHAC)

TECHNICIAN CLASS

Class #: 10-004Tech

GHAC – Main Chapter Building

Tuesday	May 25	7pm-10pm	Day 1
Tuesday	Jun 1	7pm-10pm	Day 2
Tuesday	Jun 8	7pm-10pm	Day 3
Tuesday	Jun 15	7pm-10pm	Day 4

(Testing Avail 6/22 7pm @ GHAC)

TECHNICIAN CLASS

Class #: 10-006Tech

GHAC – Main Chapter Building

Monday	Sept 20	7pm-10pm	Day 1
Wednesday	Sept 22	7pm-10pm	Day 2
Monday	Sept 27	7pm-10pm	Day 3
Wednesday	Sept 29	7pm-10pm	Day 4

(Testing Avail 10/2 9am, 10/26 7pm @ GHAC)

TECHNICIAN CLASS

Class #: 10-007Tech

GHAC – Main Chapter Building

Saturday	Oct 16	9am-4pm	Day 1
Saturday	Oct 23	9am-4pm	Day 2

(Testing Avail 11/6 9am, 11/23 7pm @ GHAC)

GENERAL CLASS

Class #: 10-002Gen

GHAC – Main Chapter Building

Prerequisite – Hold Current Technician License

Wednesday	Mar 17	7pm-10pm	Day 1
Monday	Mar 22	7pm-10pm	Day 2
Wednesday	Mar 24	7pm-10pm	Day 3
Monday	Mar 29	7pm-10pm	Day 4
Wednesday	Mar 31	7pm-10pm	Day 5
Monday	Apr 5	7pm-10pm	Day 6
Wednesday	Apr 7	7pm-10pm	Day 7

(Testing Avail 4/27 7pm, 5/1 9am @ GHAC)

GENERAL CLASS

Class #: 10-005Gen

GHAC – Main Chapter Building

Prerequisite – Hold Current Technician License

Tuesday	Sept 7	7pm-10pm	Day 1
Tuesday	Sept 14	7pm-10pm	Day 2
Tuesday	Sept 21	7pm-10pm	Day 3
Tuesday	Sept 28	7pm-10pm	Day 4
Tuesday	Oct 5	7pm-10pm	Day 5
Tuesday	Oct 12	7pm-10pm	Day 6
Tuesday	Oct 19	7pm-10pm	Day 7

(Testing Avail 10/26 7pm @ GHAC)

NEW HAMS

The most recent Technician Class offered by the Houston ECHO Society and the Houston Red Cross resulted in 5 new hams. Their names and calls are as follows:

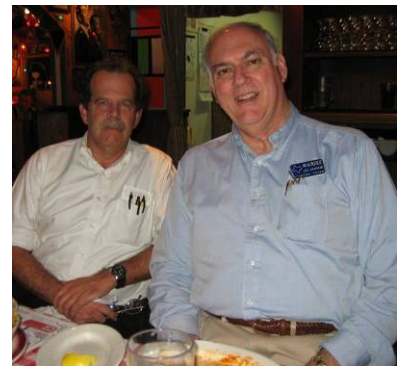
- Apolos Camarillo—KF5EXZ**
- Jerry Muller—KF5EYC**
- Nancy Warren—KF5EYE**
- Roy Clark—KF5EYA**
- Roberto Gomez—KF5EYB**

Please take a moment to welcome them to the happy if you see them at an upcoming ECHO meeting. If you would like to assist with any of the upcoming classes check out the schedule and registration information on this page.

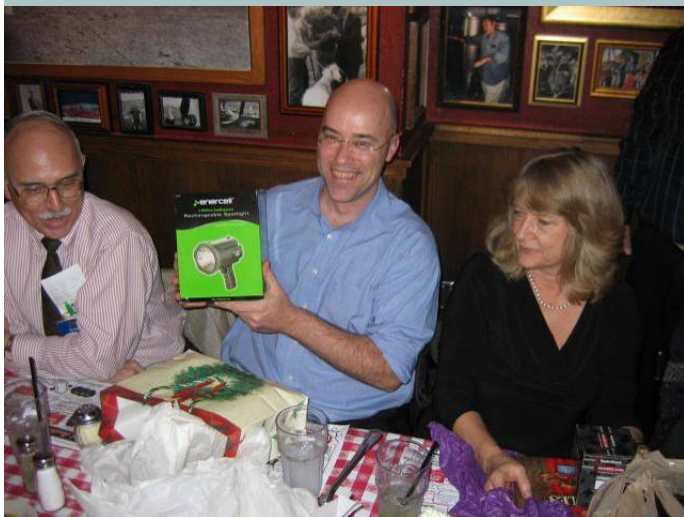
ECHO Holiday Dinner 2009

The Houston ECHO Society had its annual Holiday Dinner at Buca de Pepo again this past December. The Holiday Dinner is scheduled in place of the monthly meeting in December. The Dinner is always a great time and this year was no exception.

The highlight of the dinner is always the white elephant gift exchange. The gift selection is always an eclectic collection of items. Historically flashlights of various sizes have been a popular gift item. One year in particular more than half of the gifts were flashlights. Other examples are candies, strange books, and items your trying to get rid of.



D-Star Update



The Houston D-Star Group came together on Saturday, January 23 to discuss the current state of D-Star in the Greater Houston Area. There are currently several active D-Star repeater systems in the area that are supporting the ever growing Houston D-Star user base.

D-Star is a digital transmission protocol for voice and data that is growing in popularity on the amateur radio bands. Over the air use of D-Star is through specially designed radios that follow the D-Star protocol standard. To date, only ICOM makes any D-Star capable radios.



Alan Isaachsen-KB2WF and Mike Nault-W5OFT present a section of the D-Star update presented to the Houston D-Star Group on January 23, 2010.

Topics of discussion at the meeting included an overview of what D-Star is, an update on various repeater installations, what new products have come out, and what is coming down the pipe.

There was extended discussion regarding the advancement of the local D-Star Operator pool including how to properly provide support to those new to D-Star. Several initiatives were tossed around to include web specific content, contact lists for various radio types, and providing hands on training opportunities. D-Star operation is not a simple setup procedure. It is through these planned additional resources that the D-Star group hopes to make the path easier for those taking the D-Star plunge.

The Houston D-Star group plans to meet again on March 27, 9am at the Houston Red Cross building. For additional information on the meeting and the Houston D-Star group in General please contact:

Mike Nault-W5OFT w5oft@earthlink.net

Alan Isaachsen-KB2WF kb2wf@yahoo.com

Houston Marathon—2010

Charlie Matthew—NOXFD

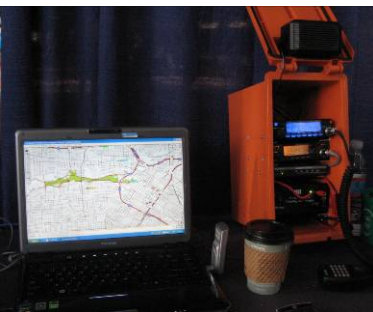
Frank Robichaux-N5EJX, Mike Urich-KA5CVH, Mike Nault-W5OFT, Mark Zentner-KE5RMA, Charlie Matthew-NOXFD and several other ECHO members were also assisting with communications support. Overall, it takes 80+ Amateur Radio Operators to staff the event, according to Carl Hacker-WC5MW lead Amateur Radio Communications Coordinator.

With such a large event the communications support effort is split across several radio nets both on repeaters and simplex. 7 repeaters were used for primary nets, with another 7 repeaters as backups. In addition, 3 simplex frequencies were in use for voice and digital operations. Through these nets and net control operators a wealth of information funneled.



Paul Owen-N5NXS staffs the primary course net for the Full and Half Marathons. Easily the most active net of the operation. The 2010 Marathon marked the 17th year that N5NXS has staffed the net control position of the course net. Through this net, supply, transportation, and medical requests are directed to the various responsible parties.

W5OFT staffed the Half Marathon Female pace vehicle and provided instant pace time information to the timing net and race officials to maintain a good situational awareness of the event. Staffing a pace vehicle involves sitting in the back of a pickup truck that drives ahead of the lead runner for a category. There are pace vehicles for the Male & Female Marathon leads and Male and Female Half Marathon leads. As the lead runner passes each mile marker the course time is recorded and then announced on the timing net. With four pace vehicles at different locations along the route the net stays quite busy at times. Fortunately through the use of a set call in procedure this information is gathered very efficiently.



Several other areas at the GRB convention center also

have APRS Map displays.

There are many other volunteer communications positions to include staffing vehicles, breakpoints, and shadowing key race officials. Recruitment for the 2011 Houston Marathon, scheduled for Sunday, January 30 (NOTE—THIS WILL BE A WEEKEND LATER THEN NORMALLY SCHEDULED), will begin in October 2009. For more information contact Carl Hacker-WC5MW at Carl.S.Hacker@uth.tmc.edu



NOXFD had the task of providing the audio of the timing net to various race officials in the media area to maintain a good situational awareness of the full and half marathons. Additionally, through the use of an APRS application, the current



9th Annual
Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club
GREATER HOUSTON HAMFEST



Hosting the
ARRL South Texas Section Convention
 Saturday, March 6, 2010 - 8 am – 1:30 pm
 Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Rosenberg, Texas

Streamlined General Admission Registration
Special Seller Parking and Easy Access
On-Line Seller Registration & Special Packet Pick-Up
On-Line Registration Info with Table Pre-selection
Free Tailgating with early buyer access

Featured Speaker – Dan Henderson, N1ND
ARRL Regulatory Information Manager

• Over 18,000 sq. feet of indoor exhibit space! • Plenty of Free Parking! • Friday evening set-up.

Programs:

- Training seminars
- Information lectures
- APRS & Satellite operation demonstrations
- DXCC checking

Camping and Lodging:

Overnight camping sites; full hook-ups

On-Site Food Available

Breakfast: 7:00 until 10:30
 Lunch: 11:00 until 1:00
 On-going snacks, coffee, soft drinks

Raffle:

GRAND PRIZE:
Yaesu FT-450-AT



HF-6M w/ DSP and Automatic Antenna Tuner

SECOND PRIZE:
AMSAT Satellite Rig



Kenwood TH-F6A Tri-Band HT w/ Arrow duplexer & antenna

Other prizes awarded every 10 – 15 minutes!

Displays & Info.:

- Emergency Vehicles
- ARRL • ARES
- AMSAT
- Live HF Station

Ham License Testing:

Testing registration starts at 8 AM; Testing at 9 and 10:30 AM.

Directions & Talk-In:

No Houston Traffic. Approx. 33 mi SW of downtown Houston. From Houston, take US 59 south to Rosenberg (approximately 17 miles past Beltway 8) to Hwy 36. Go South approx. 1 mi to Fairgrounds (on your right).
 Talk-in - 146.940 minus offset, 167.9 tone or 145.470 minus offset, 123.0 tone – Club Call KK5W

Miscellaneous:

Admission: \$5 per person - Includes 1 raffle ticket!
 Children Under 14 Free!
 Tables: All tables - \$10 pre-registration (choose tables on-line in advance)
 Electricity available to pre-registrants (no charge). On-site registrant elec. as available.
 Set-up available: Friday 4-8 PM, Saturday 6-8 AM
 Tailgate: Free – special area in main venue area. Attendees will have early access to the tailgate area.
 Raffle: Tickets - one for \$1 or six for \$5

Hamfest Location – 4200 Highway 36, Rosenberg, TX 77471 - Lat 29 31 07 Long 95 48 49
 Contact: Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z, kk2z@arrl.net, 281-639-5088



CLUB REPEATERS

147.08

- offset t103.5

147.32

- offset t100.0

224.26

UPCOMING MEETINGS & DATES

March 6 — SATURDAY, 8am
Greater Houston Hamfest
www.houstonhamfest.org
 Fort Bend County Fair Grounds
 Rosenberg, TX

March 8 — MONDAY, 7pm
Houston ECHO Society
 Monthly meeting — ELECTIONS
 Houston Red Cross Building

April 12 — MONDAY, 7pm
Houston ECHO Society
 Houston Red Cross Building

April 17-18 — Saturday/Sunday
BP MS150 Bike Tour
 Hams needed as communicators
 See the public service listing on page
 2 of this newsletter for more info

ABOUT THE HOUSTON ECHO SOCIETY

The Houston ECHO Society is a general interest amateur (ham) radio club serving greater Houston Texas and is a ARRL Special Services Club. ECHO stands for Emergency Communications by Ham Operators.

ECHO exists to provide emergency communications to various public service agencies in the greater Houston area. In order to fulfill that objective the ECHO society owns and operates repeaters that may be used in times of emergencies as well as providing a pool of trained radio operators to assist in that effort.

Because amateur radio is such a broad hobby ECHO employs the use of special interest groups, or SIG's, so that members and non-members alike may participate in common interest projects and aspects of amateur radio. ECHO offers classes, test sessions, operates repeaters, and participates in various contests such as the ARRL field day.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend our meetings, membership is not required to attend a meeting. If you would like to become a member of the Society, membership dues are only \$20 per calendar year. Please see the club treasurer at the next meeting or contact any of the club officers by e-mail (see the first page of the newsletter).



Houston ECHO Society
717 E. 8th Street
Houston, TX 77019-1719

Address Service Requested

FIRST
 CLASS
 POSTAGE
 HERE