W5AMK CTARC Central Texas Amateur Radio Club

THE Wavelength NEWSLETTER

September 2015

The Central Texas Amateur Radio Club meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Bell County Communications Center, 798 West Avenue O, in Belton

From the Editor's Desk...

Rick Murray, K6WXA

First off, I want to extend my compliments and thanks to the Terrific Twelve! You know who you are; but for those of you who may be out-of-the-loop, back in 1924, severe weather plagued the Dallas area and as a result of it the local radio club cancelled their regular monthly meeting. Instead, notices were sent out and their club conducted an on-the-air meeting instead. This past August 18th, we tried the same thing as a test-bed. Twelve members signed on and while very little business was discussed, the idea of this type of meeting was indeed proven viable. We'll try it again in December.

Then, this past August 22nd, we had a very nice luncheon get-together at *Henderson's* in Killeen, which included a nice surprise visit by Paul Molina-N5NIR, and long time CTARC member - though seldom seen, Maria Vences-KE5QGU. Good food, good service and pleasant company!

Some note worthy things coming up this month... at the top of the month, H.B. 946 which has to do with the painting of certain towers, goes into effect as law on the 1st. Those of you with Vanity Callsigns will be happy to know that as of the 3rd of this month, the FCC is doing away with the regulatory fee for applying for a vanity callsign or renewing your vanity callsign based license. The ARRL September VHF QSO Party is on the 12th through the 14th. The first day of Fall arrives on the 23rd, and NOAA's Fall Forecast Outlook is out - and the outlook is good. Then for you county hunters, the Texas QSO Party is on the 26th and 27th. Somewhere in the middle of all this, Russell-KG6FUJ will be joining the ranks of our net control operators. Also sometime this month, both the N5ZXJ and W5BEC repeaters are scheduled for maintenance and repair. The down time shouldn't be too long - keep your fingers crossed.

More on all of this, plus other fun stuff, follows in the newsletter. But first at the top of the list, we ask the question: "Do you have a crime that needs solving? Do you have a dog that needs walking? Do you have a wife that needs spanking?"

Hope to see you all at our next club meeting on Tuesday, September 1st, at 7:00 PM at the Bell County Communications Center.

73 de Rick, K6WXA

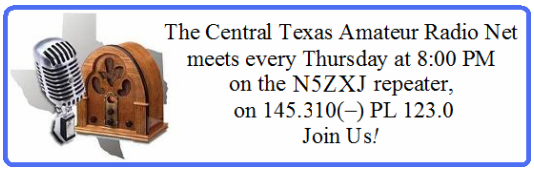
STRAYS

"Personal Notice... Do you have a crime that needs solving? Do you have a dog that needs walking? Do you have a wife that needs spanking? Danger's my stock in trade. If the job's too tough for you to handle, you've got a job for me.
- George Valentine."

Let George Do It first aired September 20, 1946 over KFRC in San Francisco.

George Valentine was an ex-G.I., who was absolutely sure what to do with himself once he returned to civilian life--He hoped to create a niche market to make money doing things other people either couldn't do for themselves, or didn't have the nerve to do on their own. He knew he wanted to make money since he was as broke as most other recently liberated G.I.'s. Portrayed as a somewhat fanciful, adventurous young man, his inherent good humor and uncharacteristically shy and unassuming--yet somewhat cynical--nature made for a very charming, albeit un-stereotypical *gumshoe*.

The program aired until January 12, 1955 with some 420 scripts in the series. You can listen in again to 186 of those episodes in the series, by visiting: https://archive.org/details/OTRR_Let_George_Do_It_Singles



September NCS & Back-Up NCS Schedule

September 3rd:	September 10th:
Net Control: W5VEX	AD5SK
Back-Up: AD5SK	KG6FUJ

September 17th:	September 24th:
Net Control: KG6FUJ	KF5OHR
Back-Up: KF5OHR	KE5ISN

September VHF QSO Party

Contest period is from 1800Z, Sept. 12th to 0300Z, Sept. 14th on all authorized amateur frequencies of 50 MHz and up. For complete information on this event please visit: http://www.arrl.org/september-vhf

Texas QSO Party

The Texas QSO party is sponsored each year by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society - W5NC - to encourage contacts between Texas amateur radio operators and amateur radio operators throughout the world. This event is also an excellent opportunity for county hunters to add to their list of Texas counties worked.

Operating times are from 1400Z, September 26th to 0200Z, September 27th with then a break and again from 1400Z to 2000Z on the 27th.

For more information, please visit: http://www.n5bia.net/txqp

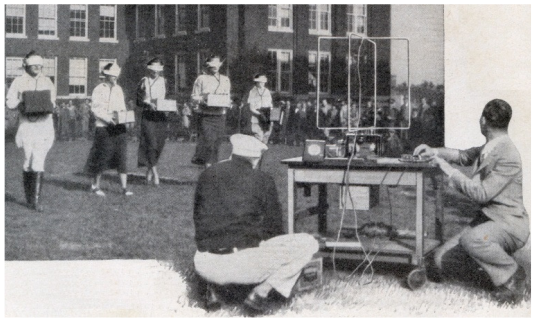
Navy-Marine Corps MARS Going QRT

The US Department of Defense is phasing out the US Navy-Marine Corps Military Auxiliary Radio System program effective the end of this month. The Navy-Marine Corps MARS will be absorbed into the US Army MARS and US Air Force MARS programs.

YL news and views

Radio Beam Guides Girls in Blindfold Race

***Popular Science* - September, 1934**

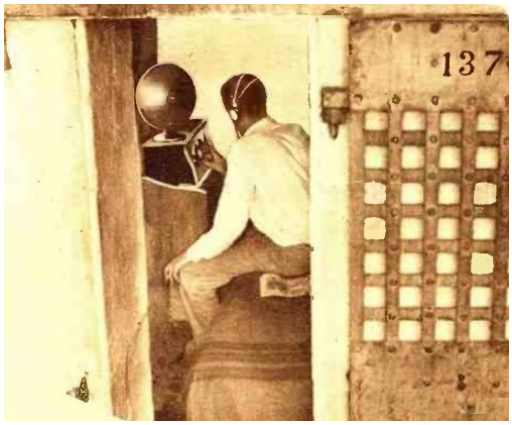


Five blindfolded co-eds at the University of Cincinnati recently competed in an odd foot race, guided only by the beams from a radio beacon set up on the campus. Each girl taking part in this unusual contest carried a small receiving set and wore earphones through which the guiding signals were heard. The signals transmitted were of two kinds like those used to guide planes on commercial airways, one indicating to the contestant that she was following the true course and the other telling her that she was wandering astray. The girls had little difficulty finding their way to the spot where the transmitting antenna had been temporarily set up.

STRAYS

Radio in Sing Sing Prison

***Radio News* - September, 1925**



Prisoners that have good records are permitted to have radio receiving sets in their cells. Many of the prisoners have built their own receivers, some of them being very elaborate affairs.

In the death house... the cells shown here are those of the old death house at Sing Sing Prison in Ossining, NY. On the warden's desk may be seen a radio receiver for the entertainment of the prisoners in the block.

> *"The radio telephone cannot be an instrument for anything but good and for that reason, if no other, every effort will be made to find its permanent place in prison life."*
> Lewis E. Lawes, Warden, Sing Sing Prison (1922)

Vanity Callsign Regulatory Fee Eliminated

The Amateur Radio vanity call sign regulatory fee is set to disappear **effective September 3rd**. According to information from the FCC, it said it was doing so to save money and personnel resources. The Commission asserted that it costs more of both to process the regulatory fees and issue refunds than the amount of the regulatory fee payment.

Emergency App

Kevin McCoy, KF5FUZ

An Emergency App button is available on your smart phones which can keep you appraised of Hurricane / Tropical Storm Warnings & Watches, Blizzards, Wildfires and a total of 35 NOAA severe weather as well as man made emergency alerts.

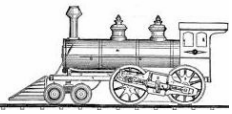
Depending on your type of phone, the App may be found in either the 'Google Play Store' or the 'App Store'

More information on this is available at: http://www.redcross.org/mobile-apps/emergency-app

STRAYS

KDIA (Oakland, CA) Mobile News Unit
September, 1962

Nomination Committee Report



At our August 4th club meeting the primary business at hand was the selection of a Nomination Committee to consider a slate of candidates for our 2016 club officers.

Rather than a committee being formed, the membership present proposed the following positions:

President: Terry Evans-KF5OHR
Vice President: Rick Murray-K6WXA
Secretary: Russell Stoddard-KG6FUJ
Treasurer: Kenneth Watkins-KE5ISN
Board Director: Joe Mayer-K4JMS

Elections for our 2016 club officers will be held at our November 3rd club meeting and those elected will assume their respective duties January 1st.

> *"Fall officially opens, people begin to put away summer things and summer ideas, and we wireless bugs begin taking stock of what we are going to do."*
> Hiram Percy Maxim - September, 1916

October Harvest Contest

Coming next month... CTARC's first ever club contest, exclusively for CTARC members. The contest period will run from October 1st through the 31st. Full information on the contest will be in the October newsletter, and as always, the newsletter will be published at least a couple of days prior to the 1st of the month and will contain a full description of the event and all the rules.

Watch for it in your In-Box and on the shelves of your favorite grocers' news stand!

H.B. 946 Becomes Law

House Bill 946 which has to do with the requirement that towers which are at least 50 feet tall, but not more than 200 feet in height above ground level, be painted with equal alternating bands of aviation orange and white.

The bill goes on to define a tower as, "self-standing or supported by guy wires and anchors; is not more than six feet in diameter at the base of the structure; and has accessory facilities on which an antenna, sensor, camera, meteorological instrument, or other equipment is mounted."

This bill takes effect on September 1st.

There are exceptions to this new act, and nearly all of us will be exempted from it. If your tower is located on your property, adjacent to a building, including a barn, or an electric utility substation; or in the curtilage of a residence - that is "an area of land attached to a house" you are exempted from this requirement.

All this being said, who in the amateur radio community here in Texas, needs to worry about this...? If you own a tower at a remote repeater site for example - then you do! Are you planning on putting up a tower at a remote repeater site? This bill applies equally to you.

And, if you own a tower at a remote repeater site or plan to erect a tower at a remote repeater site, you must provide notice to the Department of Transportation of the existence of the tower, or intent to erect a tower; and you will be required to register the tower with their department.

There are no "grandfather clauses" except, within the bill it states, that any tower as defined, erected prior to the effective date of this bill, is not required to comply with this act until September 1, 2016.

The bill in its entirety, can be viewed in MS Word, HTML, or .pdf format at: http://www.legis.state.tx.us/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=84R&Bill=HB946

The proponent agency is the Texas Department of Transportation. They can be contacted at: Texas Department of Transportation, 125 East 11th St., Austin, TX 78701. Their contact phone number is: (800) 558-9368.

How's DX?

AG6IP will be active as **K6W** from Wake Island between September 4th and the 19th. QSL via his home call.

JA1NLX will be active from Yangeta Island, 23 - 28 September as **3D2YA**. QSL via his home call.

LZ1GC will be active from Tuvalu 24 September - 14 October as **T2GC**. QSL via his home call.

IW3HVB will be active from Moorea Island, French Polynesia 3-10 September as **TX7EME**. QSL via his home call.

Z21MG will be active from Zimbabwe 18 - 30 September. QSL via OK6DJ.

F5LCI is active from Djibouti until the middle of the month as **J2ØJM**. QSL via his home call.

OX5M, OX5T, and OZØJ will be active from Svalbard 16 - 23 September as **JW/OX5M**. QSL via OZØJ.

JA1NEJ will be active from Chichijima Island, 4 - 7 September as **JD1BOH**. QSL via his home call.

N7QT will be active from Manihiki Island, in the North Cook Islands, 29 September - 27 October as **E51MQT**. QSL via his home call.

JF2SQB will be active from Palau 20 - 22 September as **T88QB**. QSL via his home call.

K2HVN will be active from Iceland through the 7th of September signing **stroke TF**. QSL via his home call.

NK8O will be active from Tanzania, September 1st through October 1st as **5H3DX**. QSL via his home call.

JAØJHQ will be active from Cocos Keeling Islands 19 - 25 September signing **stroke VK9C**. QSL via his home call.

LA7GIA will be active from Comoros Islands, 14 - 23 September as **D67GIA**. QSL via his home call.

The opportunity for international QSOs via EchoLink now has a new gateway based in Watergrasshill, County Cork, Ireland, as **EI7WHG**. Hams looking for access to the repeater should key in **EchoLink Node 395897**. Over there, the repeater is on 430.075 MHz, with a 67Hz tone.

JP3AYQ and JJ3CIG will be active from Majuro Island in the Marshall Islands, 24 - 28 September as **V73YL** and **V73H**. QSL each via their respective home calls.

JAØJHQ will be active from Vanuatu 3 - 7 September as **YJØNH**. QSL via his home call.

OK1DWC is active as **E51DWC** from the Rarotonga Islands at least through September. QSL via his home call.

7UØARU will be active to celebrate the new Algerian Amateur Radio Union, from September 1st to the 30th. QSL via SM4VPZ with self-addressed envelope and $3.00 USD .

Special Event Station **N2Y** will be active on September 11th in observance of the 14th anniversary of the tragic events of 9-11. QSL with sase to P.O. Box 288, Brooklyn, NY 11228.

9J2HN will be active from Zambia September - December with the special call **9J2JOCV**. QSL via JR2KDN.

JS3LSQ will be active from Palau Islands through the 3rd of September as **T88WJ**. QSL via his home call.

Special Event Station **TC3ØAZB** will be active from Turkey until the 4th of September. QSL only via LotW - No QSL Cards!

W2JHP will be active from Turneffe Atoll through September 4th as **V31TA**. QSL via EA5GL.

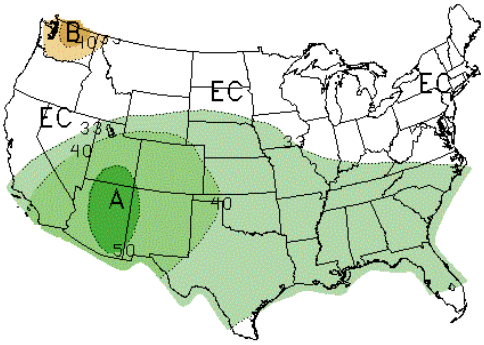
JH3QFL and JH3AZC will be active from Majuro Island in the Marshall Islands, 24 - 28 September as **V73A** and **V73EME**. QSL via their home calls.

Fall Forecast Outlook

The Autumnal Equinox, also known as *"Mabon"* for many Pagan and Wiccan traditions, is a time of giving thanks for the things we have, whether it is abundant crops or other blessings. For those of us here in Central Texas, the Autumnal Equinox marking the first day of Fall, will arrive on Wednesday, September 23rd, at 3:22 AM CDT. From here on out, the temperatures begin to drop and the days will start to get shorter than the nights.

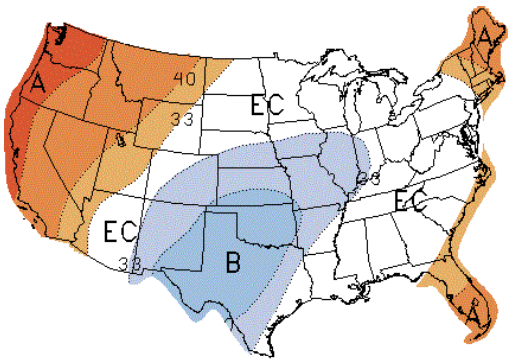
After a miserable summer, NOAA's Fall Forecast is out - and the forecast is good.

Based on recent observations, El Niño conditions continue to strengthen in equatorial water temperatures in the Pacific Ocean. Atmospheric observations above the tropical Pacific are also in good agreement with those traditionally associated with an El Niño. While all of these factors contribute to the official outlook, El Niño is *not* the sole driver of the atmosphere at any time. Day-to-day variability in the weather pattern, and other factors all work together with El Niño to determine the overall weather experienced.



PRECIPITATION PROBABILITY

But, looking at past moderate-strong El Niño's, one of the upshots is a 33% probability of above-average precipitation from late fall through winter, in the southern U.S. from California to the Carolinas then up parts of the East Coast. After a hot and dry summer, this will be most welcome!



TEMPERATURE PROBABILITY

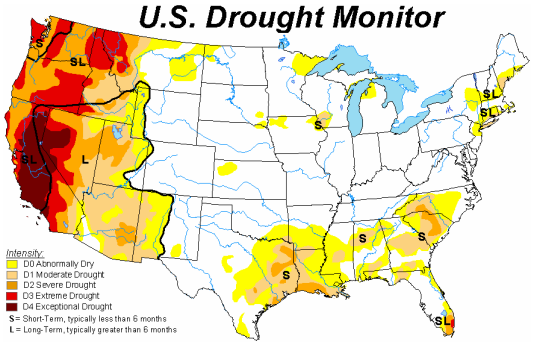
Naturally, conditions for above average precipitation also bring cooler temperatures. For our region the outlook is calling for a 33% to 40% probability of cooler than average temperatures. This temperate zone will stretch from the Desert Southwest, into the Northern Plains and along the northern Gulf Coast.

If you follow *The Farmer's Almanac* it too, is predicting that for our region, September and October will be cooler and rainier than normal, along with three hurricane threats during the month of September.

As to the Atlantic Hurricane Season, tropical cyclone activity peaks in late summer, when the difference between temperatures aloft and sea surface temperatures is the greatest. September is the most active month in the Northern Atlantic Ocean, with the season's climatological peak of activity occurring around September 10th.

As we go to press, Tropical Storm Erika which was forecast to become a hurricane, has dissipated. All eyes now are on "Invest 99-L" off the west coast of Africa. Those with interest can follow its progress at: http://www.nhc.noaa.gov

As I started to prepare this article, the entire state of Texas was completely drought free, but in a short time span of only two weeks, that changed. Abnormally dry conditions have developed across much of east Texas. The good news however, is that forecasters expect this to only be a short term event lasting approximately six months or less in duration. This is based on the predicted above -average precipitation expected during the next three months. Although drought improvement is expected, long-term hydrological drought is likely to continue.



Despite the relatively strong and consistent wet signal among successive model runs, persistence is forecast for a majority of the Great Basin and Southwest. Widespread improvement is unlikely on a monthly time scale considering the long-term nature of the drought. Winter precipitation will likely play a major role in the prospects for long-term drought recovery. The forecast confidence is moderate and favors drought development for much of East Texas and the Lower Mississippi Valley.

As to expected wildland fire activity - Primarily, normal wildland fire activity should be prevalent. This means a rapid decline in both numbers of fires and acres burned for most areas. Normal is defined as, the fires that are still expected to occur during forecast normal conditions as would usually be expected during the forecast period.

As Fall progresses, most of the U.S. will be normal in many areas indicating little or no fire activity and below normal significant fire potential across most of the eastern U.S. for this period thanks to frequent moisture inputs represents a reduced fall and winter fire season for U.S. overall. Below normal being defined as, significant wildland fires are still possible but less likely than usual during forecasted below normal periods. Significant wildland fire potential is expected to continue at or below normal through September with the majority of the area becoming below normal in October and November.

As the days get shorter, sunrise will come later; schools are back in session and the kids will be out and about, so exercise additional caution in the school zones on your morning commutes.

Cooler temps... a good chance of more rainfall... the drought is minimal... the threat of an active fire season is down...

Happy Fall!

Radio and the Piscatory Tribe

***Radio News* - September, 1925**

There are, according to the latest statistics, not less than 8,649,008 fishermen in the United States. Just think what it would mean to the radio trade in general if every one of these fishermen were to buy a complete radio outfit with loud speaker! Mind you, not mere crystal sets, but real honest to goodness five-tube dynes with real loud speaker growlers.

You see, every fisherman likes to catch fish. This, I may say while it sounds fishy, is an axiom well understood by the piscatory tribe. The trouble with the process is that the fish have other ideas about the subject and do not always care to nibble at the bait, albeit they are hungry.

Last year, while I was away on my vacation in Maine, I rigged up a little scheme which did wonders, and here is where the great, big, beautiful idea comes in. I took a metal horn loud speaker and inverted it into the waters of the lake. I connected the loud speaker part to my portable 8-tube Superflex-neutro oscillo regenocrystodyne. I quickly turned on the switch, and immediately the sound slipped out of the horn right into the lake.

From where I was sitting, not much sound seemed to emanate, of course, because most of the music stayed right in the lake. I satisfied myself that this was the correct theory by diving into the lake myself and listening to the music under water, which I could hear almost half a mile away.

In my glorious modesty I claim no revolutionary principle for this. It is well known to scientists, near-scientists, as well as radio engineers (?) if there be such, that sound in water travels much better and further than through the air. As a matter of fact, although I am aware that you know it already, sound travels through air at the rate of 1,088 feet per second, while in water it travels 4,700 feet per second. One of your star radio performers, Reggie Fessenden, used this principle of submarine sound-signaling during the war, when he listened to the naughty German submarines and caught the flip of their very propellers' tails as they did their naughty little stunts.

I have often observed that fish are very curious. They are attracted by the least little sound, and are always looking for excitement, novelty and the latest scientific doings. They get the hook only in forgetfulness or when they are too hungry to think - most of our human fish being ditto.

To come back to my main story in Maine: as soon as the loud speaker was turned on under the water, a surprising thing happened. A jazz band was jazzing away at its best jazz-time.

Immediately fish from all over the neighborhood, attracted by the weird and unaccustomed sounds, drew near. Evidently they liked the music, because I could see lots of them wiggle their tails in complete harmony with the discord of the jazz. I may say that several pairs of fish, although I may be mistaken in this, actually got together and seemed to do some sort of weird fish dance. I also noted that some of the fish grabbed at some of the notes as they came out of the horn and seemed to swallow them whole.

At any event, they seemed to like the music and came in flocks. I had no trouble in catching them, and was kept busy pulling out the fish that were so numerous around the horn. I also noticed that when there was a talk going on, they seemed to become frightened, particularly when the talk was monotonous and of too technical a nature. But they adored all kinds of variegated and assorted sopranos - the poor fish! They seemed to grow fat on them. They did not care so much about the tenors, because these seemed to them too noisy.

As it got tiresome for me to catch so many fish, I invented an automatic fishing reel, which I will now explain to you.

Herewith are the plans, from which you will see that I took a steel stake driven into a solid spot, with the fishing rod attached to a sort of hinge. Normally the entire rink-turn is in a horizontal position, but the minute a fish nibbles, a pawl is pulled by the line, which disengages the spring. This immediately, with a jerk, fires a weight onto a gong. This does a number of things. First, the entire fishing rod is jerked from its horizontal position into an angular one which jerks the fish from the water. If the sleeping fisherman is in the correct position, the fish will hit him smack in the face, thereby waking him up. This is the signal for the fisherman to re-bait the hook and go back to sleep once more. If the fish does not wake him up, the gong does, so there is no chance of the fish being fried in the sunshine.

Then there are those who would accuse me of being a confounded little liar, saying fish have no ears and therefore cannot hear. I feel deeply hurt and aggrieved. There is always some one taking the joy out of life. You cannot argue with these "scientific" people. They know everything.

But whether fish have ears or not makes no difference to me. I stick to my version. Perhaps fish have a certain sense by which they can hear. At any rate, the ones up in Maine did. I am ready to swear it on a stack of super-heterodynes, and if you don't believe it, just try it!

100 Years Ago this month

Future Wireless Predictions

The Wireless Age - **September, 1915**