

The Groundwire

TYLER AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

DECEMBER 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TARC 2011 New Year's Resolutions



Mark – W5MCT

2011 has arrived and many people around the world have made some resolutions for the upcoming year. A New Year's Resolution is generally a goal someone sets out to accomplish in the coming year. A key

element to a New Year's Resolution that sets it apart from other resolutions is that it is made in anticipation of the New Year, and new beginnings.

Be forewarned, however, that it is not easy to achieve one's stated goals.

Wikipedia.com states:

“Recent research shows that while 52% of participants in a resolution study were confident of success with their goals, only 12% actually achieved their goals. A separate study in 2007 by Richard Wiseman from the University of Bristol showed that 78% of those who set New Year resolutions fail, and those who succeed have 5 traits in common. Men achieved their goal 22% more

often when they engaged in goal setting, (a system where small measurable goals are being set; such as, a pound a week, instead of saying "lose weight"), while women succeeded 10% more when they made their goals public and got support from their friends.”

While most resolutions are made by individuals, let stretch the concept a little bit and make some resolutions as a group. Here are a few things that might be good for us as an organization to accomplish this year:

- End the fiscal year on May 31, 2011 with a healthy balance in the club operating accounts;
- Achieve closure on achieving 501(c)(3) charitable status;
- Find three club members (not board members) who would like to present a program at one of our club meetings... especially on technical or scientific topics;
- Every TARC member brings at least one non-member to a club meeting or function in 2011.

If you have any suggestions for additional resolutions, let me know!

By the way, we already have the following “resolutions” on the calendar:

- January 20: TARC Annual Chili cook-off

- February 17: Annual NWS Skywarn training
- March 17: St. Patrick's Day & TARC Meeting
- March 26: Beauty & the Beast bicycle tour
- April 21: TARC Meeting; announcements of slate of candidates for TARC Board
- May 19: Annual TARC dinner meeting & election of Board members

See y'all on the 20th, steamin' pot o' red in hand!
73!

RECENT EVENTS

Notes from the December Club Meeting

The Club's annual Christmas dinner was another typical success whenever there's food to be had. There was turkey salad and ham salad and l-o-t-s of sides dishes and desserts prepared and brought by an army of other Club members and their wives.

As usual, there was also a "blind" gift exchange. This year, President Mark Taylor (W5MCT), set the gift choosing sequence by the average age of the members at each table, going from high to low. As both your editors and Forest Rathbun (KF5ARZ) and his lovely wife were all at one table, it was the proverbial "slam dunk" that we four would go first. Some pictures of the event are on a separate page herein.

Art Sharp (K5LXK) read a brief "Thank you!" note from Dacia Edmonson who was the moving force behind the cystic fibrosis bike

race that the Club supported. Of course, we do these things from our collective hearts without thought of any sort of quid pro quo, but it's always nice to be appreciated.

Bob Sanford (KC5SMC) Continues His Recovery

If you haven't heard, Bob's bypass surgery had to be augmented by implanting a defibrillator cum pacemaker. While necessary for his long-term health, it's causing him some discomfort during what looks like will be a protracted recovery.

Bob and Charlotte both want to sincerely thank all those (and their spouses) that have stepped in to provide meals and support during this trying time. We recognize them here for that purpose: Ann Van Western, Misty Stevenson, Paul Paulson, J.W. Smith, Mary Moss, Jeri Simonton, Mark Taylor, Elaine Jackson, Mark De Paepe, Art Sharp, Ed Wilkinson.

Please continue to keep Bob & Charlotte in your prayers going forward.

Eyes & Ears At The Mall

Once again, TARC and ETECS provided some additional watchful eyes and ears during the busy shopping periods at the Broadway Square mall. Statistics provided by the Club's public service coordinator showed that 14 Club members participated with four members participating every night of the event. In all, 178.1 hours of assistance were provided to the Tyler P.D. Well done, TARC & ETECS!

Visitors and New Members

TARC was pleased to welcome the following (N)ew or (R)e-newing members and (V)isitors at the December meeting.

Name	Call	QTH	N/V
Cliff White	KF5IYL	Swan Lake	N

Monday 2M Net Participation

Check-in statistics for the latest series of TARC Monday night nets were as follows:

Net Date	Net Control	Check Ins	Traffic
12-13	K5PFP	39	5
12-20	K5LOW	33	5
12-27	KE5WJU	38	2
1-3	KF5CNN	40	2
1-10	AG5X	38	3

The Club's weekly two meter net is held each Monday at 8:00 PM on the Club's K5TYR repeater, (147.00 MHz, negative offset and 88.5 PL tone). It continues to be one of the most active VHF nets in East Texas. The net is open to all licensed hams. More information about this and other area nets can be found [here](#).

VE Testing

Testing for new and upgraded amateur radio licenses is conducted by local area VEs on the ***second Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM*** at the American Red Cross building at 320 E. Rieck Road in Tyler. Any schedule changes will be announced on the

TARC two meter net (details above). Mac McGraw, AE5FH, is the contact VE. You can [e-mail](#) him or call him at 903-839-7916 for more information.

The January 9th testing session graduated two new Technician Class hams: Susanne Hammack (KF5JKQ) of Tyler and William Appell (KF5JKR) of Hideaway. Congratulations to both of them.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January Club Meeting

Our January Club meeting will host the annual chili cook-off. Last year's winner, Elaine Jackson (KF5CNN) promises a return to defend her title against all comers. It's always great fun and, like all of our "food events", will provide an excellent opportunity for good fellowship and camaraderie. Make you plans now to attend whether you intend to enter the contest or not.

Breakfast Group

The TARC "Hams & Eggs" breakfast social is nominally held on the fourth Saturday of the month at The Kettle restaurant on the north side of the Loop 323 in Tyler just across from the Brookshire's plant. Holidays or other events may effect a re-schedule. The unofficial meeting time is 7:30 but be sure and arrive at least by 8:00.

Monthly Club Meetings

The Tyler Amateur Radio Club meets on the third Thursday of the month for fellowship and enrichment of our ham radio experience. Meetings are held at the Shiloh Road Church Of Christ, corner of Shiloh Road and Paluxy in Tyler at 7:00PM. Club meetings and membership are open to all interested persons, with or without an amateur radio license. There are usually cookies, candies, sodas etc. to share **but only** if members and guests bring them.

The planned TARC meeting agendas for the next two months are as follows:

- Chili Cook-Off - Antacids provided
- 2011 Skywarn training discussion which will be on February 17th.

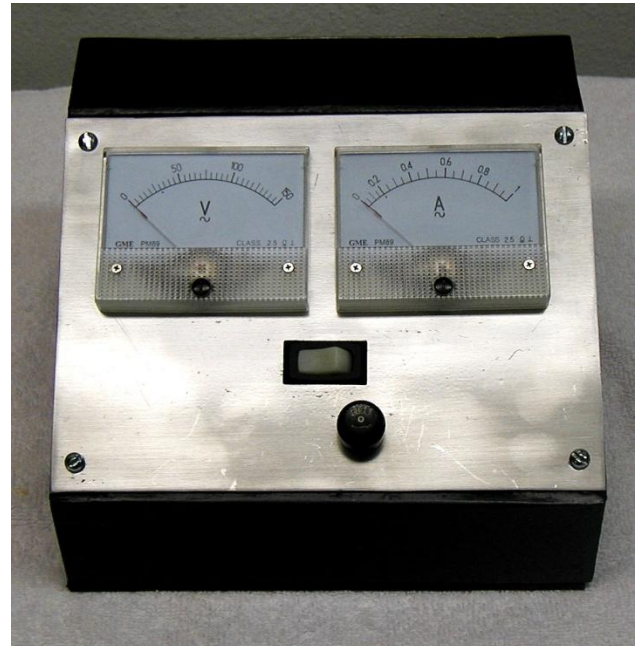
TECH TALK

This portion of the newsletter provides a venue for technical topics of general interest to all hams. Broad topics such as antennas, feed lines, connectors, baluns, interference, etc. are all part and parcel of any ham activity. The purpose is to provide some basic information along with references and links for further reading and study. Here's an opportunity to "e-Elmer" each other - let's use it! Submit your contributions to us [here](#).

If You Build It ...

Well, we built it but we really don't expect anyone to come and see it. What "it" looks like is pretty much what it is - a piece of test equipment. We collect, and sometimes refurbish old tube-type communications receivers. Usually this amounts to replacing

all the capacitors (and perhaps some resistors) in the chassis, doing some KP on the moving parts and the (usually metal) cabinet. When it's time for the re-built "smoke test", it's good practice to bring the unit up slowly, i.e. not just hit it with a full 120 VAC all at once. To do that, one needs some sort of variable mains capability. That's where a "variac" comes in handy.



Luckily, we have one but ours doesn't have a built-in voltmeter or ammeter. Enter our latest "project". Except for the two panel meters, it's built entirely out of "scrounged" parts and lumber. It goes into line between the variac (which is plugged into an isolation transformer) and the radio to be tested so proper electrical monitoring of the "re-birth" can be observed. Not difficult to build, nor fancy in its looks but a rewarding experience nonetheless.

Myth Buster vs. SWR

Last month we mentioned the book "Reflections III" (sub-titled Transmission Lines and Antennas) which is available from the [CQ Magazine](#) bookstore. Since then I've

started through it and have had some of my notions about SWR, reflected power, and related topics turned on their respective ears. The author, M. Walter Maxwell (W2DU), lays waste to the misconceptions, misunderstandings and outright myths about “all things SWR” that have been rumored and published on the topic for many years. What’s most impressive about the text (and I’m only through the first few chapters) is that most of the information he presents has been published many times before now but somehow disregarded, forgotten or ignored in favor of commerce. The book isn’t a particularly easy read. There is some math (not hard, but there) and *lots and lots* of references to back up the *science* he presents.

As all hams know (or certainly should know), all is for naught if you can’t radiate the power the transmitter generates. I find it difficult to believe that 99.9% of all hams couldn’t get a better signal out, with less fuss and bother, if they’d just read and heed what W2DU has to say. For example, a 1:1 SWR ratio isn’t always a good thing and neither is a high SWR reading (e.g. 5:1) necessarily a bad thing. That’s just the tiniest tip of the “reflections iceberg” of what this book has to offer – all backed up by *science* not opinion. Accordingly, I beseech you, fellow members, if you ever read just one more ham-related book in your lifetime, make it this one.

However, if the thought of actually having to purchase and read a printed book is distressful, at least do yourself a favor and visit [this link](#) to at least get something like an introduction to it’s first few chapters. There you’ll find two entries by Eric Nichols

(KL7AJ). Both are on topic but it’s the second entry “SWR Meters Make You Stupid” that’s the more relevant to the “reflections” book. Check out Eric’s info on his QRZ.com call sign page for his credentials which are impressive to say the least. ★★★★★

THIS ‘n THAT

Another “Tower” Movie

[This](#) one’s not scary at all. Rather it’s a ground-level observation of a ham tower being raise via a very tall crane. Interesting in its own right, but also a source of a bit of envy regarding what some of our fellow hams have to invest in the “hobby”. The one being shown is a 40M tower, one of *ten* being stood up at a contest station. I know I’m very “old school” (and proud of it!) but the practice of “just buy everything and talk” puts me off more than just a little bit. Still, worth a watch.

While We’re On The Subject ...

[Here’s](#) a link to a freebie 400+ page book recording the 25 year history of building a world-class contest station. I haven’t read it (and may not) but the TOC has some interesting entries. If you’re on dial-up and don’t want to wait for the free download, both a DVD and a printed copies are available for purchase. Might be worth a read.

A Freebie Ham eMagazine

The publishers of CQ Magazine now also publish World Radio Online. Back issues are available for downloading (free) and the

current issue may be read online or downloaded as well. Can't beat the price!



How's That Again?

While not exactly the same thing as a [Spoonerism](#), the Washington Post's Mensa Invitational has come up with another wonderful set of "word mashings" to help us speak more eloquently (or something). Some of the more recent examples include "Intoxicaton : Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with." and "Reintarnation : Coming back to life as a hillbilly." It all begs the question: Are there any ham-related "mashings" that would brighten up our sometimes arcane vocabulary? Submit your suggestions to us and we'll publish them next time.

If You Break It, They Will Fix It

It seem a sad fact that if your rig is more than a few years old, you may find yourself having to find a third party to work on it as the original manufacturer may well refuse to do it. Usually, this means finding another ham or ex-tech from the electronics industry - a task that isn't always easy. We had this experience recently ourselves. Fortunately, we now have the 'Net!

Asking around on some listservs we subscribe to, a couple of names kept popping up that we're going to pass along in case some fellow TARC members every have a need. We have no connection with either of them but feel that when other hams enthusiastically recommend someone, that can't be a bad thing.

- Dale Putnam - WC7S
- Eldad Benary - K2AB

Shack Shots From Yesteryear

[Here's a link](#) for a freebie calendar adorned with shack shots from years (and years) past in the form of a very usable 2011 calendar. Those who enjoy mobile operations might want to check out the August page first. This is courtesy of Carl Nord [W1KPD](#) who's quite obviously a real "boat anchor" person.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

- Scratch a dog and you'll find a permanent job.
- Be careful reading the fine print. There's no way you're going to like it.
- The trouble with bucket seats is that not everyone has the same size "bucket".

ITEMS FOR SALE

TARC members with items that they'd like to sell (or swap) can have them listed on the Club's website by [e-mailing](#) a full description of them along with price (or swap) targets to the Club's webmaster Gaylen Gage (KD5KIZ). A list and description of any items currently for sale or trade can be found on the Club's website [here](#). Since the list changes over time, it's best to check it out each month.

FROM THE CNN DESK ...

A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words



Elaine – KF5CNN

include in the newsletter, so last month he complied. Thanks, Mark! Honestly, now, didn't those pictures tell you something not only about Mark's hunting preferences, but about Mark as well? Like maybe, he likes to be comfortable when he hunts. My point is, we now know more about Mark than just his ham radio side.

In the past, you've seen pictures here that (mostly) Bob has made while at hamfests or some other Club event. We can't attend every event and when we don't, there haven't been any pictures submitted by anyone else. We asked when we started including pictures if you liked them or not and the few that responded did so affirmatively. So, it begs the question: "Why aren't **YOU** submitting pictures to the newsletter? Most everyone (except Bob – he refuses to carry one) has a cell phone with a camera. If you have one, how hard would it have been to take some pictures at the Christmas parade? Eyes & Ears? You opening a present on Christmas day that was a new radio or other ham-related item? Or, a picture of you or a member of your

family with a big fish they just caught? Or you skiing down the "bunny slope" at Aspen? Knock! Knock! Is anybody home?

Do you get my point?

Bob said when we took over this job that it was your, the members, newsletter. Without your support it would be, and has been, less that it could be. Make it a new year's resolution that you keep to correct that deficiency to the benefit of all of us in TARC!

Come to the Club meeting, wear your badge and bring a visitor and/or something to share.

Bob – AG5X & Elaine – KF5CNN
Co-Editors