



# THE BRASS KEY



## March 2023

*A Publication of the Central Louisiana Amateur Radio Club*



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# The Prez Sez . . .

Words from our President, Kirk Garber, W5KKG

Hello fellow HAM's of the Central Louisiana Amateur Radio Club!

Happy Mardi Gras! Now that all the frivolity of carnival is behind us and Winter Field day is in the books, I am looking forward to the next few months of spring weather. I think WFD was a successful club event and Houston KD5YS has composed the raw results. I hope you all had the chance to listen to Dr. Bob Heil K9EID's talk during our last meeting. I sure enjoyed his presentation and learned a lot!

This month we have a presentation on Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) by fellow HAM and MARS station operator Robert Partigianoni WB5JZP / AFA6HW. MARS is a DOD auxiliary and plays a vital role in back up communication for our national defense.

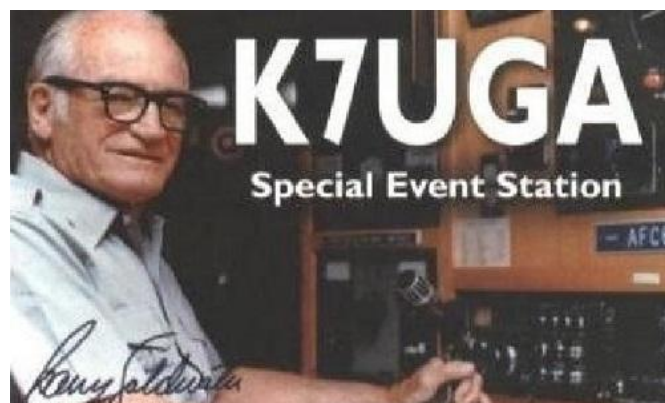
MARS operating is not for the casual operator . . . it is a true dedication to service. They regularly practice and have national communication exercises throughout the year. Prior to the satellite long distance calling capabilities, and the ease of communication that email and cell phones provide us, MARS was the only voice link for US servicemen with home. MARS came of age during the Korean and Vietnam wars and provided an incalculable service of moral and welfare to our Troops.

A somewhat famous MARS operator you may have heard the name of and didn't realize he was a HAM and MARS station operator, was Maj. General Barry Goldwater, USAF (Ret), US Senator from Az. K7UGA/AFA7UGA. Throughout his life Barry was an enthusiastic ham operator. As a member of Air Force MARS, his station K7UGA/AFA7UGA was manned 24 hours a day during the Vietnam war, either by himself or other amateurs he selected when he was away. Many stand-in operators experienced the thrill of operating the magnificent rigs at K7UGA/AFA7UGA. The station served GI's in Vietnam and around the world. Barry operated at every opportunity completing phone patches for all servicemen. Generally, all calls that passed through his station were free, paid for by Barry himself. During the Vietnam War he handled hundreds of thousands of phone patches some he operated as aeronautical mobile while piloting his plane.



Barry was known as the most congenial man in the Senate. A New York Times article once stated "Part of the reason for such fraternal good will was that Mr. Goldwater saw politics as a debate over ideas, not a blood sport for power. The other reason was that all sides knew he was one of those rare creatures on Capitol Hill who "talked straight." Barry believed in and supported individual rights; his whole stance could be easily summed up in his respect of individual freedom, and belief that a smaller government is a better government. He is often quoted as saying, "A government that is big enough to give you all you want is big enough to take it all away." Cheers to you Sir, I hope you have clear skies and unlimited visibility. Whatever our politics, what we as veterans and hams should know and remember is that he cared for us and looked after us, he was one of us.

Radio *GKA* Wkd. *Dec 12* 192 *2* M. S. T.  
 QRM *None* QRN *some* QRH QRB  
*Long distance I'm glad you got as far as I did*  
**6BPI**  
 Transmitter—5 watts Rev. Feedback. Radiation *L-5* Amp. Nw.  
 Receiver—Remartz with peanut tube, 2-step amplifier.  
 Antenna—4 wire T—100 ft. long, 35 ft. high 4 wire counterpoise.  
 Always glad to QSR if possible.  
 Pse QSL. Big 73's, *Merry Xmas*  
 A. R. R. L. BARRY GOLDWATER,  
 710 North Central Avenue, PHOENIX, ARIZONA



Hope to see everyone at our next club meeting, March 7, 2023!

73! Catch you down the log!

Kirk W5KKG  
CLARC President



CLARC Congratulates Erin Huddleston,  
KI5ZJC, for upgrading to a General Class  
license!

**HAM HOOO- RAH!!**

**BE KIND TO  
EVERYONE YOU MEET.**



**THEY MAY BE  
STUDYING TO BECOME  
A HAM.**





# Prior Public Proceedings

Lisa Coleman, KW5LC , Club Secretary

February 7, 2023 – CLARC General Meeting Minutes

Those present:

Pauline Jordan K5PIQ, Don Ward KI5AJV, Lisa Coleman KW5LC, Allen Henderson KI5IMA, Jim Walters AE5ZE, Chris Wright KI5HDW, BL Wilson WA5NHP, Alan Riley KD5R, John Dempsey N5CM, Randy Goodwin (Visitor), Stephen Peters N5EKC, David Nolan K5TS, Scott Wren KD5DFL, Chris Olivier KI5LOX, Jim Bookter N5NVP, Dick Lundy WA5CAV, Dave Basco KD5DB, Albert Castete KI5KJM, James Romero K5CNU, Jeff Foley KI5HVK, Erin Huddleston KI5ZJC, Grady Ebert KB5SDU, John Revoire K5AGI, Terry Bradshaw K5CPL, Jack Brossette W5ETL, Brady Matherne KI5LOY, Will Butterfield KI5IPJ. Viewing via Zoom: Luke Butterfield KI5RTS and Dr. Bob Heil K9EID

Welcome by our president, Kirk Garber W5KKG, followed by introductions of those present.

Health and Welfare:

Allen KG5IMA asked continued prayers for the health of his mother.

Jim Bookter asked prayers for the family of (SK) Gerald Gauthier AB5IS and his wife N5KGF and family.

John K5AGI asked prayers for his current Afib medical condition caused by Eloquis.

Jim AE5ZE offered the prayer for the group.

Congratulations were offered to Erin KI5AJC, who upgraded to a General Class license.

The meeting was halted for the Zoom presentation by Dr. Bob Heil of Heil Sound.

The meeting resumed following the presentation.

The motion was requested by Kirk W5KKG to accept the minutes of the January 2023 General CLARC Meeting. The motion to accept was made by David Nolan K5TS and seconded by Don Ward KI5AJV. The motion to accept the January 2023 Treasurer's report was requested by Kirk W5KKG. This motion to accept was made by Steve N5EKC and seconded by John N5CM. The membership approved of the acceptance of the Meeting Minutes and the Treasurer's Report unanimously.

The members were informed of the arrival of three purchased items: MFJ-856, DIRECTIONAL NOISE FINDER W/3 ELE BEAM, the Polyphaser Surge Protector for the 6m repeater site, and the N3 Speaker to use with our Zoom presentations. The N3 Speaker will be ready for use at the next meeting and the Polyphaser for the 6m repeater site should be operational in the next couple of weeks.

Don KI5AJV updated the membership on the status of our 6m repeater. The polyphaser/lightning arrestor has arrived and he hoped to have the 6m repeater operational in the next two weeks.

Kirk informed the members that the Louisiana QSO Party will be Saturday, April 1, 2023. We hope to participate in that event as we did last year. We will explore using the LDWF Woodworth facility pavilion.

Kirk thanked Jeff KI5HVK for the use of his facility for Winter Field Day, but also informed the membership that this facility will not be available for our use on a regular basis. He asked the membership to help in finding us alternate facilities, as the Woodworth facility has become somewhat unreliable.

Kirk asked for volunteers to serve on a committee tasked with locating alternate operating facilities for field days, QSO parties and other operating events. Terry K5CPL volunteered to chair this committee. No other volunteers came forward.

There was no old business that needed discussion.

#### New Business:

Terry K5CPL proposed a motion that the club call sign, N5AEX, be changed to something that is easier to pronounce and more easily copied. This motion was seconded by Don KI5AJV.

#### Discussion on the motion:

Terry proposed that we find a call that has an acceptable CW weight for the CW operators and something that is easier for the SSB operators to convey to other operators in a large pileup, such as those experienced during field day operations. Other field day SSB operators voiced their opinions saying that the problem with confusion with our call sign, ( i.e. is it AEX, AXE, XAE and so forth) has been a problem for the past few field days, POTA and QSO party operations. Scott KD5DFL spoke up that the repeaters (4) would have to be changed to reflect a new call sign. Others spoke up saying this is only a one-time change and could be done without much effort. Terry proposed that a list of available potential call signs agreeable to the CW operators and the SSB operators could be easily made and presented at the next meeting. Jack W5ETL made a motion to table and John K5AGI seconded. Kirk W5KKG called for a vote and the vote passed to table the motion. Those in support of

tabling the matter were 15 in support, and those in favor of further discussion of the matter were 6.

BL Wilson WA5NHP has a tower he would like to take down if someone could help him in this. Please see Jim AE5ZE for further information regarding BL's tower.

The motion to adjourn was made approximately 8:40. Kirk W5KKG announced that the usual "meeting after the meeting" would take place at our usual spot, Whataburger in Pineville.

Lisa E. Coleman  
KW5LC  
CLARC Secretary



## TREASURER'S REPORT

Stacey Sonneland, KG5KGU

### Treasurer's Report

Stacey Sonneland, KG5KGU, Club Treasurer

Financial Report for February 2023

#### Revenue

Dues	\$	304.00
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50/50	\$	13.00
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Misc

Total Revenues	\$	317.00
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#### Expenditures

Equipment (1)	\$	329.93
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Insurance

Fellowship

Maintenance and Repairs

Office - P.O. Box Rental

Winter Field Day-Food

Summer Field Day

Utilities	\$	18.43
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Web Hosting and domain

Scholarship

Legal - Annual Report to Sec of State

Baofeng Radios

Misc.

Total Expenditures	\$	348.36
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Revenues - Expenditures	\$	(31.36)
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Notes: (1)Suppressor & Blue tooth speaker

Total membership as of 2/28/2023 50

# Zoom Link to CLARC monthly meetings.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88070112230?pwd=bjE3bDI2dnZQSGtBWjFVeFNhbVcyQT09>

**This is a permanent link for all CLARC Meetings!**

\* \* \* \*



**January 28 – 29, 2023**







### Participants in Winter Field Day 2023:

John Dempsey N5CM, Stacey Sonneland KG5KGU, Erin Huddleston KI5ZJC, Alex Daniels KI5WBX, Jeff Foley KI5HVK, Lisa Coleman KW5LC, Terry Bradshaw K5CPL, Pauline Jordan K5PIQ, Kirk Garber W5KKG, Scott Wren KD5DFL, Will Butterfield KI5IPJ, Chris Wright KI5HDW, David Basco KW5DB, Chris Olivier KI5LOX, Jim Bookter N5NVP, Stephen Peters N5EKC, Butch Castete KI5KJM, Bethany Butterfield KI5IGT, Luke Butterfield KI5RTS. Club Challenge Participants: Houston Polson KD5YS, David Nolan K5TS, Dick Lundy WA5CAV. Technical Advisor: Don Ward KI5AJV

# WINTER FIELD DAY RESULTS

## Winter Field Day Results (aka How'd we do?)

By Houston KD5YS

Once again, the Central Louisiana Amateur Radio Club raised tower and beam (and several other antennas) and blazed a path into the ether in the annual January event known as Winter Field Day (WFD). These results are based upon the logs as submitted to me, culled for obvious (correctable) errors, and submitted to the WFD website.

The event was held at Esler Field, Pineville and a big **THANK YOU** is owed to **Jeff, K15HVK**, for enabling us to utilize the facilities. And a big **THANK YOU** to all the operators.

### The Down and Dirty

Overall, CLARC did well making 1,620 QSOs (all three modes) with 21 multipliers. Total QSO points based upon those raw numbers – 43,554 points. Add to that number, the 2,000 bonus points and CLARC has a total score of 45,554 points. As of this writing, 3830scores.com lists no other 6 India stations, but going simply on overall raw point total, CLARC would be in 4<sup>th</sup> place. There are 205 entries listed on 3830scores.com. The WFD site lists 2,215 total entries received.

Please note – this raw score will change as there are several duplicate entries in the log and there are several contacts where the exchange for the same call varies.

### The Details

Looking at a breakdown of the modes and bands

Mode	QSOs
CW	420
PH	1,166
DIG	34
Total Multipliers	21
Total QSO Points	43,554

As a reminder, in determining mode, if it's voice and comes out over speakers or headsets – it's PH. If the result is text or a picture – it's DIG. If it sounds like dah-di-dah, it's CW. The vast majority of the PH QSOs were SSB although there was one FM QSO. All the DIG QSOs were PSK31. CW was.....well ask John.

A quick point of explanation on multipliers – while the ARRL/RAC section location was part of the exchange, it was not the multiplier. For WFD, a multiplier is a contact on a band in one of the listed modes. Essentially, you could earn 3 multipliers on any single band – one for a CW QSO, another for a PH QSO, and lastly one for a DIG QSO. The more bands successfully operated using different modes, the higher the multiplier count.



Breakdown of the QSOs by band and mode is interesting:

Band	CW	Phone	Digital	Band Total
160m	2	1	2	5
80m	43	36	26	105
40m	173	254	1	428
20m	160	737	1	898
15m	32	51	3	86
10m	9	85	1	95
6m	1	1	0	2
2m	0	1	0	1
Total QSOs	420	1166	34	1620

Once again, 20m was the money band but all those mode QSOs in single digits added to the multiplier total which contributes to the overall point total. For the first time (in a long time, if ever), we made contacts on 160m. Add to those QSOs (and multipliers) the QSOs on 6m and 2m and the multiplier count (and total points) jumped.

Bonus points added 2000 points to the total score. There were six areas where bonus points could be earned. We scored in four of the six categories. The two categories where we didn't earn bonus points were mutually exclusive from earning bonus points in other categories.

The six Bonus Point categories (and potential points) were:

<b>Alternative power (no commercial power used)</b>	<b>500 points.</b>
<b>Away from home (operating away from home)</b>	<b>500 points.</b>
<b>Antenna (erect and use an antenna just for WFD)</b>	<b>500 points.</b>
<b>Satellite (make at least one satellite QSO)</b>	<b>500 points.</b>
Mobile (moving/roving and using a vehicle mounted antenna)	250 points.
Outdoor (setting up outside a building)	500 points.

We earned points in the four **bolded categories**. (Yes, we made a satellite QSO.) As I stated earlier, we operated as 6 India (indoor) so we could not earn the points for mobile or outdoor.

The exchange was class/category (6 India) and ARRL or RAC section. We worked all 50 states, but no single mode was able to work all 50. We worked all US ARRL sections except the US Virgin Islands. In fact, we were only 6 sections short of working all 85 ARRL and RAC sections (better known as a clean sweep) missing – US Virgin Islands (VI), Manitoba (MB), New Brunswick (NB), Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), Prince Edward Island (PE), and The Territories (TER comprised of Yukon (VY1), Northwest Territories (VE8), and Nunavut (VY0)).

### The Club Challenge

As part of the WFD contest, there was a separate Club Challenge. A club could register in the Challenge and those members that were unable to participate at the club location could add their scores to the club score. In effect, there were two contests running simultaneously. CLARC has an entry as a 6 India station, but we also have a Club Challenge entry as Central LA Amateur Radio Club. Three members (that I know of) added their score to the club score.

Those operators and their scores are:

Call - Name	Points
WA5CAV – Dick Lundy	236
K5TS – Dave Nolan	1078
KD5YS – Houston Polson	3396
Total Points Added	4710

Our Club Challenge point total is therefore 50,264.

### How About Last Year?

How did we do compared to last year? In some areas – better; in some – not as good.

Here is a table comparing the QSO totals by mode and total points – side-by-side.

Mode	2023 QSOs	2022 QSOs
CW	420	872
PH	1,166	1248
DIG	34	103
Total Multipliers	21	12
Total QSO Points	43,554	76,752
Total Bonus Points	2,000	1,000
Total Points	45,554	77,752

This comparison is a bit misleading for a couple of reasons.

1. In 2022, there was a 2X power multiplier for 100w stations which we earned, and which doubled our Total QSO Points. (Without the power multiplier, our 2022 Total QSO Points would be 38,376).
2. The bonus point totals were different (as the table above shows).

Adjusting the 2022 score for the power multiplier, we obtain a more realistic point comparison of 45,554 total points for 2023 and 39,376 for 2022. This statistic alone shows the significance of the increased number of multipliers. Even though the 2023 WFD effort had 603 fewer total QSOs than the 2022 WFD effort, the increased multiplier count was more than sufficient to make up the point difference.



A comparison of each year's QSOs by band and mode is more revealing.

Band	CW		Phone		Digital		Band Total	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
160m	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	5
80m	212	43	3	36	43	26	258	105
40m	229	173	591	254	7	1	827	428
20m	425	160	588	737	25	1	1048	898
15m	6	32	56	51	28	3	90	86
10m	0	9	0	85	0	1	0	95
6m	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
2m	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total QSOs	872	420	1247	1166	103	34	2223	1620

Better propagation in 2023 provided increased opportunities for QSOs on the higher bands, and we took advantage of that phenomenon, especially on 10m. Increased awareness of the advantage of even a single QSO on a band and mode added 9 more multipliers than 2022's total multiplier count. For example, 5 QSOs on 160m yielded 3 multipliers and an additional 4,860 points. The biggest mode QSO count differences are seen in the number of CW and Digital QSOs. This year resulted in less than half as many CW QSOs as last year while 2023 had less than a third as many Digital QSOs as 2022. But again, the additional multipliers compensated for the fewer QSOs when compared to 2022.

### Summary/Conclusion

In summary, the overall effort for WFD 2023 was superb. CLARC showed an ability to setup and communicate under austere conditions in a location few had seen and with limited access. Kudos to the Planning Committee for their hard work. From what I've heard, the coordination and forethought certainly helped. Understanding and utilizing some of the lesser utilized bands and modes (160m, 6m, and 2m) helped propel the number of multipliers much higher over last year.

Sadly, computer logging continues to be an issue. Or more succinctly put, lack of using contemporaneous computer logging continues to be an issue. We really need to do a better job of logging and using the computer software in all our operating efforts. After the event logging from paper copies results in needless errors, duplicate QSOs, and a general frustration for the poor dude trying to submit the club's entry. Perhaps in future events, we need to have an operator and a logger rather than just an operator at a station. In most all the events, networking those stations on a mode would be sufficient to prevent duplicates.

### Disclaimer

As always, the work, opinions, suggestions, thoughts, and theories are mine. If you have questions, please let me know.



# FROM THE SHACK



Members are free to submit articles for “From the Shack!” We want to hear about your shack or other things of ham interest! Tell us about your operating conditions and submit your photos to Lisa, KW5LC, at [clarcsec@yahoo.com](mailto:clarcsec@yahoo.com)

## ORLANDO HAMCATION 2023



CLARC's own Houston KD5YS, and Scott KD5DFL participated in Orlando HamCation 2023, February 10 – 12, 2023

### Orlando Hamcation 2023 – A Review

By Houston KD5YS

If Dayton is ham radio's Mecca, then Orlando is the little brother. A little smaller than Dayton and with fewer vendors, exhibitors, and forums but much better weather. I had the opportunity to attend the 2023 Orlando Hamcation this year. Seems late last year, my lovely wife asked if I would be interested in attending “that ham thing in Orlando.” “Of course,” I told her. “Great, then we can take a cruise after that to celebrate our anniversary.” (Our 32nd anniversary would be 15 February, only three days after the end of the Hamcation.) A great Hamfest and a cruise – something for the whole family. That's a no brainer. So, Jeanie planned the cruise while I planned to attend the Hamfest.

The Orlando Hamcation is sponsored by the Orlando Amateur Radio Club (OARC), an ARRL-affiliated club, and is supported by volunteers from throughout the nation. (Volunteer to work a 4-hour block and get free admission.) The first recorded Orlando hamfest was in 1946. A hamfest has been held annually since then except during the covid years. The hamfest location varied over the years moving among various venues in the Orlando area until finally settling on its current location – the Central Florida Fairgrounds – in 1991.

The trip to Orlando was uneventful – just the way I like traveling. We departed early Wednesday morning and arrived at our Airbnb late Thursday afternoon covering the 850 miles in a day and a half of driving. Warning – the best way to get to Orlando requires traveling on several toll roads. No problem – Florida uses pay-by-plate like the payment method used in Texas, but Florida gets their invoices out much faster. If you're planning a trip like our trip, I recommend looking at an Airbnb. As at Dayton, the cost was almost half of the cost of a hotel, the location was great, and the ease of arrival and departure was grand. After checking into our Airbnb but before heading to dinner, we opted to find the fairgrounds since I expected the Hamcation traffic when added to the regular Orlando rush hour traffic might make navigation a bit more difficult than normal. Actually, getting to the Hamcation venue was simple and as it turned out, the traffic, while heavy, it wasn't as difficult to navigate as I expected.

Ample parking was to be found at the fairgrounds but with a bit of a walk. Because of a downpour the previous night, some of the parking area was unusable. That simple fact caused some confusion in parking, but that confusion (and the mud) was not evident on Saturday or Sunday. A line greeted those arriving early, but I soon learned it was for "will call" tickets. Since I had purchased my ticket in advance, I skirted the line and walked onto the fairgrounds. Like Dayton, there were multiple building for the vendors; unlike Dayton, OARC had a separate building for the flea market – labeled SWAPS. And of course, the ever popular tailgaters were out in the RV camping section and along the roads. More about the flea market shortly.

Speaking of the vendors, there seemed to be a fair number of vendors in the main vendor building and a couple of others in buildings, but I was disappointed that DX Engineering failed to bring any inventory. They had a couple of booths but all they made available were catalogs, a few caps, and lots of good wishes. Ham Radio Outlet was there, as was Chatt Radio (formerly KM4MPF Sales), Gigaparts, Signman, Tower Electronics, and of course MFJ. Elecraft, Icom and Yaesu were there in force, but Kenwood was nowhere to be seen. I don't recall seeing any of the vendors having Kenwood rigs available for sale. I did see several Icom IC-7300s, IC-7610s, and 2-meter rigs being carried to vehicles. I even saw several Yaesu FT-991As leaving the vendor's area. Otherwise, most of the rigs sold were used from SWAPS or the RV tailgate area.

I found the overall layout of the Hamcation to be confusing. While the main vendor building was easy to find – walk thru the main entrance and it's there to your right – the building where forums were held was not so easily found. It was not in the same basic (main) area. It, also, required a bit of a hike – to the point shuttle carts were available to ferry attendees to and fro. While the SWAPS building was clearly marked, there were many flea market tables set outside the SWAPS building, and those required a significant amount of walking and looking to see where they were located and the items on them. Much like Dayton, I found far more “junk” for sale than any real deals. I saw several old (think 1970 era) SWL receivers available with the seller's asking price in excess of the original purchase price. Even saw an old Realistic (Radio Shack) 10-meter mobile unit for sale. Neat rig but for \$150 (firm) that was left on the table.

Like Dayton, the Hamcation partnered with the ARRL and used the ARRL event app. The app is available on both Apple and Android platforms. I highly recommend it for any large hamfest where it is available to use. It helps to check it several times a day (and let it update) as event locations change, prize winners announced, and a list of attendees (user provided) change daily if not hourly. Particularly helpful are the building maps showing vendor locations, list, times, and locations of forums and the list of attendees. Looking for someone, if they completed their profile, which I recommend, you can access telephone numbers and email addresses. Helpful when arranging those eyeball QSOs.

The ARRL provided a significant presence at the Hamcation, securing multiple booths for membership renewals, an area where local scouts were taught the basics of radio, and chairs to sit and chat with the many HQ staff and senior volunteers. Notably, ARRL CEO David Minster, NA2AA, ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, and Southeastern Division Director Mickey Baker, N4MB, attended all three days. All three spoke at the ARRL Forum held on Saturday afternoon. Due to the high cost of shipping, no books or other ARRL items were available for purchase directly from the ARRL. You could order and have it sent to you, but other vendors had many of the more popular items for sale there. I found the 100th edition of the ARRL Handbook (paperback version) on sale at Chatt Radio and a copy came home with me.

To me, the forums, in general, were a disappointment. Forums were held Friday and Saturday only, a wise move in my opinion, as presenting the last day of any conference or convention proves difficult for the presenter. Enthusiasm wanes and attendance is often sparse. Originally, I wanted to attend four forums but ended up at only three. BTW, a significant benefit of the ARRL App - seeing forum presenters (and bios), forum descriptions, times and locations before arrival.

My first forum was on “Field Day Antennas.” This presentation by Nelson Sollenberger, KA2C, described the issues and solutions the Antietam (MD) ARC used in reducing same band CW/Phone/Digital interference. Some of the techniques included cross-



polarization, end-to-end dipoles, and using EZNEC modeling. Nelson is the author and developer of a series of extremely sharp filters that were used as well. (The article appears in the National Contest Journal Nov/Dec 2021.) He mentioned the use of several tips and techniques that CLARC has used. The use of EZNEC to model possible interference was a new idea to me.

One forum of particular interest to me was by Tom Schiller, N6BT, on “Improving Antenna Performance.” Sadly, it was more an hour-long infomercial – short on the info. I left after 15 minutes. Much of his information can be found online and without the ads. The most interesting forum I attended, by far, was the ARRL Membership Forum. The “Big Three” (Minster, Rodrick, and Baker) attended and each had a few things to say before taking questions from the audience. Minster’s comments were the most revealing. He mentioned the need for an increase in membership dues – certainly not the most popular item those attending wanted to hear. He provided some information about the cost to print and mail QST. He explained the cost of printing one recent issue exceeded the budgeted amount by \$90,000. One possible solution – separating the cost of printing and mailing QST from the membership dues - keep the dues at \$49 with digital copies of QST included. Those members wanting paper copies of QST would be charged an additional, yet to be determined, amount.

Minster also discussed recent issues with Logbook of the World (LOTW). He explained the original system was built in the Windows 98 timeframe (think batch operations) and wasn’t designed for the modern method of use (upload of individual QSOs.) They are working to solve those problems and make it more user friendly, but it will require an almost complete rewrite of the software.

My biggest disappointment at the ARRL forum was the lack of attendance – only 35 or 40 attended (from a Hamcation attendance of 18K-20K.) It seemed most all attending were staff members, or high state/section/division volunteers – section managers, assistant division directors, etc – you know, the people with the red or blue ARRL name tags. Later, I mentioned to Mickey Baker that I would love to know the breakout of percentage of attendees that were volunteers with ARRL name tags and the ordinary members. I fear, the ARRL senior leadership may have been preaching to the choir.

The most fun I had was the opportunity to operate W1AW/4, the Orlando Hamcation Special Event Station on Sunday morning. The “shack”, setup in the main vendor building, was classic – an Icom 7610, a 4-element tri-band yagi at 35 feet pointed north, and Heil ProSet 7. Couldn’t ask for better. Attendees were invited to operate in 30-minute blocks during Hamcation open hours. I signed up for 9:00 am Sunday morning, when I learned some time was available. The person scheduled for 9:30 failed to show and the 10:00 operator was late so I operated for well over an hour. What a blast. One CQ and the pileup started. Fortunately, I had “warned” a few folks I would be on so I had a more-or-less friendly voice at the other end when I started.

Thank you, Dave, K5TS, for being my initial QSO! An hour plus later, I had 42 QSOs in the log and a smile the width of the Mississippi on my face. Sadly, some operators didn't share my exhilaration. The intentional QRM, answering my CQ but not answering my return call, or singing (off key) forced several weaker stations to miss my calling them. Still, calling WHISKEY ONE ALPHA WHISKEY STROKE FOUR was a grand experience.

Attendance was brisk on Friday, heaviest on Saturday, and sparse on Sunday. Estimated attendance was 18K-20K over the three days. Questions and lessons learned.

Was it worth it? Even after attending the hamfests at Dayton and Huntsville, the answer is yes. Each has a different flavor. Each does some things better than the other. Maybe not attend all three each year but attending one or two is a great way to meet ops you perhaps said only "five nine Louisiana" to, learn of the new and exciting rigs coming to market, pickup (or even divest yourself of) a few needed items. Our location lets us drive to these venues in one or two days.

Would I do it again? You bet.

Things I learned -

- ❖ Again, the Airbnb was a great idea. Great location, superb accommodations, easy access and only 50% of what a hotel would have cost.
- ❖ Can't emphasize enough the need for a backpack, bag, or means to carry all the bling, swag, and smaller items purchased.
- ❖ Cash is a requirement for purchase in the flea market. Fortunately, several ATMs were available for those forgetting or running short.
- ❖ Food for sale on site was outrageously priced. While there was a variety of selections (BBQ ribs, gyros, Chinese) the prices tended to reduce my appetite and lower my costs. Even my trusty ice cream waffle cone was \$7.
- ❖ Talk to everyone but listen with a discerning ear. One "experienced" operator told me that FEMA controlled ham radio. Funny, I thought the FCC had that responsibility.
- ❖ Use the ARRL Events app. It can save you steps and remind you of the forum you don't want to miss.
- ❖ There's a tremendous number of attractions in the Orlando area. Bring the family, stay an extra day (or don't come on Sunday – you won't miss much if anything) and turn your Hamcation into a family vacation.
- ❖ And finally – have fun!

For a second opinion, ask Scott, KD5DFL. He was there, too!

Cheers and 73 de KD5YS



Houston KD5YS operated the HamCation Special Event Station from 8:00 – 9:00 Sunday morning, February 12th!



**\*\* CLARC March Meeting, Tuesday, March 7, 2023 - Kees Park Community Center, 2450 HWY 28 Pineville.** Doors open at 5:30 for VE License exams and fellowship. Contact Jim Walters, AE5ZE at 318-447-9384 for exam information. Meeting to begin at 7:00 PM.  
Topic: Speaker Robert Partigiano, WB5JZP on MARS.

**ZOOM Link for all CLARC meetings:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88070112230?pwd=bjE3bDI2dnZQSGtBWjFVeFNhbVcyQT09>

**\*\* March 11, 2023 – RAYNE HAMFEST RETURNS!** – Acadiana DX Association - Rayne Civic Center - 2120 Frog Festival Drive, Rayne, LA. CONTACT: James Romero , K5CNU, Phone: 337-319-6414, Email: k5cnu@att.net. Link for info: <https://www.w5ddl.org/hamfest.htm>

**\*\*March 17 – CLARC Fellowship Lunch – Time: 11:00 AM – Location:** Brocato's Breakfast and Lunch, 5515 Coliseum Blvd, Alexandria, LA, see menu at <https://brocatosalex.com>

**\*\* April 1 - Louisiana QSO Party – Saturday – Louisiana QSO Party -** The Louisiana QSO Party will run from 14:00 UTC, April 1, 2023 to 02:00 UTC, April 2, 2023 (9:00 AM to 9:00PM CDT Saturday, April 1, 2023) <https://laqp.louisianacontestclub.org/>

**\*\* CLARC April Meeting, Tuesday, April 4, 2023 -** Kees Park Community Center, 2450 HWY 28 Pineville. Doors open at 5:30 for VE License exams and fellowship. Contact Jim Walters, AE5ZE at 318-447-9384 for exam information. Meeting to begin at 7:00 PM. Topic: Whitham D. Reeve – HAARP - High-frequency Active Auroral Research Program ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highfrequency\\_Active\\_Auroral\\_Research\\_Program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highfrequency_Active_Auroral_Research_Program))

**Zoom Link for all CLARC meetings:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88070112230?pwd=bjE3bDI2dnZQSGtBWjFVeFNhbVcyQT09>

**\*\*Friday, April 21 – CLARC Fellowship Lunch – Time: 11:00 AM – Location: TBA**

**\*\*May 9 – CLARC May Meeting -** Kees Park Community Center, 2450 HWY 28 Pineville. Doors open at 5:30 for VE License exams and fellowship. Contact Jim Walters, AE5ZE at 318-447-9384 for exam information. Meeting to begin at 7:00 PM. Presentation: Winter Field Day Operations Wrap-up, Houston KD5YS  
Zoom Link for all CLARC meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88070112230?pwd=bjE3bDI2dnZQSGtBWjFVeFNhbVcyQT09>

**\*\* May 13, 2023 – Saturday -**Carter Strong 3rd Annual Hamfest HAMFEST/CONVENTION – Louisiana Delta ARC- Joe Holland KB5VJY, 318-348-0153, kb5vjy@gmail.com, Location: Barak Shriners Lodge, 6620 Frontage Rd., Monroe, LA 71201 Email Joe: [kb5vjy@gmail.com](mailto:kb5vjy@gmail.com)



