

The Ground Wire

February 2003

Volume 2003, issue 2

Inside this issue:

Shuttle Columbia News	2
50 Years in Amateur Radio	3
Mystery Photo Answers	3
Dits And Dahs	4
Meeting Minutes	5

February Membership Meeting Program:

Mark 9 Search and Rescue

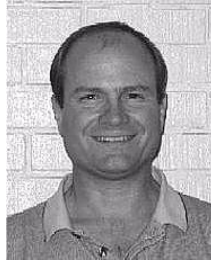
2 METER NCS Schedule

Feb. 2003

03-KC5MQC
10-KB5TMD
17-W5WB
24-KB5TMD

Mar. 2003

03-KJ5UY
10-KC5MQC
17-KB5TMD
24-W5WB
31-KC5CPO



Paul Dryer KD5IVP

A Surreal Morning...

Two minutes after eight, Saturday morning, February first, five of us wandered out into Luby's parking lot to observe one of the truly amazing displays contrived by mankind, a space shuttle reentry. Literally a meteor, hugely bright, rivaled only by the sun, shuttle Columbia flashed into view right on time, gracefully streaking across the sky on it's south easterly track to Florida. Breathtakingly surreal, we all commented about it's brightness and about the "sparks" being left in it's wake, never suspecting anything other than another successful space shuttle mission. Five minutes after the transit, the legendary double sonic boom sounded, topping off a beautiful spring like morning. Then, the news of what we'd actually witnessed was heard over the club repeater.

I'm sure by now we've all learned of the horrible tragedy befalling shuttle Columbia and her crew of seven. Shock and disbelief can only describe my

feeling upon hearing the news. I feel tremendous sadness for the crew and their families. And then, tremendous pride. We live in a great country where the best of the best knowingly trade the risk of death for the spirit of adventure. They know the odds, but bravely and cheerfully press on to discover the undiscovered. I thank God for blessing us with such people. Think where man kind would be had such people not walked the earth.

May God bless crew members Husband, McCool, Anderson, Brown, Chawla, Clark, and Ramon and may he watch over their families.

In the near wake of the Columbia disaster, amateur radio, once again, put on it's hat of service to the community. Dave Tucker, KC5CPO, had to be one of the first to answer the call. All day Saturday and most of Sunday, Dave worked with other Keene, Texas amateurs in assisting local law enforcement and fire fighters in their search for shuttle debris, which they found. Several of us listened to Dave as he provided updates over our 70cm repeater. Many Dallas RACES members have volunteered to provide badly needed communications to searchers in east Texas and are already in place. Wreckage and debris is being found at a rapid rate. SWDCARC would like to thank all those who volunteered and those who continue to stand by, on call. Again, our hobby proves its self something more

than just a hobby.

Amateur radio can make a difference!

On a happy note, the January general meeting celebrated 50 years of amateur radio in a surprise presentation to Dick Ellis, W5YCK. Rick Ellis, KJ5UY, somehow got Dick to the meeting under the guise of needing him to help with a "50 years of ham radio" presentation by Rick. Dick has always struck me as a true "ham" by every sense of the word. Dick was presented a nice certificate and a paid membership to our club. Congrats Dick, and thanks for being a friend, mentor, great father, and true ham!

73,
Paul, KD5IVP

Nominated Officers for 2003

Pres—Paul Dryer
V P—Bernie McPartland
Sec—Danny Cromaz
Treas—Johnny Roberson
Director—Rick Ellis

There were no additional nominations from the floor at the January Membership Meeting.

Elections will be held at the February General Membership Meeting

AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNITY MOURNS LOSS OF COLUMBIA ASTRONAUTS

The flags of the United States, the ARRL and the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) are flying at half staff at ARRL Headquarters as the Amateur Radio community has joined the rest of the world in mourning the loss of the seven shuttle Columbia astronauts. Through the Space Amateur Radio EXperiment (SAREX) and, more recently, the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) programs, amateurs have enjoyed a special relationship with the astronaut corps, many of whom are licensees. Three of the Columbia astronauts were Amateur Radio operators, and the ARISS program is a joint effort of ARRL, AMSAT and NASA. "The ultimate in public service was just given by these astronauts," said ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP. "It's a sad thing that's occurred, and our thoughts are with the families of the astronauts who died doing what they loved. They were part of us." Haynie, who was in Florida last weekend for the Miami Tropical Hamboree, said the news of the Columbia incident cast a pall over the festivities. "You could feel it in the crowd," he said. Haynie led those attending the ARRL forum in a moment of silence in remembrance of the lost crew members. The STS-107 crew, headed by Commander Rick Husband, included Pilot Willie McCool, Mission Specialists Kalpana "KC" Chawla, KD5ESI; David Brown, KC5ZTC; Laurel Clark, KC5ZSU, Michael Anderson, and Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut. "The world has lost seven great heroes," said ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, a NASA employee, in extending condolences to the families and friends of the STS-107 crew. Bauer said the Columbia catastrophe "clearly demonstrated the challenging and sometimes sobering aspects" of human space flight. "Our quest for space must continue despite these tragic losses," he said. ARRL and the ARISS Team received condolences from all over the globe. AMSAT-NA President Robin Haighton, VE3FRH--one of two Canadian ARISS representatives--expressed his great sadness at learning of the Columbia disaster. "AMSAT has always been a strong supporter of the shuttle program and of ARISS," he said "Their understanding of the risks taken on this and other missions did not prevent them from performing at the highest level and, unfortunately, paying the ultimate price," he said of the lost crew. Ken Pulfer, VE3PU, the other Canadian delegate to the ARISS International Team, said he was overwhelmed by the tragedy, both in sympathy for his US friends and because he had met so many of the astronauts himself. It was Pulfer who convinced the Canadian government to establish an astronaut corps of its own. "My condolences go out to all Americans at this time," he said, calling February 1 "a sad, sad day indeed." ARISS International Secretary Rosalie White, K1STO, recalled meeting "KC" Chawla at an ARISS meeting at Johnson Space Center. "Kalpana was intelligent, quiet--a professional scientist with a genuine smile," she

said. She also noted that Laurel Clark had done some "terrestrial SAREX QSOs" from W5RRR at Johnson Space Center with students in Kansas and New Mexico. The "terrestrial" SAREX QSOs took place at a time when the demand from schools for radio contacts with astronauts was high but the number of scheduled shuttle flights was very low. Built in 1981, Columbia was the oldest shuttle in NASA's fleet and was the first to carry Amateur Radio. Retired astronaut Owen Garriott, W5LFL, became the first ham to operate from space in November 1983. Thousands heard W5LFL, and hundreds had direct QSOs with him on 2 meters. Refurbished in 1999, Columbia was on its 28th space mission. Columbia carried no Amateur Radio gear on its last mission into space, however.

SHUTTLE LOSS IMPACTING AMATEUR RADIO IN SPACE

The future of Amateur Radio in space--at least in the near term--could depend on how fast NASA pins down the cause of the February 1 shuttle Columbia disaster and fixes the problem. With the shuttle fleet grounded until it does--and further International Space Station construction on hold as a result--attention is turning to the well-being of the all-ham ISS Expedition 6 crew of Commander Ken Bowersox, KD5JBP, Don Pettit, KD5MDT, and Nikolai Budarin, RV3FB. Three of the Columbia astronauts also were Amateur Radio operators. Under normal circumstances, a shuttle mission next month would have brought a fresh crew to the ISS and returned Bowersox and his crewmates to Earth. With a Progress 10 cargo rocket delivery February 4, the Expedition 6 team now has sufficient supplies to sustain the crew until late June or early July if necessary, NASA said this week. What happens beyond that remains up in the air, although NASA has said it would not mothball the ISS and leave the spacecraft without a crew. The extended stay could have an unintended consequence for Amateur Radio, however, since the temporarily stranded crew would be likely to have more spare time on its hands. NA1SS onboard the ISS represents the first permanent Amateur Radio station in space. The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) International Team recently announced plans to expand NA1SS to include, among other things, separate stations for 2 meters and 70 cm and SSTV capabilities. ARISS is an international program with participation by ARRL, AMSAT and NASA. An ARISS contact set for February 6 with students at a high school in Germany was postponed, although the ARISS contact schedule is expected to resume later this month. "The German school QSO was postponed because of the Columbia accident and the re-planning taking place for ISS," said ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Bauer said the crew's having to unload a ton of equipment from the Progress rocket also was a factor. He said he's expecting further clarification from NASA regarding future ARISS school QSOs. NASA reports that Bowersox, Budarin and Pettit paid a private tribute February 4 to Columbia's astronauts. NASA ISS flight controllers radioed the crew an audio feed from the memorial ceremony at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Additional information on the crew's activities aboard the ISS is available on NASA's Human Space flight Web site <<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/>>. The crippling of the US shuttle fleet has shifted formerly unanticipated demands on Russia and its meagerly funded space program, since Russian supplies the Soyuz capsules that now serve as emergency escape vehicles for the ISS crew. "If we have the money, we can build new [Soyuz] capsules," Russian space official and former cosmonaut Valery Ryumin assured this week. But, more money or no, Soyuz vehicles cannot carry cargo or experiments. The Russians also have temporarily scrapped their "space tourist" program, which they had been promoting to raise much-needed additional funds. Businessmen Dennis Tito, KG6FZX, and Mark Shuttleworth each paid an estimated \$20 million to fill the third Soyuz seat and spend a week aboard the ISS. 'N Sync pop singer Lance Bass, KG4UYY, had been considered a possible candidate for an April Soyuz taxi flight. Now, the Soyuz could become the principal crew transport vehicle for the ISS, although no decision has been made on whether the April taxi flight now will be used to carry out the crew change.

Thanks to :

The ARRL Letter and the American Radio Relay League for these articles.

**Congratulations to Dick Ellis W5YCK
for 50 Years in Amateur Radio !**

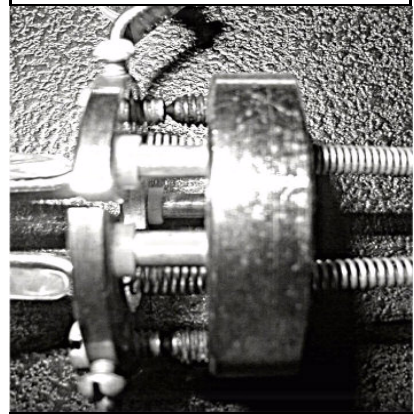


Left to Right - Paul Dryer presenting Dick Ellis W5YCK with a certificate congratulating him on 50 years of Amateur Radio at our January Club meeting.

**Mystery Photo
answers from last month**



**Mickey Mouse (KB5NJD)
at Field Day**



Bencher Paddle



**KTVT (Cedar Hill) burnt coax
for high definition TV antenna
after initial transmitting test.**

DITS and DAHS

Paddle or key ? What's the key to Morse ?

Involvement is the key.

The debate has been going as long as ...
Probably since Samuel Morse showed his friends his new alphabet and left the room for a fresh glass of well water. What kind of device to use to send this new art form. I'm speaking of the debate of Straight Key versus Paddle Key.

Since my initiation into the CW Circle of Friends, I've all but learned to tell who is using what. Those who are going at a pace I can head copy are about half and half. The people doing their best imitation of the Jetson's car in the passing lane are usually doing paddles.

Why do I care ? Well, Your club has been conducting Slow speed CW practice sessions. These are designed to help me ..(its all about me...) to help you brush up on your Morse. News to you ?

Monday nights, right after the normal club net on 2 Meters, we take the "big hop" and meet on 10 Meters. The frequency is 28.140 and is a nice quiet place to chew the fat with either your straight key, or your paddles. Even to mix and match like I try to do. Your ticket isn't punched to join us ? Contact any club officer and a way will be found for you to at least listen in, if have the desire.

Again, this is slow speed, laid back, comfortable CW. No matter if you use a paddle, or a key. No one will "bug" you, or "tap" your enthusiasm.

We'd love to have you stop by, or at least listen and tell us what you've copied !
Or even if the stuff is leaving my attic !

73.
Bernie McPartland, KC5-MQC

From our friends to the south.....

This years Skywarn School is scheduled for March 26th. This is a Wednesday night, 2 hour class. We will be meeting again at the Fine Arts Center at Waxahachie High School, Waxahachie, Texas. Times are: Doors open at 6:30 with program starting at 7:00 PM. Program will be ending by 9:00 PM.

This program is open to the public with no fees

charged for admittance. If you have a large group to attend, please RSVP. We are trying to get enough publications put together for the program.

Tnx

Danny Woodruff
Ellis County

Local Club News

Our best wishes and our sympathy to Richard Baker (N5KXA) and his family on the recent loss of Richard's Mother.

Best wishes for a complete and speedy recovery go to Bob Best (KA4JSQ). Bob has been heard on the 2 meter repeater with a Q-5 signal from his stay in the hospital. Bob hopes to be able to go home around February 12th.

Got an idea for a club special event? We are looking for ideas to help spark interest in our club for both present and future members. You can email your ideas to **specialevents@swdcarc.org** and it will get into the hands of the special events committee.

On the same vane, there has been email boxes set up for various club functions for your use.

Use **swdcarc@swdcarc.org** for general comments to the club Board of Directors.

We have **newsletter@swdcarc.org** for contributions to this publication. Anything from a single paragraph or sentence about club members or events is acceptable. We are always looking for articles as well.

Questions to the membership chairman can be directed to **membership@swdcarc.org** and any comments and suggestions about our club web page can be directed to **Webmaster@swdcarc.org**

Wanted

I am looking for good used

3-1000Z
4-1000Z
and 3CX1200A7
tubes for a HF amplifier project, if anyone has one extra.

Contact Danny Boyer W5AHN

BOARD MEETING

First Tuesday 6:30 PM

Luna y Sol Restaurant

1615 N. Hampton

DeSoto

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Third Tuesday 6:30 PM

Luna y Sol Restaurant

1615 N. Hampton

DeSoto

January Board of Directors Meeting

The January 7, 2003 Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Paul Dryer KD5IVP at the Luna Y Sol Restaurant in Desoto, Texas. Board Members and members present were Paul Dryer KD5IVP, Todd Huovinen KB5TMD Neil Palmquist W9NDP, Russ Thompson KX5G, Rick Ellis KJ5UY, Rebecca Ellis KC5FHG, Johnny Roberson KJ5LB, Pat Roberson KB5YPP, Ted Black WB0TSX, Danny Cromaz W5WB, Drena Cromaz KK5YC, Dave Tucker KC5CPO, Floyd Rogers KC5QBC and Bernie McPartland KC5MQC. Treasurers Report—Johnny Roberson reported end of the year balances have been transferred for the 2003 beginning year. Membership dues are starting to come in. Repeater Report- Johnny Roberson reported that the 2 meter was working great. A question was raised regarding the output of the 440 machine. The antenna pattern may have changed. Ted Black, chairman of the nomination committee presented the proposed slate of 2003 officers. They are Paul Dryer-President; Bernie McPartland-Vice-President; Danny Cromaz – Secretary, Johnny Roberson-Treasurer, and Rick Ellis-Director. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the January General Membership Meeting per the bylaws. Anyone wishing to put their name into nomination should have their dues paid . Elections will be held at the February General Membership Meeting. Special Events-Rebecca Ellis presented a proposal for a club fund raiser for upcoming special events. Paul Dryer announced that there will be another CW boot camp held the first week of February 2003 at the Windsor Park Baptist Church in Desoto, TX. It will be held for 5 nights from 7pm-9pm with the last class having the code test. A \$10.00 testing fee will need to be paid at the first class and will be used to pay the VE test fee at the last session. Contact Paul Dryer for your reservation or additional information. A Field Day committee was formed composed of Paul Dryer, Danny Cromaz, Russ Thompson, Bernie McPartland and Floyd Rogers. This committee will

look into potential sites for Field Day 2003.

The programs for the January and February meetings were discussed. Also discussed was the use of email from the SWDCARC.ORG to better serve the club. Comments were heard from guests and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM

January General Membership Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President, Paul Dryer at 6:45PM . There were no corrections to the previous meetings. The treasurer report was read by Johnny Roberson, we have received the 2003 dues from 11 members so far. There was no VE testing held last month. Paul Dryer announced that he would like to have another code boot camp starting on Monday, February 2nd if he could get 5 interested participants. The fee will be \$10.00 that would be applied to the VE testing fee regardless if pass or fail. Todd Huovinen gave the net report stating that there were 13 check-ins at the last 2 meter net and 1 at the slow speed CW net. Rebecca Ellis announced that the Special Event committee will hold a fund raiser for the club. They will be selling silk corsages or roses in a bud vase for \$10.00 each for Valentines Day. See Rebecca to place your order. The nominating committee chairman, Ted Black announced a proposed slate of officers for 2003. They are as follows: Paul Dryer-President; Bernie McPartland-Vice President; Danny Cromaz-Secretary; Johnny Roberson Treasurer; and Rick Ellis-3 Year Director. Nominations from the floor were then entertained for anyone wishing to nominate or run for a 2003 officer position. There were no additional nominations. The nominations were then closed. Old Business-Aaron McCarthy gave a status report for the county Bio-Terriorm project. Funding is in the works. It appears that the Homeland Security wants to combine counties involvement with more information to follow. New Business-Floyd Rogers , Adam Adkins, and Paul Dryer visited the Mark 9 rescue dog unit and saw them training. This appears to be an excellent project for the club as they need communications which we could provide. They are presently using FRS radios with minimum success. They will present the program at the February General Membership Meeting. Floyd Rogers presented an opportunity about the city of Lancaster, who wants to open up a local EOC office. The General Manager of the city came from Garland and he worked with the Garland RACES group and is aware of the benefits that ham radio can provide to a city. Meeting will be held in the future. A committee was set up to look at alternate sites for field day. The program was presented by Rick Ellis, Jr about Fifty Years of Amateur Radio. The program was presented in honor of his Father, Dick Ellis and his achievement of 50 years as an amateur operator. Dick was also presented with a certificate and awarded paid membership for 2003 from the club for this extraordinary accomplishment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM