



JULY 2008

**Hill Country Amateur Radio Club
Kerrville, Texas**

Minutes of Meeting, 4 June 2008

The Hill Country Amateur Radio Club was called to order by President Marilyn Vordenbaum, KE5DDR, at 1900 hours on Thursday, 4 June 2008, in the Hill Country Chapter Red Cross Building. Marilyn led the pledge of allegiance.

President Vordenbaum awarded 50/50 tickets to Bob Nelson, N5EW; Steve Griffin, WD5ENH; Jack Chichester, W9AMF; Gene Atkinson, K5AZ; and the "Sharp Boys" (Zachary, KE5JUV; Samuel, KE5NYZ; and John).

Ron Drumheller, K3NXF, introduced Steve Griffin, WD5ENH, who gave the evening's program. Steve is president of the Hill Country Camera Club, and presented a most interesting picture (pun) of photography as an art, a science, and a business.

A short break was declared for consumption of coffee and sweets provided by Diane Nelson, K5DBN, and her refreshments committee.

Treasurer Harvey Vordenbaum, K5HV, presented the treasurer's report, which was approved.

Under Old Business, the following information reports were given:

- Dan Eastes, K5OW: Organization and preparations for Field Day (28-29 June)
- Fred Gilmore, W0LPD: Static pictures of Field Day
- Harvey Vordenbaum, K5HV: New packet station operational
- Curtis Eastwood, AD5UZ: Emergency response organization

Marilyn Vordenbaum, KE5DDR: Red Cross courses being offered in CPR, etc. It was announced that wireless internet is to be installed in the Club meeting room.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Samuel Jones.

Bob Nelson, N5EW, presented components of a complete operating station, from the estate of Floyd Thorn, N5SVP, to the Sharp brothers (Zachary, KE5JUV; Samuel, KE5NYZ; and John).

The meeting was adjourned at 2050 hours.

Gene Atkinson, K5AZ, Substitute Secretary

AUSTIN SUMMERFEST

<http://www.austinsummerfest.info/>

The Austin Summerfest is an ARRL Sponsored State Convention. See you there!

**DID YOU KNOW...
WSPR**

Pronounced "**whisper**" stands for "Weak Signal Propagation Reporter." This program implements transmitting and receiving for a digital soundcard mode called "MEPT_JT", an acronym for "Manned Experimental Propagation Tests, by K1JT".

WSPR QSO COMPLETED

WSPR is a relatively new digital mode that hams have been experimenting with on HF and VHF bands over the last few months. Joe Taylor K1JT has been the driving force behind this weak signal development. WSJT is capable of extremely weak signal detection way below the noise floor due to its use of very robust Forward Error Correction techniques. Stations previously have been operating using beacon like transmissions to test the capabilities of the mode using very low power often way less than 1Watt.

On May 6 2008 the first two way QSO was made using WSPR between K1JT and W6CQZ on 30meters using simple antennas and **1Watt** TX power. Take a look at this link if interested in that QSO and what might be to come in future releases of WSJT:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wsjpgroup/message/4799>

If you are interested in experimenting with this mode you can download the free software at:

<http://www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/index.htm>

Thanks to K1JT and others for all their hard work.

OUR SUN



ScienceDaily (Jun. 9, 2008) - The sun has been lying low for the past couple of years, producing no sunspots and giving a break to satellites

That's good news for people who scramble when space weather interferes with their technology, but it became a point of discussion for the scientists who attended an international

solar conference at Montana State University. Approximately 100 scientists from Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa and North America gathered June 1-6 to talk about "Solar Variability, Earth's Climate and the Space Environment."

The scientists said periods of inactivity are normal for the sun, but this period has gone on longer than usual.

"It continues to be dead," said Saku Tsuneta with the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, program manager for the Hinode solar mission. "That's a small concern, a very small concern."

The Hinode satellite is a Japanese mission with the United States and United Kingdom as partners. The satellite carries three telescopes that together show how changes on the sun's surface spread through the solar atmosphere. MSU researchers are among those operating the X-ray telescope. The satellite orbits 431 miles above ground, crossing both poles and making one lap every 95 minutes, giving Hinode an uninterrupted view of the sun for several months out of the year.

Dana Longcope, a solar physicist at MSU, said the sun usually operates on an 11-year cycle with maximum activity occurring in the middle of the cycle. Minimum activity generally occurs as the cycles change. Solar activity refers to phenomena like sunspots, solar flares and solar eruptions. Together, they create the weather than can disrupt satellites in space and technology on earth.

The last cycle reached its peak in 2001 and is believed to be just ending now, Longcope said. The next cycle is just beginning and is expected to reach its peak sometime around 2012. Today's sun, however, is as inactive as it was two years ago, and scientists aren't sure why.

"It's a dead face," Tsuneta said of the sun's appearance.

Tsuneta said solar physicists aren't like weather forecasters; they can't predict the future. They do have the ability to observe, however, and they have observed a longer-than-normal period of solar inactivity. In the past, they observed that the sun once went 50 years without producing sunspots. That period, from approximately 1650 to 1700, occurred during the middle of a little ice age on Earth that lasted from as early as the mid-15th century to as late as the mid-19th century.

Tsuneta said he doesn't know how long the sun will continue to be inactive, but scientists associated with the Hinode mission are ready for it to resume maximum activity. They have added extra ground stations to pick up signals from Hinode in case solar activity interferes with instruments at other stations around the world. The new stations, ready to start operating this summer, are located in India, Norway, Alaska and the South Pole.

Establishing those stations, as well as the Hinode mission, required international cooperation, Tsuneta said. No one country had the resources to carry out those projects by itself.

Four countries, three space agencies and 11 organizations worked together on Hinode which was launched in September 2006, Tsuneta said. Among the collaborators was Loren Acton, a research professor of physics at MSU. Tsuneta and Acton worked together closely from 1986-2002 and were reunited at the MSU conference.

"His leadership was immense, superb," Tsuneta said about Acton.

Acton, 72, said he is still enthused by solar physics and the new questions being raised. In fact, he wished he could knock 22 years off his age and extend his career even longer.

"It's too much fun," he said. "There's so much exciting stuff come up, I would like to be part of it."



WL7MQ (Pete) and XYL (Lois) back from Alaska Drop by McDonalds Coffee on Wednesday and say Hello

The RST system

R = READABILITY

- 1 -- Unreadable
- 2 -- Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable
- 3 -- Readable with considerable difficulty
- 4 -- Readable with practically no difficulty
- 5 -- Perfectly readable

S = SIGNAL STRENGTH

- 1 -- Faint signals, barely perceptible
- 2 -- Very weak signals
- 3 -- Weak signals
- 4 -- Fair signals
- 5 -- Fairly good signals
- 6 -- Good signals
- 7 -- Moderately strong signals
- 8 -- Strong signals
- 9 -- Extremely strong signals

T = TONE

- 1 -- Sixty cycle a.c. or less, very rough and broad
- 2 -- Very rough a.c. , very harsh and broad
- 3 -- Rough a.c. tone, rectified but not filtered
- 4 -- Rough note, some trace of filtering
- 5 -- Filtered rectified a.c. but strongly ripple-modulated
- 6 -- Filtered tone, definite trace of ripple modulation
- 7 -- Near pure tone, trace of ripple modulation
- 8 -- Near perfect tone, slight trace of modulation
- 9 -- Perfect tone, no trace of ripple or modulation of any kind





The Austin Sumerfest is an ARRL Sponsored State Convention.
<http://www.austinsummerfest.info/>
August 1st and 2nd



Austin Summerfest Talk-in Frequency

146.940 (minus offset - no tone).

The Wyndham Garden Hotel

3401 South IH-35 in Austin.

Phone (512) 448-2444

From the President....

Re this, Re that, and Re the other.....
That's the prefix for now. Stay tuned, come to the meetings, read the Static, check kerrhams.org and YOU will understand.
73,
Marilyn KE5DDR

VE REPORT

de W0LPD

June 28 2008 session added one new ham to our club roster and one upgrade to Extra class operator. Thanks to AD5UZ, K5AZ and W9CNC for their work as the VE examiners.

AR News

Market Reef Will Be On In July

Word was released that six well known operators will activate Market Reef 11-14 Jul 2008. The expedition is timed so that the operators will be able to take part in the IARU High Frequency World Championship event 12-13 Jul 2008. The group says that it will have three stations on the air on 160 through 6 Meters. All operators will use their home calls portable OJØ before and after the IARU contest, except for OH1VR, who will use OJØVR. QSL each station to his or her home calls and OJØVR via OH1VR.

— OPDX, ARNewsline

First SSTV From New Seeds Ham Radio Cubesat

The first Slow Scan Television pictures have been received from the Seeds cubesat satellite which was one of seven successfully launched on 28 Apr 2008. JN1GKZ reports that he was one of the first to successfully copy and record an SSTV image from Seeds and has put it on his website. PA3GUO adds that he, too, has received a Seeds SSTV transmission along with that of the satellite's digi-talker. The Seeds cubesat transmits on a frequency of 437.485 MHz using either CW running 110 milliwatts or FM at 450 milliwatts output. It sends only one stored SSTV picture about every two minutes when the satellite is in digi-talker mode. More about Seeds is online at: <http://cubesat.aero.cst.nihon-u.ac.jp/english/blog.html>

— ARNewsline

Ham Radio In Space

The 28 Apr 2008 launch of 10 satellites aboard an Indian Space Research rocket put seven Amateur Radio cubesats and three commercial scientific birds into space. Telemetry indicates that all solar panels and antennas were properly deployed. Other telemetry shows values for all on-orbit housekeeping activities are normal. An excellent source of information for each of these satellites can be found at: www.skyrocket.de/space/space.html. Also visit Ralph Wallio's, WØRPK, cubesat webpage at <http://showcase.netins.net/web/wallio>

— ARNewsline

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