

FOUR SEASONS BEAUMONT

AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

MINUTES OF MEETING OF JULY 29, 2022

Members Present: Pete Hersey KJ6NRR, Fred Plenge K6FXP, Bill Taylor KM6CIU, Harry Henderson AC2LZ, Henry Ciesielski KN6CQL, John Ensler KN6FMM, Fred Weck KK6HBQ

Club President Pete Hersey opened the meeting by discussing his experience at the recent ARRL Field Day on June 24-25. He mentioned that he was one of three operators at Dysart Park. Pete said that the outdoor temperature was over 100°F but that he had an 'Easy-Up' so it helped. Pete explained the problems of using a car battery as a source of power for his radio. According to Pete, car batteries that are stored in the garage for long periods of time between being used can be subject to sulfating, where the battery plates get coated with sulfates. Pete mentioned that you can turn the battery upside down, and drain out the battery acid. Then flush the battery with a mixture of water and baking soda, and repeat the process 4 or 5 times. Then, Pete said that you can get ammonium sulfate and put it in the battery and charge it. REMEMBER, battery acid is highly toxic and great care should be taken to not let the acid get on you or your clothes. Pete said that our two emergency batteries supporting our HOA's radio station in the RCN building, should be tested to determine their level of charge.

Pete mentioned that there may be merit on testing the two car batteries we use for our radio room. Harry mentioned that a good way to test a car battery is to connect a sealed beam car headlight to the terminals.

Pete then discussed a You Tube video originating in British Columbia whereby a radio operator made an antenna. This outdoor antenna stood about 22' tall and was a directional antenna which gives better gain to focus on a pre-determined direction. The guy in Canada that used it was able to pick up signals from radio operators on our east coast and southern California. Pete said he would send the video to Fred Plenge who could then put it on our radio club website for all to see.

Pete brought up the topic of Software Defined Radio (SDR) that he saw presented at the SPARC meeting the previous evening. Apparently SDR takes some of the hardware out of the radio and your computer does some of the work. There are some radios that don't need a computer. For example, Pete said that the ICOMM 7300 does not need a computer. Additionally, SDR FLEX radios, though expensive, is a good radio and has just a power switch on the front. The benefits are (1) a better signal, and (2) it filters out noise.

Pete mentioned that he attended Laurie's memorial service and it was likewise well-attended by many people in the Four Seasons community.

There being no further business, the Amateur Radio Club meeting was closed at 11: 20 am. The next club meeting will be held on August 26 at 10:00 at the RCN building. Minutes respectfully submitted by Fred Weck, club secretary.