

June 2003
Volume 3
Issue 6

SMARCalling



Southwest Missouri Amateur Radio Club <http://www.smarc.org>

P.O. Box 11363 Springfield, MO 65808 PH: 417-886-4152

President's Corner . . .

Regular Meeting
7:00 PM
American Red
Cross Building
1835 E Chestnut
just East of
Glenstone Ave.
3rd Monday of
Every Month

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June 16th
Field Day 2003
Planning

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

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**Public
Always
Welcome!**

Time To Plan Field Day!

We have permission to use Lake Springfield again so we will be at the same site as the past several years. As always, we need volunteers to "storm the gate" before sunrise to give us the best chances of obtaining the pavilion. We really would not like FD without the use of this shelter!

Please come to the meeting this month, bring a friend, and help us plan a great Field Day! Your suggestions and your help really are appreciated! Have an idea? Try to line out some of the details. With small organizations the hardest part is finding a person to ramrod an idea. Often this is the most critical element.

I have spoken to Scott at the American Red Cross and he has agreed to pay us a visit this year. (Thanks Scott! No word from the Senator ;-)

We have two big outdoor operations planned this year. First is Field Day this month, and then in August we have another Special Event Station planned, w0c, commemorating the battle at Wilson Creek.

Outdoor operations such as these are a lot of fun, a lot of work, and certainly better prepare us to help our communities in times of need, such as the deadly tornadoes that recently destroyed so many towns in Missouri. Remember one of the reasons we are licensed by the FCC is so we can assist with communications during emergencies. (Contact Ken Baremore, w0krb, to discover more about emergency communications.)

Please come out and play radio with us at both these portable stations. We enjoy visiting with one another and whether you want to operate CW, experiment with antennas, solar power, or just chew the fat, we welcome and invite everyone. In fact, bring along a friend, we're in this for fun too!

Here's a link to some useful information. It compares a 66-foot and 44-foot dipole, complete with computer modeling and enough commentary to flesh out the details. I think I may try one. What about using it Field Day?

<http://www.cebik.com/aledz.html>

See you there! -73 de Erik, n0ew

Upcoming Events – Write Them in Your Calendar Now & Come Play!

June, 24	VE Testing Session, Evangel, Evening Session, 7 PM!
June, 28-29	Field Day 2003
July, 19	Warrensburg Hamfest http://waarci.dyndns.org VE Test Session & Air Conditioned!
August, 10th	w0c, Wilson Creek Battlefield Special Event Station

April 2003, SMARC MINUTES**Attendance:**

Dick Higinbotham k0gl	Erik Weaver n0ew	Woodie Moore w0ody	Bill Chambers n0mbw
Lee Shafer w0tIs	Lance Riffle kc0kbl	Ken Baremore w0krb	Louise Buck kb0vkv
Mike Rains k0rfi	Bill Harmon wb0onm	Michael Blake n0nqw	Fred Drake ki0et
Ron Schanda wb0ovc	Andy Decker ad0p		

Guests:

Steve Palmer ka0spm	Gene Adcock wb0rsz	J.R. Duncan n0rlp	Allen Busiek wf5u
Jim Martin nm0q	Jody Martin ka0vrv	Matthew Elliff n/c	Carson Elliff n/c

Business Meeting & Announcements:

Previous Minutes, and Treasurer's Report were accepted.

KOS – Kurt N. Sterba Strange Antenna Challenge Special Event Station

All k0s logs and required images have been turned in. There was only one additional station ran Sunday. The membership voted in favor of running another "k0s" event next year.

91 Repeater

No firm idea of the intermittent interference. Our Trustee Michael Blake n0nqw did go over a number of the commands to run the controller with several interested members after the main meeting.

Field Day 2003

We have received the letter of permission allowing us to stay in Lake Springfield over Saturday night. This will be the site used and we need "pre dawn gate crashers" to storm the pavilion and secure its use. If available we will have the crane out there again and the generators (thanks to Skip ak0c and Mike n0nqw). Scott Emerson of American Red Cross fame has verbally agreed to pay us a visit and Erik will write him the official invite. There's 100 bonus points to get us started!

134 Amp-Hour Batteries

Southern Missouri Battery (865-8843, W. Kearney just east of Race Brothers) has 134-AH AGM batteries for \$25 each – this is a great price! If you desire battery backup or solar power applications you should get some of these batteries. They weigh 100 pounds each. They are tested and we believe they have a 30-day warranty, but no one has had any problems yet. The club board intends to purchase some of these batteries to provide reliable backup power to our repeaters.

VE Testing Session

6:45 PM Tue. June 24th at Evangel Library (1111 N. Glenstone) is a testing session. Last chance before the new exam goes into effect July 1st. Contact w0ody for details (see last page).

News-Leader Article

Sunday May 11th the local paper ran a nice feature on our k0s Special Event. Good press for ham radio!

General Comments....

We had a larger number of guests this last meeting than we have had recently. It was great having them and will be really great if they keep coming back! Along this line, remember to invite or bring people to our meetings. When you see a new face be friendly and talk to them a little bit. We don't really have a "greeter" and maybe we should, but for now it is up to all of us to make guests feel like returning.

For Field Day we do need...

Computers for logging, battery backup power for the computers, four stations (CW, SSB, 6M, and Get On The Air). Please be thinking about what you would like to do for Field Day, and bring these ideas to the June meeting. Lance, kc0kbl, is our Field Day Chairman. Think about antennas. Due to a shrinking budget the feeding will be pot-luck style so think about pot-luck food items you might bring. Thanks!!

Our Kurt N. Sterba Strange Antenna Challenge Special Event Station, k0s, met with severe weather Saturday, but Sunday brought pleasant weather although still quite windy. We only operated about 3 hours on Saturday making contacts using three different antennas, and roughly 3 1/2 hours Sunday, using another antenna in three different configurations. Saturday we also tuned up a pair of shopping carts and a dolly vertical but did find time to work them. Nor did we fine-tune any antenna setup with regard to feed points, height, or such concerns. We just stood 'em up, tied 'em down, and flew 'em!

10-Meters seemed dead and all the bands were fading quite a bit. Nearly all our contacts were made on 20-Meters and during day light hours. My thanks to everyone that showed up, and especially to everyone that pitched and to help! Dick k0gl, Lance kc0kbl, Ken w0krb, Dwayne wb5plj, Bill n0mbw, and myself brought the majority of "things" ranging from small generators (which we did not need this time) to hose clamps and bits of wire, 100 lb. batteries, and everything in between! Thanks guys, your help made the event possible, and it must have worked because the club has voted to do this again next year! Others such as Mike k0rfi and Brad kl1if were a great help. I apologize to any I missed!

Saturday we made contacts with a 24 foot "tophat" extension ladder, a ladder "A-Frame", and ladder dipole, for a total of 13 contacts all in the lower 48, starting at 10:12 am (local) through 13:07. Our Saturday contacts were:

1. With the "A-Frame" ladder, between 10:12 & 11:35: OR, PA, FL, AZ (2), CA;
2. With the 24 foot "Tophat" ladder, between 11:34 & Noon: CA, NC, CA and one "unknown";
3. With the extension ladder dipole, between 12:38 & 13:07: MO, VA, FL.

Sunday Erik and Dwayne flew a loadlock in three different configurations: as a vertical off a small chain link fence, as an "L" off the basketball hoop (in truth it was closer to a horizontal / vertical dipole). These antennas made a total of 40 contacts, bringing our club's two-day total to 53 contacts.

Sunday we had one "DX" contact in Ottawa, Canada, and the rest were across the lower 48 states:

1. Loadlock vertical on the small (about 40 foot) chain link fence:
GA (2), NY, CA (2), TX (5), FL (3), PA (2), AL (2), AZ, NC (2), Ottawa, OH (2), LA, VA, CO, MD, NM (2);
2. Loadlock vertical "L" with basketball hoop (and an hour of calling CQ):
AZ (Phoenix Science Center, with a beam at 200 feet. This antenna didn't work very well!);
3. Loadlock vertical on large neighborhood chain link fence:
CA (8), WA (2).

So far we've had a little over a dozen hams request a QSL. You can see a sample of the k0s certificate on the following website, along with more information about this event and the pre-event testing: <http://www.n0ew.org/StrangeAntennas/k0s.html>. Be sure to visit www.smarc.org because Lee is doing a great job of updating our club web site with useful and interesting information.

Compared to the 10-Meter contest Erik entered with a variety of "strange antennas" (chairs, easels, dolly, tape measure) we didn't do nearly as well with regard to DX stations. I think the largest reason is the height. Erik had his antennas up 15 to 20 feet whereas ours were no higher than 3 feet. Next year we should plan to run some comparative tests. Perhaps we can get two identical antennas strung up, one from the trees and the other on the ground and have some of the stations we contact provide RS-reports on both set ups. That'd be neat!

Treasurer's Report as of May 31, 2003

Assests		Expenses		TOTAL INCOME	\$ 50.00
Checking	\$ 511.64	Bank Charge Overdraft	\$ 20.00		
Savings	\$3,092.71	Newsletter		TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 48.28
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,604.35	printing	\$ 0		
Income		sales tax	\$ 0		
Repeater Fund	\$ 5.00	stamps	\$ 0	(INCOME) - (EXPENSES) =	\$ 1.72
SMARC Dues	\$ 25.00	146.640 Phone Line	\$ 28.28		(no newsletter cost yet turned in, but existent -EW)
Reimbursement for overdrif	\$ 20.00	X-Mas Family 2002	\$ 0		

Field Day 2003 – Lake Springfield, MO

June 28 – 29. We begin set up at dawn, with operations beginning at 1 PM.

Talk-In Frequency is 146.91, Negative Offset, PL Tone 162.2

GPS Coordinates N 37.11639° W 093.25832° (N 37°06'58.9" W 093°15'29.9")



From Fremont & Republic Road in Springfield (see circle above):

South 1.0 mile on Fremont until you come to a "T" intersection (Briar).
Turn left (East) onto Briar.

If you look to your left you will see a fire station # 11 on the NE corner.

Drive a total of 0.6 miles to reach the park entrance (on your left).

At 0.2 miles you come to a sharp turn right.

At 0.6 miles you are following a large curve to your left.

Lake Springfield Park entrance gate is immediately after this large curve.

(If you cross the dam bridge, or pass the power plant, you've gone too far!)

Follow the park road 0.7 miles to the pavilion we are using.

From Outside Springfield:

Find the intersection of Hwy 60 and Hwy 65.

I-44 crosses Hwy 65. Head south from there to Hwy 60.

Hwy 65 runs along the eastern edge of Springfield.

Hwy 60 goes through the southern edge of Springfield.

From Hwy 60 & Hwy 65:

Get on Hwy 60, from Hwy 65, and drive west 1.6 miles to the first exit.

(The exit is after you cross the railroad tracks and climb the hill.)

This is the Glenstone Avenue & Republic Road exit.

Turn south, onto Republic Road. Drive 1.2 miles to Fremont + Republic Rd.

(Republic Road curves to your right and you'll pass the YMCA.)

Turn south onto Fremont and follow the directions given above.

FIELD DAY CHAIR

Lance Riffle, kc0kbl, our club's VP is the FD Chairman this year. His contact information is on the last page of this newsletter. Please contact Lance to coordinate your FD plans.

FOOD

The biggest change from last year is the meals are "pot luck" style. We'd like everyone to bring some kind of covered dish, bag of chips, pop, or something along these lines. Last year the club spent close to \$200 on food and it simply is not in the budget to do so again. We will have a BBQ at the site and the club will provide hot dogs, hamburgers. All other food items will need to be donated by individuals. Lance, kc0kbl, has donated bun money.

DRINKS & ICE

We will need several water containers, such as the Gott jugs you sometimes see on utility trucks. Ice should not be a problem. Last year Reddy Ice donated a large ice trailer but we didn't use nearly that much ice. This year Erik, n0ew, will fill coolers Saturday morning. If you have a cooler you would like filled, bring it to the June SMARC meeting and Erik will deliver it to the site filled with bagged ice (Reddy Ice donation).

STATIONS

We anticipate having the construction trailer supplied and set up by Bill Besore, k0wb, as he did last year. Chris Smith, kc0gox, and Mike Rains, k0rfi, are setting up the 6-Meter station. Chris will also set up a demonstration of solar power, which will be really interesting to see. Tim and Lora Smith, n0ehw and kc0epd respectively, will bring the SSB station. We need someone to set up the GOTA.

We still need a couple computers to run the logging software as well as backup UPS (backup battery power) for all the computers. We will NOT network the computers this year because it caused too many problems in obtaining the logs and is not required so long as the stations are used on the planned bands (CW, SSB, and 6-Meter). Several power strips are always needed.

Mike Blake, n0nqw, and Skip Crane, ak0c, are supplying the generator and power distribution as they have done in the past. We may have the crane again too, if it is available.

Desk lamps for the evening, pads of note paper and pens, some backup coax, coax connectors and soldering supplies for repairs are needed. We may need some tuners. We need a couple power supplies. We need a 2-Meter talk-in station and a person to man it during the set-up hours.

SEVERE WEATHER

We need to make plans for severe weather. In the event of a lightning storm we will shut down the stations, but we also need to make plans for protecting the electronics from rain. Plastic rolls, garbage bags, tarps and a means of weighting the bottoms. Rope, etc.

SETUP / TEARDOWN RAMROD

Don McCroskey, wa0gvh, has agreed to ramrod our setup/tear down efforts. This is always a great help!

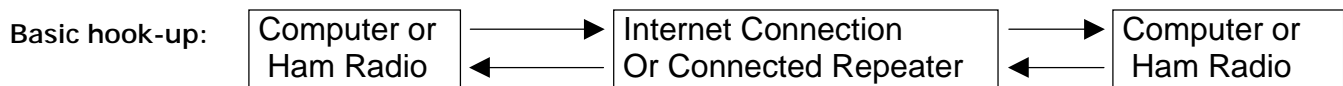
Miscellaneous...

There is not enough room to outline everything, and there are certainly some things I haven't thought of, so please attend the June SMARC meeting and bring your ideas. All suggestions are welcomed, and those that are teamed with the helping hands to carry out the project are the best!

This should be a fun meeting. Bring a friend. With everyone's efforts we should have a great Field Day!

May Meeting – Part One

Echolink Presentation by Ken Baremore, w0krb



Echolink allows you to hook either your computer or rig to other similarly hooked up hams all across the world via the Internet. A ham radio license is required. The computer should have a "Soundblaster" compatible sound card to make your life easiest as well as a "cheapee" headset with microphone. If using a phone line you may experience "picketing" and other problems. Try it and find out!

Here is some information to get you started (remember to visit www.smarc.org for even more info):

Hollister	kf0pb	443.900	Node 92130
St. Louis	k0rwu	146.925	Node 68690
Springfield	kr0y	145.190	Node 42351
Houston	k5wl	444.500	Node 4481 (smaller node # indicates earlier start date)

<http://www.echolink.org> (to download you need to supply a valid email address & your call sign).

The first time you sign onto the system you will be assigned a "node number" which identifies your station. This may be a computer, repeater, or other ham radio. It is strongly (strongly!) suggested you use the space bar as your PTT (push to talk). This will keep you from remaining connected while you are cooking dinner, watching TV, etc., so don't use the "lock space bar" option.

You need to know there is a small delay between transmissions, 5 to 15 seconds. Remember to leave an opening between TX/RX (which is good manners anyway actually). There is also a "echo test" function which will allow you to play back your audio. Do so as this allows you to hear exactly how you are sounding on the receiving end – quite important! Also be aware Echolink is somewhat "rude" in that it doesn't listen before talking on the receiving end, it just breaks right in. If you hear this happening the other station is not being rude, it is just the way the system works.

You will see a blue bar – this is your talking volume. If it just peaks into yellow you are about to over-mod. If you see it consistently in the yellow you are certainly over driving your audio. The # key shuts off the connection. When you connect / disconnect the program automatically announces your call. When you successfully connect you will hear "connecting" and there is a similar announcement when disconnecting.

Some of our member's more interesting contacts include: Sherwood Forest & someone mobile in Israel. At the meeting Ken used a HT to hit the 145.19 repeater through which he briefly spoke with Steve n9nso who was in Arkansas. Equipment was less than ideal, but the communications took place!

The free software is very user friendly. The help is actually helpful and includes screen shots to be even easier to use – pretty nice! You can see everyone that is currently connected or you can limit your vision to a given geographical area, specific repeater, or node. You may "conference" thus allowing multiple people access to your node (which you set up one time) or limit access. You can type notes back and forth if both stations are on computers.

The hardware interface requires a soundcard and parallel port (about \$100 total). There are currently four servers which are believed to be connected to one another that provide this service. Hams are operating both VHF and HF. Installation can be a little tough if you have a firewall to get through. On the other hand if you already have a similar piece of software set up you may find no difficulty. You will require four active ports on your end. Both your mic and soundcard must work.

Right now the only local repeater we know of allowing Echolink is the 145.190 and you will hear hams connecting and disconnecting throughout the day. You never know with whom you may talk! So when you hear the connection take place give them a call and let them know they are being heard. If they have a poor signal let them know what you are hearing so they can make changes to their set up. Give it a try! Lee has links to everything you need on the SMARC web site.

May Meeting – Part Two

CWCommunicator Presentation by Lee Shafer, w0tIs

See www.smarc.org for the download link

No ham license is required and the software is free (about 3 megs). After you download the software and begin setting it up only change your call sign in the "connect" window. Accept the rest of the default settings. There are over 65,000 "channels" available and channel 1,000 is considered to be the "calling" channel.

Configuration is found by following Mouse -> Keyboard -> then Joystick or Comport (whichever you are using – you can use a variety of your own keys too if you like). To set up a key go to the Help Manual -> Diagram. You will need either a 9- or 15-pin serial port.

You can use either the Network or Internet connection. If you use specific IP addresses you can talk directly between two computers and the "world" can't hear / see you. If you use the Internet connection you are visible to the rest of the world. For more information go to http://www.mrx.com.au/d_cwcom.htm

Character speed settings need to be within about +/- 5 wpm of what you are sending / receiving but the program will listen and self-adjust. If you see gobbledygook don't worry as it should adjust. Try to maintain the same rhythm while sending. You can set the screen to print what is being sent, or you can turn this feature off.

You can send preformed text files. They need to be plain text, not a Word document or other files that include formatting. Maximum file size is 10,240 bytes.

This is a great tool for learning CW. Your sending skills have to be fairly properly formed or you will get the "wrong" characters (the ones you actually sent versus the ones you thought you sent). From this you will immediately see which characters you need to practice.

Another nice thing about not being on the ham radio bands is the lack of crowding. Say you have been trying to practice CW with a friend. You find your frequency and get started then the next thing you know there are other hams talking right on top of your signal! It is weird, but there are a lot of hams out there that figure if you are sending CW on the phone portion of the band they don't have to give you any room at all. They will park exactly on top of your signal and start their QSO. Happens all the time! Using CWCommunicator you can avoid this. You also won't have the atmospheric conditions to contend with, which when you are just learning can be a big problem too.

Give it a try and let us know how it is working for you and your friends!

Protocol – Echolink, Autopatch, Etc.

When using another person's repeater there are some basic "rules" to follow. The owner may not wish you to activate these options at that time, there may be problems at that time, or there may be others that wish to clear the frequency before you begin. So be nice! (You know, that rot your mother was talking about! ;-)

Announce your call and your intentions "n0ew, wishing to use Echolink." Listen for a reply before pushing buttons! If using autopatch, be certain to immediately tell the other party you are broadcasting via radio (the trustee is liable for illegal language, etc). When finished, announce "clear of autopatch (Echolink, etc.), n0ew." It is also nice to toss in a "Thanks John" (or whoever owns the repeater).

Very, very important... "Third Party Rules" apply to Echolink if you are speaking outside the United States. Don't let an unlicensed person speak to someone in France for example!

2003 Board Members ...

Southwest Missouri Amateur Radio Club

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Public Welcome!

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All board members may be reached by email at:
["theircall"@smarc.org](mailto:theircall@smarc.org)

Some Useful Web Sites

FCC ULS Info: <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/index.html>

Practice Tests: <http://www.qrz.com/p/testing.pl>

License Renewals: <http://www.qrz.com/i/renewals.html>

New Hams - Search for Your 1st Listing! http://www.qrz.com/new_hams.html

Congress: <http://www.sos.state.mo.us/library/reference/feddocs/fedcong.asp>

Membership Dues
Single \$25 / year
Family \$35 / year

*1st Time - joining after
July 1st, reduced by 50%*

SMARCalling is a monthly newsletter published by and for the Southwest Missouri Amateur Radio Club, Inc. All submissions for publication must be received by the last day of the preceding month. SMARCalling reserves the right to edit all submissions for spelling and when necessary length. All comments on *SMARCalling* may be made to editor@smarc.org or by direct mail.

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