
OFARC Monthly Meeting Minutes 2025_0823

Meeting held at the Red Cross Building

Mark (WB5ANN) called the meeting to order at 0915.

JohnW N5DWI, is currently living in Stuttgart, Germany and is speaking to the club today. He told how he was one of the first OFARC members when it started at the old Masonic Lodge building. He found the club looking for antennas on the cars in the parking lot. He started setting people up as volunteer examiners. He set up the volunteers in 1994. It is tough to get antennas up in Germany as they inspect your property and antenna annually. While driving in Germany he got a guy in Australia using SSB mode with only a ¼ watt, in perfect conditions.

No real agenda planned for this meeting but were 26 members, guests and testers in attendance. There were many new faces so it was a good time for another round of introductions.

Jeremy has a new callsign (KN5YVJ) is currently club VP. He talked about being somewhat active in Parks on the Air and mentioned there will be an event at Stephen F Austin on September 27 from 9:00 to 5:00. Expect there will be 3 to 5 radios running from solar and/or batteries. If you plan to operate, BYO everything. Another event planned is at Lake Livingston on November 15, 2025. They usually set up in the picnic area or in the camping area of the parks. If you work 10 bands in 10 parks you get a certificate. The POTA folks often work out of Kristy and Anthony's home park at Sheldon Lake <https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/sheldon-lake/map>.

Matt W2NS is restoring old radios... Last month picked up a signal1 200W radio from Mike Nault, very heavy unit. Currently restoring a Command SCR-274N army radio that uses a motor/generators for its high voltage supplies of 550/210V.

Barry KG5IRR - professionally is an electronics engineer, and is still working. He was licensed in 2015 and joined the club in 2016. He enjoys experimenting with antennas and designing and building radio circuits. He serves the club as the webpage and reflector administrator. <http://www.ofarc.org/>

Roger K0KON - got his novice license in 1956. After a licence lapse, got back licensed in 1980. Enjoys CW, SSB and FT8 modes. Serves as net control operator on the Alaska net 444.3MHz.

Don KI5WWD, now retired got licensed 3 years ago likes restoring broadcast radios.

Hal KG5OIR - Professionally is a geologist likes golf, autocross in his Porche, General class licensed in 2015.

Rick KE5AOA is a retired CPA. He has served as club Treasurer for a long time. He was licensed as a novice in '68 license. Got started with a vintage A1 Collins radio. Over time let his license lapse but started up again in 2008. He is accused of having a meticulous garage and organizes his tools by project.

Donald KG5PFN is a lawyer. He is a club trustee and a net control operator. He recalls having fun on field days watching antennas go up in the trees at the old lodge, using sling shots and air cannons.

Byron - Was licensed in 2014 but now that he is retired, he has time to do enjoy the hobby.

Elisha KF5WFB has been licensed since 2015. He enjoys the insomnia net on 444.30 MHz. He's in the Light house choir that performed at the Astros game, June 12th. Was a good friend of, also blind, KK5KE Larry (SK).

Dom N5TCB got is license in 1991 after the code requirement was dropped. He likes the traffic net on 146.94 Mondays at 6:30 pm. Also enjoys sending and instructing how to do radiograms interest. He talked about the Baofeng U5RV style radios available through Amazon. These radios have hundreds of frequencies that it can save in its memory. He was showing off his latest acquisition, a 3-bander Boafeng AR5RM radio, that is USBc chargeable and has 999 memories. It is a 10 Watt radio and is very cost effective starting at \$38.24 for 1 radio or \$200 for 10 radios.

MarkL WB5ANN - currently acting club president, VE and Treasurer. Enjoys maintaining repeaters. Is member of HAMS and Echo Society.

Bob N5RLN retired police. Mostly uses Echolink because he travels a lot. He's been a ham for 20 years. Likes using Allstar nodes.

Jacob passed his General class license test today. At age 15 recalls doing a radio patch telephone call in the driveway on a friend's radio... and 30 years later got a license. It was a father's day gift from son to study together and go for a license.

Jim – was real busy 3 years ago and let his license lapse. Is now KJ5RH. Was a school teacher and med school educator. Has a funcube pro SDR dongle that isn't working (<https://www.funcubedongle.com/>) and is looking for help.

Ken Wenzel - licensed next 10 years, most retired operates hand helds only

Bobby KI5PZT - likes restoring old high-end audio equipment.

Erika KJ5LDJ - just got an icom 7300, Working on extra class license. She Recently made a trip driving between NY and Boston and made repeater contacts along the way. MarkL, using google earth to find repeater locations for the route, was able to program repeater frequencies into her handy talkie.

Tyler KJ5IDE – Erika's study buddy, is a Chemical Engr working for Exxon/Mobile,

Julian is a Chemical engineer. licensed in June, upgraded to General in August too many hobbies, xigeu g90, 20W portable tuner, \$400.

MarkC is a software engineer. About 1 yr ago got his tech license and quickly upgraded to general in October and Extra in November. He is also a VE (December) and highly recommends all Extra Class holders get certified with the open book test.

Mike Nault OFT is a retired paleontologist. He's been licensed since '88, upgraded to general and extra in the early 90's. In 2003 took over management of the American Red Cross radio room.

Repeater update:

For remote operation on 2m and 440 repeaters, use EchoLink from your mobile phone. It is a free "app". To get on the air, submit your license and get an application key back that allows you to operate over VOIP. If you travel overseas, you do not need a reciprocal license. The system works using a gateway the keys up the repeater (RF) from a VOIP link.

146.84 was talked about as a backup frequency for the Tuesday Net. The 146.84 antenna is a short distance from the 145.170 antenna on the same building. 147.06 is no longer operating. 147.32 has moved to 1 Allen Center area and is under-utilized. 147.32 was checked by Elisha as we talked & was hit from the 2900 SW Freeway area. TX Children's Hospital has a repeater in the Medical Center.

Repeater Book contains a list of available repeaters are usually accurate. Some repeaters are not on the book, but what it listed, is probably going to work properly. When programming, buy the good cables. The clone cables will not work as soon as the software is updated.

Roger K0KON, was wondering about doing some kind of Special Event. There was discussion regarding special events in the Texas area. It was stated that Dallas had an event earlier this year where they sent up a balloon up to 105,000 feet and one of the members tracked the launch.

There was talk about ABR giving a discount on lines and connectors. <https://abrind.com> They are located at:

ABR Industries LLC
10661 Haddington Drive
Suite 160
Houston, TX 77043

Phone: (713) 492-2722

Email: info@abrind.com

There was talk about Power Pole Connectors that are connectors that are impossible to connect wrong, they are genderless.

Soldering connectors was discussed as something to do at the meetings. Cutting, measuring, shrinking, making J-Poles, are things that we will probably do at the next meeting. Bring tools you have, crimpers, soldering irons, wire cutters etc. to the next meeting.

MarkL said NASA has a 300 page book on making Space Connectors.

Future Elections were talked about for Officers of the organization.

Minutes Recorded by Ken Wenzel, KW5KEN and Barry Basile, KG5IRR