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Newsletter of the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club, AD5BB

June, 2010

Alpine, Texas

MEETING MINUTES, JUNE 2010

June 8, 2010

People attended. Minutes were read. Treasurer's report was given.

Bill, W5ATO asked for volunteers to sign up to help with the K5N 6-meter gridpedition which will be June 29-July 2.

Mike Ward, NW5M, Fire Marshall for Jeff Davis County, announced that Jeff Davis County has a new 55 foot antenna tower trailer. The unit has an on board power generator and a motorized system to tilt and telescope the tower. It is mounted on a 15,000 lb. GVWR bumper pull trailer and requires a **heavy duty** ¾ ton tow vehicle minimum. One ton tow vehicle is recommended. The trailer has 4 heavy duty out-rigger beams that slide out and 4 heavy duty trailer jacks that attach to the out-rigger beams. In this configuration the tower is good for free standing in winds up to 79 mph. It also carries 3 guy anchor augers and provisions on the tower for guy wires, and when properly set up, this raises the wind rating to 139 mph. winds.

Mike says the tower is for emergency portable communications for public service, which includes public civilian events. He also noted that when such emergencies occur requiring the use of the tower, it is most likely that Amateur Emergency Radio Service (ARES) will be activated. Mike sees Field Day as a good opportunity to give the tower an annual inspection and operating workshop.

Bill, KE5OG discussed other plans for Field Day, most of which will be the regular plan we have followed for the past several years. We will put the JD Tower into service on the Sideband station at the Double Diamond Pavilion, and we will also set up our manual crank up tower trailer for the CW station.

THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT OF THE WHOLE MEETING! ... If you intend to eat from the community buffets at Field Day, GET YOUR ORDER IN NOW, BEFORE JUNE 17. Friday night supper, 3 meals Saturday, breakfast and lunch Sunday is \$30.00 per member, one 12 pack soft drink donation and one 12 pack water donation. If you bring family members or guests, whether they eat 1 meal or all 6, their fee is \$10.00 per person. Payment due before or when you arrive at Field Day.

IF YOU DO NOT SIGN UP FOR MEALS BY JUNE 17, the fee will be \$10.00 per person, per meal, provided there is food left.

Contact Bob Ward, WA5ROE at True Value (432)-837-2061, or wa5roe@juno.com to make your reservations.

FIELD DAY 2010

As stated above, this year's Field Day will be much the same as in recent years. One sideband station, one CW station, a GOTA station and probably a 6-meter station.

There will be 2 portable antenna towers. A new 55 foot tower belonging to Jeff Davis County for the sideband station, and our own 50 foot tower for the CW station.

MOST IMPORTANT POINT OF ALL! ... If you intend to eat from the community buffets at Field Day, GET YOUR ORDER IN NOW, BEFORE JUNE 17. Friday night supper, 3 meals Saturday, breakfast and lunch Sunday is \$30.00 per member, one 12 pack soft drink donation and one 12 pack water donation. If you bring family members or guests, whether they eat 1 meal or all 6, their fee is \$10.00 per person. Payment due before or when you arrive at Field Day.

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K5N DL88 GRID EXPEDITION

Bill Baker, W5ATO

On Sunday, May 30, I made the trip down to Big Bend National Park, to the Talley campsite number 2 where the K5N 6-meter Gridpedition will operate from June 29 to July 1. That is the rare DL88 grid. On July 2 they will operate from somewhere in DL89wx. They need some of us to pass information between them and the Internet via our repeater system. My trip and the signal reports of those who monitored the system for me proved that we have coverage at the Talley 2 location. It is multi-path and while the RF signal was only about an s1 to s2, the audio was 100% copy with some path loss noise. I would say 20% noise and 80% audio. Very easy copy even for me. We also verified there is a simplex path from Talley 2 to KB5ROB in Terlingua, as well as a simplex path to K5TDA in the Davis Mountains Resort. Both of those contacts were impressive. 36 miles across the hills to Terlingua and 124 miles to the Davis Mountains Resort.

With a 50 watt mobile and a 5/8 wavelength antenna, we determined we have useable coverage on the old River Road in the park from the west end near Castolon to a little east of the Johnson Ranch. Beyond that point it becomes intermittent and multi-path phasing becomes more noticeable when you can get a signal. At Talley 2 the campsite is on a slight rise and there is a reliable path at that location. But when you enter Talley road the signal is almost not there. The further east you go on the river road from there I found only a few spots where the signal was usable until within a mile or two of the Rio Grande highway.