



# The Exciter

Meeting Monday, 28 Nov, 7:00pm (Central Fire Station)

Nov 2005

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## Chasing the Fox

From left to right, Woody/W5HHS, Jay/W5GM, Gerald/WB5NZV, Brent/KD5WYU,

Mike/KD5ZCA, wait for Guy/KC5GOI, to hide the Fox for the transmitter hunt held on Sunday, November 13th. All participants converged to within a few feet of the hidden transmitter before Mike zeroed in and found it.



## President's Podium

By Jay, W5GM



This month's column will be more of a report on a club activity that I participated in last Sunday. This was my first fox hunt. We all met at a parking lot by Denton City Hall to get briefed on the rules and record our mileage. KC5GOI activated the fox and everybody took off. At first I was headed out of the way till I started losing the signal and dou-

bled back to where it was strongest. I wasn't using anything fancy to get my bearings. I had the dual-bander in the truck tuned to the fox frequency and I was using the body shield method with my faithful Icom IC-2GAT to get bearings. When I ended up on top of the fox I could take the antenna off and almost point the bare BNC antenna jack towards the fox and get a bearing. Turns out, I was right on top of the fox and didn't even know it because Guy had done such an excellent job camouflaging it in the brush. Mike Carlisle was the lucky duck that used his tape measure yagi to home in on it. Congrats Mike! I will get it next time!

## HAM-COM 2006

By Barry, WA5KXX

(Dallas, TX) Ham-Com, Inc. announced the date and location for Ham-Com 2006. The event will be held June 9-10 (Friday and Saturday), 2005 at the Plano Centre. The facility is located at 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway in Plano, TX. The schedule for the event is 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on both days. The flea market will open at 7:00 a.m. each day.

Commercial vendors will open at 9:00 a.m. each day. Both groups will close at 6:00 p.m. Workshops, association meetings and seminars will run from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. each day. For complete information, maps, directions, hotel information (with LOW group rates!)

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☞ *The EXCITER* ☞

Is published each month for the purpose of informing DCARA members of current events and issues of interest to amateur radio. Articles and suggestions are always welcome. Articles that appear in this publication may be reproduced provided credit is given to *The EXCITER* and to the original source.

## New members

KE5GGY Peter Thomson & his son Mac, Denton

KE5FIY John Naab, Shady Shores

## Meeting agenda

- Call to Order
- Guest Recognition
- Member Recognition
- Motion to Accept Minutes as published in newsletter
- Repeater Report
- Operations report
  - Mall Watch
  - Turkey Roll - Debrief
- Treasury report
- Election snafu committee report
- ARES Report
  - Ecom2 report
- Old Business
- New Business
  - Christmas Party
- Adjourn

Remember to use your Kroger Share Card when you buy groceries

Cards available from Gerald at the meeting

**Richard Flores**  
Store Manager



Phone: 972-436-3099 Store 217  
 FAX: 972-221-5527 801 West Main  
 E-Mail: RKFLORE.s00217@stores.us.wal-mart.com Lewisville, TX 75067

We appreciate the continued support of the Wal-Mart Super Center on Main Street in Lewisville.

### Area Repeaters

- ★ 146.920 - .600 110.9 DCARA Denton
- ★ 444.050 + 5 110.9 DCARA Denton
- ★ 441.325 + 5 88.5 DCARA Denton
- ★ 443.525 + 5 118.8 DCARA Denton
- ★ 145.17 - .600 110.9 W5FKN NE Tarrant
- ★ 441.550 + 5 123.0 KE5UT Celina
- ★ 444.850 + 5 88.5 N5ERS Flower Mound
- ★ 147.380 + .600 110.9 The Colony
- ★ 147.220 +.600 100.0 N5IUF Collinsville
- ★ 145.010 W5NGU digipeater DCARA Denton
- ★ 927.975 -25.0 110.9 DCARA Denton

## DCARA information

Meetings: Forth Monday of each month (except Dec and Nat. holi-days) at 7:00p. We are currently meeting at the new Central Fire Station in Denton. For more info on the Denton County Amateur Radio Association, contact one of the individuals listed to the right.

DCARA on line: [www.dcara.net](http://www.dcara.net)  
 Denton ARES on line: [www.denton-ares.org](http://www.denton-ares.org)

Name	Position	Phone No.	Email
Jay Urish	President	972-691-0125	president@dcara.net
Stewart Rabinowitz	Vice Pres.	214-732-3356	vice_president@dcara.net
Gerald Marchant	Secretary	940-387-2314	GMarchant@att.net
Greg Evans	Operations	214-684-3682	operations@dcara.net
Guy Story	Tech Dir.	940-243-0754	kc5goi@kc5goi.net

## Repeater report

By Gerald, WB5NZV

The 900 MHz repeater is now back on the air at 927.9750 out/902.9750 input, with 110.9 PL. It will be improved soon with a preamp on the receiver and a new Arcom controller. The Arcom is under construction at this time. This new controller will also control the 444.05 repeater and will have a link radio on the third port. The RC85 now controlling the 444.05 repeater will be re-assigned to the new backup .92 repeater the City of Denton is providing and installing at their facility.

In addition to the new 900 repeater, the 443.525 +5 118.8, is the newest addition to the DCARA's family of repeaters at TWU Stark Hall. Users report excellent coverage.

The 146.92 machine continues to perform well. There have been some problems with the transmitter dropping out during extended QSOs. This was attributed to a connector on the power supply that had corroded and overheated. A small problem with the audio levels on the voter system was caused by a bad connection on one of the voter link receivers.

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and RV parking locations, please visit the new Ham-Com web site at <http://www.hamcom.org/>.

There are a few changes to the 2006 event. Admission and flea market table pricing has been REDUCED! Admission is \$7.00 online and \$8.00 via mail, FAX or at the door. Flea market tables are \$20.00 for two-days and \$10.00 for a group of special "Saturday-only" tables. Due to the change of location, the number of tables available has been reduced so GET YOUR ORDER IN EARLY! Ham-Com staff will assign table locations on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking is F-R-E-E and shuttle buses will be provided from overflow parking to the venue!

Complete details are available on the Ham-Com web site.

The Ham-Com web site has been redesigned to make it easier to purchase admission and flea market tables. As in previous years, NO

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## Fox hunt antenna

By Mike, KD5ZCA

After listening to the Transmitter Hunt stories at the last club meeting and doing the suggested reading, I decided to build the "tape measure yagi" antenna and the offset attenuator from the plans located at [http://home.att.net/~jleggio/projects/rdf/tape\\_bm.htm](http://home.att.net/~jleggio/projects/rdf/tape_bm.htm) and <http://members.aol.com/joek0ov/offatten.html> respectively.

I picked up the PVC pipe and joints along with a cheap tape measure (wished I'd kept that old, broken one) at Home Depot and along with an RG-58 cable with UHF connectors and a little bus wire from Radio Shack, I was able to assemble the antenna per the instructions on the web site without difficulty. I added a short length of PVC pipe to the end of the antenna to use as a handle.



During the hunt, I realized that a little counter-weight needs to be added to this handle if you're going to be able to use the antenna comfortably for extended periods.

While investigating the offset attenuator plans, I quickly found that some of the parts called for are not readily available any longer. I was able to locate these at Jameco Electronics ([www.jameco.com](http://www.jameco.com)). I had a few components from electronics experiments in my youth (never throw anything away). The rest were available at the local Radio Shack.

I found that the suggested box is a bit small if you use a UHF connector and a full-size toggle switch. Your mileage may vary, but I needed the UHF connector to fit all my existing equipment, and why waste a good switch. Even if you use the recommended connectors, the fit of the battery inside the box will be TIGHT. I decided to just attach my battery outside the case to facilitate replacement and reduce my frustration levels while assembling the attenuator.

I assembled everything per the instructions on the web site. When I tested the unit, I found the voltage on the regulator output to be closer to +6v than 5, but figuring my multimeter is 25 years old, I didn't sweat it too much. Besides, the hunt was now only 14 hours away and I needed some sleep. I strapped it to the handle on the yagi and called it a night.

The day of the hunt was absolutely gorgeous. After running errands in the morning, I tossed everything in the truck and headed over to the starting point.

Once the Fox was loosed, I was able to pick up a strong signal using my HT with the Yagi. I had a pretty good angle on the Fox using the S-meter on the HT and turning the squelch up full. Ah, the hunt was on!

What followed was an intense and frustrating 90-minute education

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## Tower party

On October 30th, DCARA members removed a tower donated to the Club by Claude Jenkins, WA5KYU. Greg, KD5MNO on the tower, Stewart, KE5UT, Brent, KD5WYU, Robin, N5BTU, and Gerald, WB5NZV were the ground crew. Claude is on the right in group picture. He is a past President of the DCARA in the 80's.



## Meeting minutes



DCARA Meeting, October 24, 2005  
at 7pm, Central Fire Station,  
Denton, TX

Meeting called to order at 7:10pm by President Jay Urish

Introductions all present.

Motion by Chambers, seconded by Woody to accept last meeting minutes as posted in the newsletter. Minutes accepted.

Gerald & Guy presented a short repeater report.

Greg – Operations Report

Plans to reschedule the technician class in near future.

Presented funds in the amount of \$750 from sales of excess 900 equipment.

Need operators for Turkey Roll – Saturday before Thanksgiving.

Mall watch starts Thanksgiving weekend – Need 5 operators per night.

Christmas dinner is Dec 8 at the Lantana Lodge.

Election committee report by Stewart

Much discussion regarding the reference to email. Stewart will rewrite and cover at next meeting.

ARES report by Guy

Next net in January. Will cover net protocol. Minimum reporting criteria.

Don Roberson asked that anyone needing pager changes, contact him.

Guy announced the next transmitter hunt is the second Sunday in November.

Greg will check with the Lodge and bring back food choices to next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Surplus equipment auction was held after the meeting.

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in the science of electromagnetic wave reflection. I ended up driving all over the southern portion of the 288/I-35 area (sometimes to the same location twice) chasing that elusive little @^!\$@#^ # fox. Even after I stopped to read how to use the attenuator correctly, I still couldn't sniff the stinker out.

Luckily, Guy took pity on the poor fools that still weren't close and got us in the general area of the creepy critter. As I approached the park where the wee beastie was hiding out, I actually picked up the signal with the antenna still sitting in the back seat.

Once out of the vehicle and paired up with a more knowledgeable assistant (Guy must have been worried I might get lost in the woods too), I continued on the quest. From then on, the search was actually quite simple. The offset attenuator did its job remarkably well and I was finally able to track the quarry down. The attenuator/yagi combination proved to be quite accurate as I found myself standing about 10 feet from the box sitting on the ground and found my antenna was pointing above and a little to one side of it. Lo and behold, that wasn't another branch, but a small j-pole antenna in that tree.

While hunting through the wooded areas of the park, I gained a real appreciation for the give in the tape measure elements of this antenna. They easily bent and snapped back as I pushed through the denser areas. I did notice that I need to tighten the clamps down a bit more though as there was some minor misalignment of the elements. This didn't seem to affect the performance at all though.

The importance of a counterweight for the antenna became very clear that evening as my "tennis elbow" reared its head once again. You younger hams may not feel it, but those of us over 40 tend to be a little more sensitive to putting stress on our arms for extended periods.

I haven't the experience to claim the offset attenuator was the best type to use on one of these hunts, but I was very surprised at the sensitivity it allowed in tracking the signal once I got close.

I obviously have some learning to do, but that's a big chunk of what this hobby is all about. I really enjoyed the afternoon and am looking forward to the next time.

## Coming events

### Nov

#### 28 DCARA Meeting, 1900, Cntl Fire Station

### Dec

- 2-4 ARRL 160 Meter Contest  
Top Band Sprint  
TARA RTTY  
Holiday Spirits Homebrew CW Sprint
- 08 **DCARA Holiday Dinner**
- 10-18 ARRL 10 Meter Contest  
Great Colorado Snowshoe Run  
North America Meteor Scatter Contest
- 17-18 OK DX RTTY Contest  
Stew Perry Top Band Distance Challenge  
PSK 31 Death Match  
Russian 160 Meter Contest  
Croatian CW Contest  
RAC Winter Contest
- 24-01 Lighthouse Christmas Lights QSO Party
- 25 DARC Christmas Contest
- 31-01 ARRL Straight Key Night

Note: There will not be a regular DCARA meeting in December.

**TICKETS WILL BE MAILED!** Online purchases for tickets and flea market tables will be at the registrations and flea market desks at the event.

The Ham-Com staff is busy developing the schedule of events, special interest group meetings and presentations. If you have an idea for a presentation, workshop or need to schedule a special

interest group meeting, please contact John Beadles, N500M, Programs Director via n500m@arrl.net. The information will be available on January 2, 2006 in the first edition of the "Ham-Com Flyer." Expect to see more youngsters at Ham-Com 2006! Several groups including the ARRL, Boy Scouts of America, and other groups are developing special youth programs

for the event. The Boy Scouts will sponsor a one-day Radio Merit Badge session plus a special license session. Over 100 youngsters are expected to attend the sessions.

By the way, did we say that parking was F-R-E-E?

DENTON COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 50433  
DENTON, TX 76206



Nov 2005

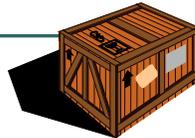


## Surplus Equipment



As long as this section does not get too crowded, I will accept sale or wanted notices for personal equipment from members or non-members. Priority will be given to members. Editor.

Second month listing  
(Nov Sale)



None

First month listing  
None (Jan Sale)

Motorola Visar UHF w/ new slim battery, and 1 used but good normal battery includes dual bay quick charger and stubby antenna Asking \$225

Motorola GP300 UHF (8 channel w/ scan) w/ two used but good batteries includes quick charger and stubby antenna Asking \$170

Motorola HT600 UHF (6 channel) w/ two used but good batteries includes quick charger and stubby antenna Asking \$125

Motorola HT600 UHF (6 channel) w/ 1 good used battery includes overnight charger and std. antenna Asking \$85

Motorola M1225 40Watt 20ch w/ mic and mounting bracket Asking \$250

For more info, contact John, N5API <n5api@yahoo.com>