

Minutes, FCARC Meeting January 12, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm. A roster for attendance was circulated. The following were present:

Larry Appleby	KC5YWC
Don Bollman	KB8LNV
Perry Carlton	AE5EE
George Carroll	N5GC
Robert Carroll	KA5WVE
Jim Carter	KB5DQM
Ken Chafin	N5RKC
Tom Desaulniers	K4VIZ
David Doty	N5XF
Lynette Dowdy	KD5QMD
Kayla Dowdy	KE5JYX
Philip Doyle	KC5BAY
Bill Fill	KD5IC
Dora Anna Fill	NI5D
Jim Grinder	N5TSG
Gary Hawkins	KS5ZQF
Gary Hawkins Sr	KD5YIX
Gerald Hogue	AE5GH
Stefan Johnson	KE5YBN
Wayne Johnston	KD4TA
Glenn King	N5GK
Eric Martin	N5EMX
Will McFadden	KB5DDX
John Nordlund	AD5FU
Frankie Parks	K5FRP
Hannah Parks	KF5BPU
Pat Thomas	AE5NW
Kathy Williamson	KB5RMV
Roger Williamson	N5QNA
Roger Langsten	KF5ESY - visitor

Old Business:

Minutes: The summary of the meeting for December was not on line, but was available at the meeting. The official part of the December 2009 Christmas party/ dinner lasted fifteen minutes and five seconds. Glenn King brought his train whistle to demonstrate that the railroad system was operational for electing officers by acclamation. The following officers were elected (or railroaded by acclamation). President Frankie Parks; Vice President George Carroll; and Secretary Treasurer Wayne Johnston. A door prize raffle drawing at the end of the meeting produced the following winners: a Minimag light (Gerald Hogue); a Radio Shack amplified extension speaker (Jim Grinder); a Radio Shack Weather Cube radio (ultimately by Ken Chafin); a micro-screwdriver set (ultimately by Glenn King); and the grand prize, a new MFJ G5RV antenna (by Philip Doyle).

Treasurer Report: We have \$1,619.24 in bank. No outstanding bills, but some new business

expenses are projected in new business this evening. Prior to the start of the meeting we had 27 paid members and seven more paid the night of the meeting. New members should fill out the new 2010 membership forms that have home, work, and cell phone numbers. Those numbers will not be posted on the web site, but will be used internally to contact members.

The Faulkner County Judge to purchase equipment for OEM center (announced at December meeting) Preston Scroggins has approved \$5,000.00 for ham radio equipment to be installed in a weatherized (air conditioned and heated) shack at the Faulkner County OEM center. FCARC members should be sure to thank him for his support.

Exam Session on Monday Jan 11, 2010. The new ham (Rodger Langston KF5ESV) upgraded to General and only missed one exam question. He also took his first test a week ago and then upgraded quickly.

New Business:

Need for controller for tone and ID for 6 m and 430 repeater. Glenn King reports that a number of years ago David Doty put together a 440 repeater and a 6 m repeater. We have been waiting for antennas and duplexers for those system. While on vacation Glenn completed the co-phaser for the 6 m antenna and it is ready for installation in good weather. These individual repeaters work, but there is no automatic ID for them. We thought it would be good to able link the 440m to the 6 m, thus anyone with a 440 rig would be able to link to 6 m. The problem is that the controllers are fairly expensive. The one that is being used now for the 697, the 521, the 443.800 and 443.525 is a single controller RLC4 made by Link Communications. We paid about \$500.00 for the controller, but they now cost \$786.00 with the voice Id capability. The controller that would be necessary is like one on the 03 machine will handle two -- and it cost \$621.00. Glenn hopes that we can raise a little money above the \$1,600.00 we currently have in the FCARC account. Wayne Johnston commented that the \$1,600.00 we now have in the bank does not include any dues amount for the 30+ members we have - i.e. \$300+ more to come in the bank once membership deposits are made. Glenn stated that this purchase would be to add a linking controller. If we buy the RLC4, we can add two more repeaters.

It would be possible to link all the repeaters. George Carroll noted that the FCARC has spare RLC4 right now to replace any that might be damaged by a lightning strike. The county could not cover the expense because most of the \$5,000.00 has been spent on other ham radio equipment. Glenn foresees additional income for the FCARC at the Russelville Hamfest in March around \$500.00 - including the sale of the Collins equipment. Regardless of what we buy, Glenn does not want to see the FCARC treasury drop below \$1,000.00 as that amount might be necessary for contingencies.

Motion was made and seconded to purchase the necessary RLC4 equipment. The motion passed without opposition. Glenn King will take care of the purchase and of the equipment. A kit is not available to keep the cost down, as quality costs. The controller operating the 97.521 repeater has been operating for at least ten years with no problems. It is not affected by heat or cold. It is a solid piece of equipment, but that is why a new one costs so much. It is a little computer that is programmed to operate. George pointed out that FCARC has one now, so a few members are familiar with operation and maintenance (Glenn and George).

FCARC Jacket Order. Frankie Parks reports that both the light and heavyweight jacket styles selected by the FCARC are no longer made. He had the supplier looking for a suitable replacement. The consensus of those buying the jackets is that a hood is not necessary for the light weight jacket, but the heavy weight one will have a hood. The representative has found an acceptable substitute for the

heavy weight jacket that looks nearly identical to the ones we have -- and it is fully lined. He will obtain photos of the jackets and send them out for potential buyers to make a decision. If anyone wants to back out, then Frankie needs to know it. He needs firm commitments, because the total order will be for over \$1,000.00. Both weight jackets will be zip up.

CHAUF Partnership for the Toad Suck Triathlon. Last year the FCARC assisted them in that event, while they took the lead. For 2010, CAUHF proposes both Clubs to be involved in conducting the event in September as partners. The CAUHF would like to run it like an ICS event and a training exercise. No objections were noted to partnering with them. Frankie Parks then asked for volunteers to serve on the joint committee for the event. George Carroll, Jimmy Carter, and Robert Carroll volunteered to represent FCARC on the venture. Wayne Johnston noted that it was a great training event that lasted only one day from early morning to late afternoon with lots of distance to be covered by radios.

Russellville Hamfest. First weekend in March is the time of the hamfest. All donations to FCARC are appreciated for the tailgate sale.

Haiti Earthquake. Information - at 4:09 pm on January 12, 2010 a 7.0 magnitude earthquake happened in Haiti -- hospital collapse and vast damage has been reported and relief efforts are anticipated. No information was available as of FCARC meeting time about the frequencies that might be use or how ham radio might be involved.

Embroidery. Jimmy Carter will do elaborate embroidery on shirts for only \$8.00. Eg Faulkner County, Emergency Radio Communications on the shirt.

Program: Jim Grinder presents Computer Back-up Operations: Equipment & Tips

Although Jim is known in the FCARC as a joker, he has a professional serious side as he has worked at Axiom for ten years as a Systems Engineer and in networking operations for 25 years. Disaster recovery is part of his official duties for them. Two or three times a year he travels to Philadelphia with six others to create a back up system on tape within 56 hours for an important client. They get the solutions up and running, and the customer log in, signs off on the backup system, and they get to leave. If not, they have to do it again at Axiom's expense. Thus, it is very important on the job to make backup systems work.

In the Windows environment for each of us individual users, the virus and spyware are a real threat. Most people are not even aware of the detailed information that they have on their home machine and what they would lose with a crash. Family members might have important things in different files. Financial data, important information, and photos may be stored all over the hard drive. He recommends that we know exactly what is on our machines, and where it is stored. Then we need to be sure that it is backed up. The data needs to be organized and classified as to importance. The operating system is inconsequential -- it can be reloaded. But when a hard drive is lost with lots of photos and Quicken financial data, it is a hard job that he can only try to recover. For example, he can stuff a dead hard drive in a deep freezer for 48 to 56 hours and then sometimes recover data or replace a controller board and then recover data. Therefore, item number one is to think about your data and where it is stored. His organization: My Data - local and photos, and off-site and financial.

He recommends organizing all data on an external drive. He paid only \$79 for a usb connected 320 Gb drive that will store data separately from a computer. Most non-geek ordinary users do not know how to identify and access their hard drive within the machine case. He advocates keeping the

data on a drive that is not part of the machine.

He has a folder on his drive that is marked "off site." He keeps DVDs of data for that "off site" file -- mainly photos and documents that cannot be replaced -- in a safe at a friend's house. Off site storage means just that -- somewhere far away from the house - at a friend's house or a safe deposit box where it will not be destroyed with the original.

The cost of data storage can be kept down by purchasing a cradle that will handle numerous external drives. The cradle can be purchased for \$50 to \$79 and can be used over and over. He has one that cost \$46 and \$5 shipping that will hold two drives. A 320 Gb drive will cost about \$50. So for about \$100 you can back up all your important data. That cost is much less than a trip to a computer repair center. The cradle will fit 2 1/4" or 3" drives. They are very small, and can be wrapped up in saran wrap for storage. The laptop drives are good to use for backup as they are designed to withstand more punishment than regular drives. Once all important data is stored in files, it can be backed up with special programs. In the old days you could drag and drop files to a backup drive, but the drives today are so big that is not feasible.

It is important to know that USB flash drives (also known as thumb drives) are not reliable. They are designed to be read from many times, but not to be written to repeated times. They will let you down. Jim uses his flash drive / thumb drives to read from, but not to write to after he gets the files on them that he needs. They are not reliable after being written to many times.

A few years ago Ghost was the choice backup software. But today the Acronis True Image Home 10.0 is really good software. If you are the type of person who clicks on every link or you cannot decide on the software you want, then this is for you. It allows you back or image your entire hard drive with a single click. It also will let you try software out in a safe environment. For example, if you want to test shareware, load it on your machine and then don't like it, then you try to un-install the program. But in a Windows environment it may be difficult to get rid of all the files on the register, shared DLL files that may or may not conflict, and other places where pieces of the tested program have been stored. These files may or may not conflict with other programs that you. The Acronis software will remove every bit of the program you do not want. It creates a transactional data base a register that watches every bit of the changes at the disk level. Acronis will restore your machine to just like it was before you tried the software. If you have a virus that you get through an email, you can undo the problem with Acronis in just a few seconds.

Acronis only costs \$39.00. How much would you spend if you had to carry your machine into some place like Best Buy or Computer Works to get it fixed? One member commented that he just did that, and it cost at least \$200.00. Acronis is full featured. It will also image your entire machine at the disk level by compressing the information. If you have a TB drive with only 50 GB of information, Acronis will back up only the part you have used and compress it. If you leave your cradle and backup drives connected, you can schedule periodic backups or incremental or differential backups with Acronis. If you do this once a day, then you can roll back to where you were twelve hours ago. The more you have it do, the more disk space it will use -- therefore, get at least a 320 GB backup disk. Remember, that using Acronis for backup at your computer is a supplement to backing up your data separately for off site storage that could not be harmed by lightning or fire.

If you do not buy Acronis, then you will be stuck with Windows backup software or whatever your machine came with. The Windows back up software is the next best thing to Acronis. If you have Vista basic, you do not have backup software and you need to get Acronis! If you do not know about disk geometry, the get Acronis will be very easy for you to use. It will do all the hard work for you and

help you sort out source disk, destination disk, etc. Some of the other programs are not so easy to use.

Every time you used to buy a computer you got a stack of recovery CDs. That is no longer done, and you have to make your own. All the call centers still got calls - "I don't know where my recovery disks are as we've moved three times." Nowadays the PCs come with a recovery partition on the internal disk drive. It is a good idea to create you recovery disks when the computer is new, but it is not a good idea when the machine is older. If you do not make your recovery disks, then when the disk dies, you have no way to recover. After several years the recovery disks you try to make may not be clean and work. The HPs and Toshibas will bug you about making a recovery disk. The computer wants you to make recovery disks off that partition of the hard drive. When you first get a computer brand new and everything works well, make those disks.

When it comes time to get rid of a PC, be sure to think about all the data on the machine after four or five years. You may think you have it all off, but you may not be able to remember everything that is on the machine. Take the time to wipe the machine clean. Somebody in the family may have been surfing where they should not have been, so sanitize the machine. Eraser is a good program to use for wiping your PC. Erase is a freeware program in Windows. It can be used to overwrite a particular files with random characters. It will also wipe the entire disk and overwrite it all. Eraser gives you the choice to erase a file, a directory, or the entire disk. The program operates within Windows.

Another good program is the freeware Dban utility. It works off a bootable CD made from an ISO. It walks you through the steps to erase. Be careful when using that program, as you could make a mistake and wipe more than you intended. Note: Dban will erase your hard drive to the point where it is acceptable for governmental erase standards. It is one step below smashing the disk with a hammer!

Beware of the problems that you might have when somebody works on your computer. If you have to carry you PC into a repair shop, then you no longer have control of your data. If your screen needs to be fixed, there is no need to send the hard drive in with the laptop. Financial data or photos could get out of your control when someone is working on your machine. The technician may have lots of time to browse you data. Some of these 16 yr old technicians may get bored and browse your stuff.

Merely saving your Excel financial data with a password will keep your data secure for only about ten minutes! Office 2003 or before, the password gives you no protection. Microsoft Word passwords provide no protection at all. The best way to protect a text file or financial data is a program called "7Zip." It is freeware that will encrypt to a very high level - 256 bit AES encryption. To protect a file, just encrypt it in 7Zip and it will be protected. There are other disk encryption utilities like "TrueCrypt." Jim does not necessarily encourage encryption for ordinary users, because they can put themselves in a bad situation. A web site called freecountry.com has lots of free programs for security. "SafeBoot" is one that has potential. Beware of software that encrypts the entire disk. Without the encryption key you are out of luck to recover it.

If you have ever visited questionable sites (or your 16 yr old son has done so without your knowledge) or you unintentionally ended up with questionable data on your PC from clicking on a wrong link, and then you get the PC worked on, the technician who finds the data may have no choice but to turn it over to law enforcement. All those photos of 18 year old girls could be legit, but the technician at Computer Works cannot make the call that the person is that old -- under the child porn laws they have to call the Attorney General's office. Therefore, when it comes time to get your PC worked on, you might want to wipe the disk. You may not be aware of what is on it, but the technician has to turn it over to others.

Be aware that some web sites drop objectionable thumbnail photos onto your temp directory even though you did not click on them. A problem may arise even with a Google search of images -- many of those images will end up on your temp directory even if you did not intend to keep them. The Eraser utility will securely overwrite your internet cache folder everyday or delete all files when you close a browser window. Jim has his Acronis program wipe his temp folder on a schedule. The Internet Microsoft Explorer browser will not delete the cache file completely. Some files may be left behind.

For antivirus software, use Avast, AVG, McAfee or Symantec.

Parental software is designed to protect your kids while they are on line -- it is a good idea. K9 software comes in a Windows or Mac versions. It is better than anything you can buy. You can tune it to protect your kids by user ID. You can set levels of freedom for your kids.

Most CDs and DVDs have a 15 to 20 years lifespan depending upon the environment they are stored in. Do not try to back up files to a flash drive (thumb drive) for long term storage. As a solid state device, a thumb drive can be destroyed by a static electricity discharge. CDs and DVDs are not affected by static discharge. CD are durable -- Jim makes a restore CD and duct tapes it inside the machine where it will be available any time he needs it in the future. The WriteTech brand of OEM disks from New Egg for Sony and Verbatim is reliable CD media.

Reminders (1) FCARC Thursday night Net (and the need 9-11 Center Staffing) (2) Pay your bill.
Adjournment at: 1938 hours.