

NEW! THE B-VARC BULLETIN

Volume 20 - March 1997

Issue 3

NEW MEETINGS DRAW LARGEST CROWD!

What's in this issue?

- 1997 B-VARC Picnic announced! P. 3
- Updated B-VARC Calendar! P. 2
- How Does the Bird Wattmeter work? P. 7
- Internet Info, and 10-10 news P. 6

SPECIAL THANKS!

A special Thank YOU! goes out to First Colony Church of Christ for the use of their facilities in making this newsletter possible.

May Program notice -
George, N7SNI, is scheduled to do a show on transmitter finger printing. This will be a good chance to learn to catch squirrels. Plan to attend!

STU LAMKIN, WB5IGG SILENT KEY

(This article is a reprint from the Houston Chronicle Jan 17, 1997)

The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (B-VARC) remembers our Charter Member, Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG. Born 9-10-08, Stu became a Silent Key on 8-18-96. He was an Honorary Life Member of B-VARC and had served on the Board of Directors, was editor of the B-VARC Bulletin and the primary author of the club's bylaws. Stu acted as the mortar to hold B-VARC together in its early years. He was a member of 10-10 and the Certificate Manager for the Houston SHOT. Stu was also a longtime member of the ARRL and a VE Examiner. Stu was an Elmer to many hams in Houston and the countless hams who have been touched by Stu through the years join B-VARC members worldwide in this goodbye to a dear friend. Stu, although your key is now silent, your love for ham radio will never QRT.

Harold, ND5F and Bruce, KK5DO

Message concerning the 1997 Houston Marathon -

I am writing to thank the members of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club their help with supporting communications for the 1997 Houston Marathon. One hundred-twenty amateur radio operators plus seven non-hams (who drove or navigated the transport vans) provided communications for 137 positions for this marathon. We were organized into seven nets, which used five 2-meter, two 70-cm repeaters, and several simplex frequencies.

This was a notable year for the Houston Marathon. This was the 25th running, there was a new title sponsor, the Methodist Health Care System, and the Marathon was run under the "worst weather conditions we've ever experienced on marathon day." Even so, "everything came off as scheduled and the 'well-oiled machine' performed as expected."

All amateur radio operators who were on the roster checked in and made their way to their assignments, many of which were exposed to the weather, and all remained at their stations until dismissed by their respective net control stations. Tom McBrayer reports that for the Marathon 71% registrants finished, and that 67% of the more than 1100 registered for the 5K run finished. Although there is no way to count those that started, anyone monitoring the Administrative and Transport Nets knows of the many runners who were picked up and returned to the warmth of the George R Brown.

(Continued on page 8)

President:
Gailen Marshall - N4SKR

Vice-President:
Rick Hiller - W5RH

Recording Secretary:
Terri VanSlyke - W5BKK

Corresponding Secretary:
John Dryton - KC5QZD

Treasurer:
Nizar Mullani - K0NM

3-Year Board Member:
Jackie Burton - KC5OHJ
(713) 460-1968

2-Year Board Member:
Terry McCoy - W5TEM
(713) 641-4595

1-Year Board Member:
Bud King - N5UOG
(713)-494-3741

Past President:
Ron Grimes - WA5SCE

**PSN Check-Ins
By Jackie Burton -
KC5OHJ**

January 1997 checkins are :
1/6 - 37
1/13 - 45
1/20 - 58
1/27 - 48



Upcoming Events:

**March 6 -
On-Air Board Meeting**
7:30 PM...Everyone is invited
to listen in.

**March 13 -
General Meeting at Sugar-
land Community Center**
7:30 PM
- *Houston Amateur Televi-
sion Society (HATS)* - How to
get on ATV cheap! Did you watch the
Marathon? It was on ATV!

- HF Radios by Gailen, N4SKR
- Vasos BBQ before Meeting!

**Mondays and Wednesdays -
BVARC CW Practice Net**
8:30 PM
146.470 Mhz FM simulcast
28.14647 Mhz CW

**March 9 -
K9 Fun Run, contact KI5DR**
15-20 hams needed

**March 23 -
BlueBonnet Express BikeRide**
Contact Brett N5VOY

**April 3 -
On Air Board Meeting**
7:30 P.M...Review March
Meeting.

April 6 - MS Walk
Contact Bret, N5VOY

April 10 - B-VARC meeting
- ARRL discussion

**April 19, 20 -
MS-150 Houston to Austin**
Contact Mike, N5VCX
80 Hams needed!!!!

**BVARC meetings
will be on 2nd Thursday
for all of 1997!**

Every Meeting A Hamfest!

*Starting in February, several new features
will be added to the meetings:*

Surplus junk-box Swap: Bring your
surplus junk for swapping and give
away...

...one ham's junk is another ham's junk!
(Sorry no selling of any type)

**Products Corner: 10 Minute meeting
feature at all meetings**

MAR-- HF Tranceivers--N4SKR

**Technical Corner: Meeting Feature at
all meetings, 10 Minutes
(KC5QZD Organizer)**

Mar--Simple VHF antenna building
April--RF safety

*Mr. Alan Cross, WA5UZB, our local ARRL rep-
resentative has graciously agreed to appear with
some of his staff at the April meeting.
Here are some topics to be discussed:*

- *How can the ARRL local representation help B-VARC and the hams within?*
- *ARRL and antenna ordinances/deed restrictions?*
- *The future of Amateur Radio as seen from the eyes of the ARRL .*
- *Amateur Frequency reallocation and the sale of spectrum.*



Notes from the President

By Gailen Marshall, N4SKR

If you missed the B-VARC February meetings this month, you missed some good ham stuff! We had our first Board Meeting on the air (BMOTA) that occurred on February 6, 1996 at 7:30PM on the 145.47 MERA repeater (Thanks MERA !!). I was called out-of-town and our VP Rick W5RH ran the meeting without agenda (through an e-mail snafu, he did not receive the agenda in time yet ran the meeting extremely well - thanks Rick and sorry for the foul-up on my end!). The overall response from clubbers was so good that we will again have a BMOTA on March 6, 1997 at 7:30PM on 145.47. God willing, I will be in town for this meeting. We will try (but no promises yet) to have the agenda available on the B-VARC home page.

The monthly meeting held on February 13 was equally great. There were 57 members and guests present which is a high for recent meeting attendance. We had a brief (if you can believe it) business meeting which lasted less than 10 minutes followed by a coffee break for presentation of the Product Corner and Technical corner. Both were extremely well received. The final crowning touch was Rick W5RH giving excellent information about HF/VHF/UHF mobile antenna - what, how and why. I believe I counted all but three individuals who were at the beginning of the meeting present when we broke up. Thanks to our program committee.

Next month promises to be equally exciting. Several of us have long wanted to have more formal interaction between B-VARC and other local ham clubs. With that in mind, Rick W5RH and Nizar K0NM have arranged a joint meeting between B-VARC and Houston Amateur Television Society (HATS). They will present a program on how you (and I) can get involved in ATV without spending too much money. The technical and product corners will support this program. In addition, we are also going to add a shareware corner with information on free software of amateur interest. If you have some shareware you would like to contribute, contact the session chair Joe Ross AA5BD (AA5BD@hal-pc.org)

Your Board continues to plan exciting things that meet the perceived needs of the membership. Plans for Field Day are already underway, again chaired by Allen Brier W5BIR. We are planning an upcoming club picnic before it gets too hot. I would like an indication of your interest in being able to purchase B-VARC paraphernalia such as patches, shirts, jackets, mugs, etc (if you are interested, send me an e-mail). This can both raise money for the club and allow us to continue to promote our club to others.

Finally, a club is only as strong as its membership. Feedback is critical. If you don't like something we are doing or if you think we should be doing something we are not, let us know. I pledge our willingness to fully consider your opinion. If you DO like something we are doing, let us know that too. It will be easier for us to continue to provide the service that you like.

Until next month. 73 and good contacts.

1997 B-VARC Picnic Announced!!

DATE: Saturday April 12, 1997.

LOCATION: George Bush Park, formerly Cullen-Barker Park, which is 2 miles west of West Oaks Mall on Westheimer Parkway. More details coming soon!

Ham Expo '97 -- Spring 'Fest
See our website: www.tarc.org
Admission: \$1.00

"The largest indoor Ham tailgate swapfest in the world" Bell County Expo Center, Belton, Texas Saturday, April 19, 1997

Fully accessible to the handicapped Acres of convenient, paved parking Easy access from Interstate 35 -- Take Exit 292 to the dome (on Loop 121) Tailgate spaces: \$10.00 each (at the door ONLY) Tables for tailgaters: \$10.00 each (at the door ONLY) Talkin on 146.820 MHz (PL 123) Commercial Vendors: Call for Rates and Information

Saturday, April 19, 1997 -- 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Setup: 5-7 a.m.)
Admission: \$1.00 See you in Belton!

Next year's Marathon is scheduled for Sunday, January 18, 1998.

Meeting of the Board of Directors of The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club January 2, 1997

A quorum of the board of directors met at the Sugar Land Community Center on January 2, 1997. This was the first board meeting of the calendar year. The meeting was called to order by Vice-President, Louis House-KD5GM, in the absence of President, Ron Grimes-WA5SCE, at 7:31 P.M.

The following Board Members and guests were present: Jackie Burton-KC5OHJ, Allen Mattis-N5AFV, Sam Wilson-N5CPA, Mike Hardwick-N5VCX, Bud King-N5UOG, Terri Van Slyke-W5BKK, Terry McCoy-W5TEM, John Moore-KK5NU, Rick Hiller-W5RH, Gailen Marshall-N4SKR, Nizar Mullani-K0NM, Pete Norris-KJ5SS, Claude Sessions-K5HFY, Jim Cahanan-KB5V, John Dryton-KC5QZD, and Louise House-KD5GM.

Recording Secretary, Jackie Burton-KC5OHJ, presented the December minutes. The minutes were approved with a motion that passed unanimously.

Treasurer, Pete Norris-KJ5SS, presented a treasurer's report for December showing a balance of \$ 3255.75. The Treasurer's report was approved with a motion that passed unanimously.

Board Member, Terry McCoy-W5TEM, had nothing to report.

Corresponding Secretary, Jim Cahanan-KB5V, had nothing to report.

Board Member, Claude Sessions-K5HFY, stated that he had been approached by M.D. Anderson Blood Center regarding a possible blood drive given by B-VARC members. 1997 President, Gailen Marshall-N4SKR, listed several problems involved with having a blood drive and a regular club meeting simultaneously. He suggested organizing a group to go to the blood center instead; that another blood center location might be more convenient. Claude stated that he would get information regarding B-VARC donating as a group. Claude also mentioned an error in January's newsletter, regarding talk-in repeaters. The 444.45 MHz repeater should be listed as 444.55 MHz. He also suggested that the times listed for Saturday morning breakfast be changed. The times currently listed are 7:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. These times should be changed to 6:30 a.m.- 8:00 a.m., because most people are gone before 9:00 a.m. In addition, he suggested listing the Houston Area Information Line, run by Bruce Paige-KK5DO, on the back page of the newsletter as a contact number for B-VARC information. He will speak to Betty Wilcox-KA0TEN, who is currently the contact person, and Bruce Paige regarding this matter.

Board Member, Bud King-N5UOG, stated that Ernest K. "Moses" Silverthorn-KB5TNW, passed away the previous week. Treasurer, Pete Norris-KJ5SS, confirmed that he had received a check for membership in B-VARC from Moses. Bud asked that his check be returned, or money refunded to his wife. Vice-President, Louise House-KD5GM, said that a card would be sent to his family from B-VARC.

Past President, Allen Mattis-N5AFV, expressed concern regarding the drop in size of our club membership. He has agreed to take charge of a mailing to past members of the club, and currently has a list of 100 members. This mailing would include a letter and a membership application. He requested \$ 32.00 for postage. This was approved with a motion that passed unanimously.

Vice-President, Louise House-KD5GM, introduced the new Board Members for 1997. President, Gailen Marshall-N4SKR, Vice-President, Rick Hiller-W5RH, Recording Secretary, Terri Van Slyke-W5BKK, Corresponding Secretary, John Dryton-KC5QZD, Treasurer, Nizar Mullani-K0NM, and 3-Year Board Member, Jackie Burton-KC5OHJ. Remaining on the Board are 2-Year Board member, Terry McCoy-W5TEM, 1-Year Board Member, Bud King-N5UOG, and Past President, Ron Grimes-WA5SCE.

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, expressed the need for volunteers for public service events. He is head of the committee for the M.S. 150, and this event needs approximately 100 volunteers. He is also a coordinator for the American Lung Association committee, which sponsors the Clean Air Bike Ride and the Alamo Challenge. These events need volunteers, also.

B-VARC Rag Chew Net Manager, Sam Wilson-N5CPA reported that the net met 3 times in December, with 10-18 check-ins.

Public Service Net Manager, Jackie Burton-KC5OHJ, reported that the Monday night Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Public Service Information Net

was going well, with fairly high check-ins for the month of December. She mentioned that there had been squirrel activity the previous Monday night.

Board Member, Claude Sessions-K5HFY, mentioned that the street address of the HESS building, as printed on the back of the January newsletter, is incorrect in regard to the banquet. The banquet will be held at the old address, 3121 Buffalo Speedway, as printed on the map on the inside back page.

Vice President, Louise House-KD5GM, reported that Larry Levy-WD5DRB, has given a draft for the Stu Lamkin memorial to Harold Parker-ND5F. He also presented several options, regarding the payment of the \$ 75.00 setup fee for life member plaques. After some discussion, this issue was tabled until the next Board meeting.

1997 President, Gailen Marshall-N4SKR, presented plans and ideas for the 1997 year. These include conducting board meetings on the 145.47 MHz repeater, with Gailen as net control. This will be done on a month by month trial basis, with an optional Board meeting the following week, if necessary. He presented a new structure for meetings, consisting of a swap fest, product corner, business, technical corner, 5 minute break, and program, followed by discussion and social time. He stated that Darell Kirk-KC5JAR, had been mostly responsible for setup and cleanup, and would probably remain involved with a cleanup committee with a Board member as backup. He added that 1997 Corresponding Secretary, John Dryton-KC5QZD, would be the coordinator of the technical corner; 1997 Vice-President, Rick Hiller-W5RH would be program chairman, and has a need for a product corner chairman with backup. He asked that each Board member take responsibility for a program. He also stated that each Board member would receive a calendar of events by e-mail. In response to a Gailen's question regarding the swap fest part of the meeting, Board Member Bud King, N5UOG said that equipment could not be sold at a meeting.

Past President, Allen Mattis-N5AFV, suggested that a membership application be attached to the newsletter as had been done in the past. He also mentioned that there is a membership application on the B-VARC home page; that it didn't include enough spaces for family members. There was some discussion regarding the pros and cons of subscribing to World Radio and ARRL through B-VARC. Treasurer, Pete Norris-KJ5SS stated that quite a bit of paper work is involved when a member subscribes this way, and that only \$ 20.00 was made from this last year. A motion was made to eliminate these from the application, which passed unanimously.

Sam Wilson-N5CPA, asked if we needed a certain percentage of ARRL members, in order to maintain our status as a special service club. A decision was made not to remove ARRL dues from the membership application, until the impact of such a change could be determined.

Treasurer, Pete Norris-KJ5SS, said he would not distribute tickets at the banquet as before. Instead, he will hand out pieces of paper with the entree of choice written on them. Board Member, Bud King-N5UOG, stated that he needed the number of people attending the banquet.

With no further business, this meeting was adjourned by Vice-President, Louise House-KD5GM, at 8:50 p.m., by a motion, second, and unanimous vote.

Meeting of the Board of Directors of The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club February 6, 1997

A quorum of the Board of Directors met on the W5RPT 145.47 repeater on February 6, 1997. This was the second board meeting of the calendar year. The meeting was called to order by Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, in the absence of President, Gailen Marshall - N4SKR, at 7:31 p.m.

The following Board Members and guests were present: Rick Hiller - W5RH, Nizar Mullani - K0NM, Bud King - N5UOG, John Dryton - KC5QZD, Ron Grimes - WA5SCE, Jackie Burton - KC5OHJ, Terry McCoy - W5TEM, Terri Van Slyke - W5BKK, Pete Norris - KJ5SS, Allen Mattis - N5AFV, Mike Hardwick - N5VCX, Dale Temple - KC5HNJ, John Moore - KK5NU, Claude Sessions - K5HFY, Scott Pederson - K15DR, Darell Kirk - KC5JAR, and Mark - KC5YEU.

Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, stated the purpose for holding the board meeting on the repeater was to involve more B-VARC members in the workings of the club, and would be conducted as a normal board meeting.

Board Member, Bud King - NSUOG, made a motion that the January minutes be approved. This motion was not passed, as not all board members had received the minutes.

Recording Secretary, Terri Van Slyke - W5BKK, reported that a pavilion had been reserved for Saturday, April 12, 1997, for the B-VarC picnic at George Bush Park, formerly Cullen Barker Park. Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, suggested a discussion at the next club meeting regarding food for the picnic, and mentioned composing a paragraph for the newsletter to advertise the event.

Treasurer, Nizar Mullani - K0NM, stated that he would put his accounting report on his computer, using Quickbook. He will have printed copies for the membership to review at the next meeting. Past President, Ron Grimes - W5SCE, asked if an audit committee had been formed, and Nizar responded that the committee had not been formed yet. Mike Hardwick - N5VCX, asked about the subscriptions he had ordered on his membership application and Nizar informed him that he was working on those separately from the membership dues.

Public Service Net Manager, Jackie Burton - KC5OHJ, reported that the Monday Night Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Public Service Information Net was going well, with a high number of check-ins, and low "squirrel" activity.

Scott Pederson - K15DR, presented several ideas to promote public service. These included: 1. an incentive plan, which might offer a discount coupon to a person or group of persons for participation in a public service event; 2. including public service in the code/theory classes for new hams, and speaking at V.E. exams to new licensees on this topic; 3. obtaining Motorola radios at a discount to be used in the Technical Corner. These would be stripped down and tuned up for the ham hands.

Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, who is also Program Director, gave a report on current plans for programs in the 1997 year. He stated that February's meeting will be the first with the new meeting format, which includes the Product Corner and Technical Corner, in addition to the main meeting topic. He said that John Dryton - KC5QZD, would be demonstrating how to solder PL-259 connectors for the Technical Corner, and he would present his classic microphone collection for the Product Corner. Other topics mentioned were ATV, QRP, an HL&P demo, and re-doing radios. Rick said that the emphasis would be "hands on" activities, and that meetings would be advertised and publicized one month in advance.

Corresponding Secretary, John Dryton - KC5QZD, stated that he would demonstrate how to solder PL-259 connectors for the February meeting, and VHF antenna building for the March meeting. He mentioned that Rick Hiller - W5RH, would present RF safety in April and that B-VarC currently had 52 memberships expire in January 1997.

Allen Mattis - N5AFV, reviewed the details of his activities regarding the membership drive. He stated that he had sent out 100 letters to past club members who had not renewed their memberships. Five letters have been returned with bad addresses. He said that he needed information from the Treasurer as to who had renewed membership in the past month and that this would help to measure how successful his effort has been.

Past President, Ron Grimes - W5SCE, acknowledged the good job Allen Mattis - N5AFV, has done with the membership drive, and thanked him for his effort. Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, stated that he appreciated Allen's effort also.

Board Member, Terry McCoy - W5TEM, had nothing to report. He also thanked Allen for his effort.

Board Member, Jackie Burton - KC5OHJ, had nothing to report.

Board Member, Bud King - NSUOG, had nothing to report.

Claude Sessions - K5HPY, reported on the status of the B-VarC blood drive. By reviewing comments made at the last board meeting and talking with a woman at the blood center, he has come to the conclusion that a blood drive at the Sugar Land Community Center would not be feasible. He is doing further research on the possibility of B-VarC members donating at the blood center as a group. This would require at least 25 people and would cover B-VarC members for blood for one year. He said that he would bring more information to the next board meeting and would poll the members at the next general meeting to see how many were interested in participating.

Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, asked for information regarding the funding of the Life Member plaques. This issue was tabled until the next meeting. Rick also brought up the topic of a vanity call sign for the club. He stated that 25 call signs could be listed and these calls must be unused for the last two years. Ron Grimes - W5SCE, suggested a club contest, picking 5 - 10 call signs to submit and awarding a prize to the one who's call sign is chosen. John Dryton - KC5QZD, said that he thought this was a good idea and another way to get club members more involved. Bud King - NSUOG suggested bringing the idea up in the general club meeting. Terry McCoy - W5TEM, also liked the idea for the club contest. He made a motion that the club designate the \$30.00 fee that is required to apply for the call. The motion was seconded and approved with a unanimous vote.

Darell Kirk - KC5JAR, stated that he will continue to take responsibility for making coffee and setting up chairs for the meetings. He said he did need help with this and would be calling people.

Pete Norris - KJ5SS, mentioned that his next class would begin in June and that he would add a public service portion to it, as suggested earlier. He also stated that a motion was passed at the January board meeting not to take any more subscription money with the membership dues and that he would announce this change. He said he would like to see a membership application included with the newsletter.

Newsletter Editor, Scott Pederson - K15DR, reported that he would correct several errors in the newsletter, including the meeting dates, which were incorrect. He said that he would include a membership application with the newsletter. He stated that it was difficult to be limited to 10 pages for the newsletter and asked the reason for that limit. Several people responded. It was concluded that it had to do with weight and postage. Terry McCoy - W5TEM, mentioned that B-VarC needed to be written as "B-VarC" with the hyphen between the "B" and the "V". He said this is because it is a trademark when written that way. Scott said that he would correct it in the next newsletter.

Pete Norris - KJ5SS, stated that he takes bulletins to other locations, as do some other members. He suggested listing a phone number on the bulletin, regarding membership information, rather than add an extra page for an application.

Mike Hardwick - N5VCX, reported on upcoming public service events which include the MS 150, on April 19 and 20. He is the contact person for this and said he would be calling past participants. He said that participants must have a radio of at least 25 watts output and a gain antenna. He also mentioned the K9 Fun Run and said he would be giving a list of events to Scott Pederson - K15DR, to be published in the newsletter.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Vice President, Rick Hiller - W5RH, at 8:35 p.m., with a motion, second and unanimous vote.

ALL YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE INTERNET AND MORE

by John Moore, KK5NU

'Let Your Fingers Do the Walking'

On-line shopping, one of the newest forms of electronic commerce, is one of the ways of identifying, searching for, pricing and then ordering your selection of merchandise thru the medium of modern electronics. From the reach of your easy chair, literally the whole world is merely keystrokes away. So, let's make a venture out into cyberspace and take a little shopping excursion.

For our trip, the first stop, after identifying the merchandise or product of our desire: might well be the manufacturer or distributor source of our sought after item. Let's try RF Bencher, Inc., for a look at some of their amateur radio line of products. A hasty search for either product line or company name thru one of the various search engines such as:

'Lycos' www.lycos.com

'Yahoo' www.yahoo.com

'Infoseek' www.infoseek.com

'Altavista' www.altavista.digital.com

'Excite' www.excite.com

gives rise to several promising URL's of, if not the manufacturer itself, as in this case: a multitude of users and distributors. In most cases, pictures of the desired and sought after item may be found 'on line', as well as at least one or more sites with prominent mention of the attributes of the item. After browsing these web pages at the manufacturing or distribution source, then looking at some of the prices displayed; you can narrow your choice of both the exact item sought, as well as just exactly where that it may be found, out on the net.

Next, the selective use of eMail, should be used to find both a favorable price and the place with which to trade and deal. While in some cases, secured credit card information may be transmitted across the 'net'; it may be to your advantage to settle on the old 'Snail' to just send you check for the purchase price and to include any shipping and delivery charges. Most distributors will not only acknowledge the receipt of your monies by eMail reply, but will also advise of both shipping date and carrier. And, for those that desire to track their shipment, some of the commercial carriers provide for on-line tracking of the every movement of the shipment. Thus, it should prove no surprise, when in due course, the item arrives at your front door. Your correspondent has been known to greet the delivery person with an abbreviated form of 'twenty questions' as to just what has been sent today. And, as an added bonus, if the item requires some additional instructions or questions as to use or assembly come up; an eMail back to the source is generally a fast and easy solution to the problem. So, try it out; you may be pleasantly surprised at the results that you'll get. And, as always,

'your mileage may vary'.

More to come -- John Moore, KK5NU

HOUSTON SHOT NEWS

by Al Mattis-N5AFV

The Ten Ten International web page is one of the recipients of the Best Ham Web Page award. This award program, coordinated by Max Marbles,

KC7GFW, recognizes ham radio web pages for "exemplifying good design and utility to amateur radio operators

on the web." If you surf the Internet and have not yet checked out the Ten Ten International web page at <http://www.lehigh.edu/lists/tenten-1/>, you may want to do so.

Also remember to visit the Houston SHOT chapter home page on the Internet. Check it out at <http://www.clarc.org/shot/>. The SHOT chapter thanks Bruce Paige, KK5DO, for constructing and maintaining the page, and the Clear Lake Amateur Radio Club (CLARC) for providing space on their server for the page.

Jeff Ritter, N5VAV, in Dallas, TX has created a Ten Ten chat room on the Internet, where members can exchange messages live in real time. Those of you who are on the Internet can find it at: <http://www.flash.net/~n5vav/cgi-bin/chat/index.html>. The chat room has been set up as an experimental project by Ritter, and is not officially sanctioned by Ten Ten International.

We've all heard about the problems that can be caused by a computer virus. Ten Ten International has experienced these problems first hand. The computer system used by Gerry Gross, WA6POZ, Ten Ten International's data manager, was affected by a virus. Jerry's computer system was down for a while, but fortunately, the Ten Ten membership data base was not affected. Meanwhile, Linda Barnes, KJ4FM, who publishes the monthly Paper Chasers Update, has also had computer problems. Her data diskette containing the subscriber's addresses for the Monthly Paper Chasers Update became corrupted. No problem, she thought - she had a back up disk. It soon became apparent that the file it contained was also corrupted. Fortunately Barnes had a hard copy list of the subscribers, and she was able to re-enter the data.

Remember, the 1997 Ten Ten International Convention will be held in Council Bluffs, Iowa on July 10-13, 1997. If you can't make it to the convention, consider attending the 9th annual Texas Hill Country Ten Ten Gathering which will be held on June 1, 1997, at the residence of Jack Moore, K5CC (ex-K4NF), near San Antonio. This gathering provides an opportunity for Houston area Ten Ten members to meet a number of active Ten Ten paper chasers from outside the Houston area.

In 1994, Ten Ten International held the annual Paper Chasers Bash in Las Vegas, NV at the Hacienda Hotel and Casino. Some of the members who attended the gathering felt that they were badly treated by the hotel management. Those disgruntled attendees were delighted this past New Year's Eve when the Hacienda Hotel was "imploded" by explosives to make room for a new casino complex. The controlled demolition was part of the New Year's festivities in Las Vegas, and a number of television stations around the country carried video of the demolition.

Word has been received that the tornadoes which struck Tuscaloosa, AL in late January hit the neighborhood where Tom Henderson, K4CIH, resides. Henderson is the president of Ten Ten International. His home received only minor damage. A large pine tree in his yard, and a portion of his fence were blown down.

The week end of February 1-2, 1997 was the Ten Ten International Winter Phone QSO Party. The SHOT chapter made a serious effort to participate in the QSO party, and many of the local members congregated on 28.488

(Continued on page 7)

10-10

MHz. For the first time in history, a Ten Ten QSO party used a multiplier in scoring the contest. The multipliers consisted call sign prefixes, and many of the Houston area operators who came up on frequency to work chapter members provided new multipliers. The SHOT chapter thanks all of the Houston area operators that supported the chapter in the contest.

Paper chasers continue to be active on 28.345 MHz and 28.375 MHz when the band is open. Chapters with specials this month include GB Ten (DX) and Eagle Watch (AL). Ten Ten members were saddened to learn that Roy Bain, WB8JET, chapter head of the Arizona Thunderbird chapter has become a silent key. Pete Matson, KC1CP, a member of the Ten Ten International Board of Directors, has been hospitalized in New Haven, CT for cardiac problems.

Propagation on ten meters this past month continued to be sporadic. There were a few good domestic openings, however, the signals had very marked QSB, and the openings did not last long. Occasional DX openings were also reported. We all look forward to propagation on ten meters continuing to improve in the coming months as we head into the next solar cycle.

Remember, the Houston SHOT (Space Houston On Ten) net meets every Tuesday evening at 8 PM local time on 28.488 MHz. All amateurs are welcome to check in, even if they do not have a Ten Ten number. If you are not a member of Ten International and wish to join the organization, please check into the net. There are a lot of exciting activities in Ten, and many friendly people can be found on the ten meter band.

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

By Scott Pederson
ki5dr



Greetings!

The 1997 event season is upon us! Here's a couple events coming up which will require some additional help.

- March 9: K9 Fun Run - Contact me at 460-5852
- March 23: Texas BlueBonnet bike ride - Contact Bret Pritchard, N5VOY
- April 6: MS Walk. Contact Bret, N5VOY
- April 19, 20: MS-150 Houston to Austin Contact Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

Next month I'll talk about some incentive ideas for participants who work several events, and also an idea I have about getting our hands on some ham equipment for rent or borrow to be used for PS events.

The Space Houston On Ten (SHOT) Chapter of 10-X International now has a home page on the world wide web. The URL is

<http://www.clarc.org/shot>

Information about joining the chapter and how the awards are issued may be found on the page.

The BVARC CW Practice Net meets every Monday & Wednesday at 8:30pm on 146.47 simplex and 28.14647. Code is sent at 5, 8, 13 and 20 WPM and all text comes from QST. No code is sent the last Monday of the month.

HOW THE BIRD WATTMETER WORKS

by Dick Harrison, KB5WZI

The ARRL Handbook calls the Bird Wattmeter the industry standard, but does not try to explain its operation. Instead, the handbook calls the operation "proprietary". Patents are good for seventeen years. The Bird has been around for half a century. Its proprietary status can only be protected by trade secrecy and patents on recent improvements. I find Bird's own literature misleading. I think the principles of Bird's meter should be clearly expressed, as they are now public domain.

I've tried to do it in 226 words. If my analysis is wrong, I want to be corrected. Homemade versions of the wattmeter might reward the builder. Bird's business certainly won't suffer. Craftsmanship is their strength.

I hope there are others who share my interest in the subject.

Your's truly,
Dick Harrison, KB5WZI
(713) 668-8415

The Bird Wattmeter's success is based on its ability to distinguish forward power from reflected power. Measured together, they don't mean much. But separately, they are very significant.

Two factors are key to separating the forward power from reflected power for measurement. First, Voltage and current are in-phase in the forward wave, while they are out-of-phase in the reflected wave. Second, voltage is always 50 times the current in either wave, forward or reverse, due to the fixed transmission line impedance.

The bird works by collecting a voltage sample and a current sample at some point on the transmission line. These two samples are designed to produce exactly equal DC current magnitudes through the power indicator. Current generated by the voltage sample is always polarized to deflect the meter up-scale. By positioning an arrow, the operator selects polarity of the current sample. If aiding polarity is selected, forward power will be indicated, and reflected power will cancel. If opposing polarity is selected, reflected power will be indicated, and forward power will cancel.

Indicated forward power will include reflected power because it is reflected again at the source. This puts the voltage and current back in-phase, just like the forward power. The difference between forward and reflected readings is a measure of the real forward power.

KB5WZI

Scanner Jack's Corner
by Jack Roberts, KB5TMY

(This month Jack has four recommendations for hand-held scanners which are Triple Conversion. In case you did not know, most scanners are double-conversion, while the more expensive ones are triple-conversion. Triple Conversion helps eliminate birdies, and dead carriers caused by noise and spurious emissions inside and outside te receiver.....Ed)

The four recommendations are -

- AR-8000
- Icom R-1
- Radio Shack PRO-26
- Uniden Bearcat 3000XLT

Next Month he'll review some of the mobile scanners on the market.

Here's a list of frequencies containing all HCSO Constables, HCDA, HCME, HCHD, HC Animal Control, Alief VFD, Tollway Authority, and West University Lifelight.

Match across and down	860.x	859.x	858.x	857.x	856.x
x.7125					
x.4875					
x.4625					
x.2375					
x.2125					
MISC	868. 7625	868. 4875	868. 2375	867. 9125	867. 6625

(Continued from page 1)

Communications is always important for assuring the safety and welfare of the runners and public at such a large and complex event. It was particularly important to this year's running of the Houston Marathon. Your support is recognized and appreciated by those responsible for its organization.

I shall endeavor to thank each participant personally, but I would appreciate your reading this letter on any nets that use your repeater and publishing this letter in the newsletters of those clubs whose members routinely use this repeater. If you have any questions or comments about this event, please call me at 713-977-9754

de

Carl Hacker, KB5LDY
Chair, Communications Committee
Houston Marathon

Cyberthreat report makes new case for ham radio's value

Cyberthreat Report: New Case for Ham Radio?

By Peter Coffee, AC6EN, pcc_csm@earthlink.net

U.S. citizens depend on a sophisticated telecommunications system that is vulnerable to relatively simple forms of electronic attack. So warned the chairman of the President's Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection in his January 30 remarks to the National Press Club.

Commission chairman Robert T. Marsh warned of the risks, from both natural and man-made threats, against the critical systems and services that make up the Commission's charter: the electric power system, gas and oil storage and distribution, telecommunications, banking and finance, transportation, water supply systems, emergency services (including medical, police, fire and rescue) and continuity of government services.

In particular, he warned, due to increasing reliance on dispersed electronic networks for communication and control, combined with plummeting prices of powerful computing and communications equipment, "Even amateurs have access to the technological tools needed to penetrate systems and cause trouble."

The ham radio community should take this opportunity to remind policy makers that we provide a backup system that directly addresses the risks Marsh cites. Hams represent a decentralized system, virtually immune to attack at any single point, whose users and operators are one and the same: a team that can recognize and work around many modes of failure.

This combination of technical characteristics and precious operator skills should not be overlooked by Marsh and his fellow commissioners. The Amateur Radio Service should be recognized in the commission's report, due for completion at mid-year, as a vital defense against the paralysis that might otherwise occur in response to a major communications outage.

Commissioner Marsh's remarks can be viewed at

<http://www.pccip.gov/pccip/npc.html>

The charter of the commission and other information are on line at

<http://www.pccip.gov/pccip>

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B-VARC Ragchew net check-ins
by Sam Wilson, N5CPA

01/01/97 - N5CPA (NCS) K5LJ, N5ECP, W5TEM, NM5K, K4YH, W5GLD.

01/08/97 - N5CPA(NCS) W5EFB, KK5DO, KI5SC, KB5PAJ, KM5DG, W5IHY, W5GHK, W5TEM, KG5KV, W5RH, W5GLD, KE5SR.

01/15/97 - N5CPA (NCS) K5LJ, KK5DO, KI5SC, KB5PAJ, WB5NES, KB5V, W5TEM, WB5LJU, W5RH, KC5TLG, N5UOG, W5IHY, WB8SVR, KK5W, N0DEB.

01/22/97 - N5CPA (NCS), W5RH, W5EFB, W5IHY, KE5SR, K5LJ, KK5DO, KI5SC, KB5PAJ, N5AFV, AB5OK, KG5KV, KM5AG.

01/19/97 - N5CPA (NCS), K5LJ, K4LVV, KE5SR, W5RH, KK5DO, KG5KV, WB5NES, NM5K, W5IHY, W5GHK, N5VXU, WB8SVR.

ARRL and TAPR 1996 Digital Communications Conference
Seattle Washington
Banquet Speech by Lyle Johnson WA7GXD
September 21, 1996

Listen to Banquet Talk

Well, as you can probably tell, this is the first time I've ever done one of these, so I want to thank everybody for the opportunity to do this. I want to thank Greg Jones, WD5IVD, for inviting me. What I understand the ground rules on this are that: if this goes over OK, Greg gets the credit for his wisdom: if it doesn't, it's my fault. And besides that, I know you're really here for the prize drawing so I'll try and keep this short.

My personal involvement with TAPR, heavy involvement that is, on the board and as an officer and so forth, ended about three or four years ago. I left at that time feeling it was really time for some new blood with a new organization, new directions of leadership. Four years ago when I left, I was very, very proud of TAPR and what it had accomplished. And today I can honestly say that I'm just as proud of what it's still doing and I want to thank Greg for doing an excellent job. (Applause)

We have a number of students with us this year. I understand with the first ever student awards that some of these students may not be terrifically familiar with Amateur Radio. So, I'm going to touch on a few things that may seem a little bit basic; for them it's new, for the rest of us it's a refresher.

THE B-VARC BULLETIN - MARCH 1997



The Monthly Publication of the
Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club.
Serving the Greater Houston Area.

Club Callsign - KC5OIG

B-VARC's Website: <http://www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc>

Editor-In-Chief: Scott Pederson, KI5DR

(713) 460-5852

E-mail address: ki5dr@flash.net

The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (B-VARC) was originally organized in 1978, primarily as an emergency communications group available to assist the communities of Missouri City and Stafford, when required. Since that time, B-VARC has grown and expanded its activities to become the most active HAM radio club in the Southwest Houston area.

Today, B-VARC is truly a general-interest club with an impressive record of Public Service. The Commitment to service has been recognized by the Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) with the coveted status of Special Service Club. We are proud of our members who represent the finest in Amateur Radio. Membership is not limited to licensed operators, but is open to anyone with an interest in Amateur Radio. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at the Sugar Land Community Center. Talk-in assistance is available in the 145.470, and 444.550 MHz repeaters.

To obtain information about the club, its activities, or about joining B-VARC, contact Scott Pederson, KI5DR at (713) 460-5852

B-VARC Eating Schedule

Saturdays-7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Location: New York Coffee Shop, 9720 Hillcroft @ S. Braeswood

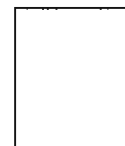
3rd Friday dinners - 6:30 p.m. SHARP! Location TBA

Last Sunday Lunches - 2:30 p.m. Location TBA

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