

# THE B-VARC BULLETIN

Volume 20, issue 4

April, 1997



## Note from the Editor –

Please excuse the change in format this month, I lost the old template last month when my system crashed. Also, I am missing some Emails from a few regular submitters. I humbly apologize, and things should be back to normal for next month's issue. Feel free to call me with any questions. Scott, ki5dr

## What's in this issue?

- Note from the President p. 3
- SHOT news / 10-10 p. 4
- Map to Picnic p. 10
- Changes proposed to RACES rules p. 7

## Don't miss the 1997 B-VARC Picnic!!!

The B-VARC Picnic will be held on Saturday April 12, 1997! Come and bring the family for lots of food and fun! The cost is \$ 6.00 per person for Barbecue and all the trimmings. The location is Cullen-Barker Park, now called George Bush Park, about 2 miles West of Highway 6 on Westheimer Parkway. Turn left at South Barker Cypress and look for Pavilion 3 on the left. See the map in this newsletter. Come and spend the day with food being served at 2 P.M. We will have radios too!

See map in back of Newsletter.

A Special Thanks to the First Colony Church of Christ for the use of their facilities  
which make this newsletter possible.



# THE B-VARC BULLETIN

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  
(713) 341-7137

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## PSN Check-ins for February 1997

By Jackie, KC5OHJ

2/3 - 53  
2/10 - 47  
2/17 - 44  
2/24 - 56

73 de KC5OHJ  
IP Address: 44.76.4.118  
kc5ohj.ampr.org

## Every Meeting a Hamfest

Don't forget!

The monthly meetings are a perfect time to bring your junk box to trade with other hams who bring their Junk Box! Remember, one ham's junk is another ham's Junk!

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### 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

*Mr. Alan Cross, WA5UZB, our local ARRL representative 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

- Products Corner: Phase 3

- Technical Corner: KC5QZD

April--RF safety

*April 19, 20 -MS-150 Houston to Austin*

Contact Mike, N5VCX

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## President's Message for April 1997

*By Gailen Marshall, n4skr*

It is really hard to imagine that the year is almost a third gone already! We have had some really great B-VARC meetings in the last couple of months. This past meeting was presented by the Houston Amateur Television Society and they were GREAT!! A great big B-VARC "thanks" to HATS. Our VP and Program chair Rick WSRH has more and more good programs planned. So stay tuned and stay involved

I want to use this opportunity to publicly explain some of the changes that are occurring in B-VARC. Several individuals have expressed dissatisfaction with some of the policies that we have established as a Board. The *central* theme established by the Board has been to increase the emphasis of the club on amateur radio. All of us are (hopefully) friends and enjoy one another's company at breakfasts, picnics, and dinner before meetings and Friday night dinners. But B-VARC was established as and remains a forum for amateur radio. The rest is just "icing on the cake". Your Board of Directors has fully embraced that concept and wishes to expand it even further. We do not wish (and have not, to our knowledge) tried to exclude anyone or any particular area of emphasis in amateur radio - HF, VHF/UHF, satellite, public service, etc. But, in order to accommodate all the activities and have time for the focus to be broad-based, we have had to organize/prioritize information to what we believe is the most appropriate and efficient forum possible. That is the basis for many of the changes you have seen to date.

The monthly Board meetings have gone to an "on-the-air" (BMOTA) format. While I have certainly heard negative comments about the format, I have also heard many positive comments as well. Apparently, the two Board meetings so far have generated more participation (at least by listeners) than any Board meetings in recent memory. That is purposeful on your Board's part. The more you know about your club and its activities, the more you will participate. The BMOTA format will continue for the duration of my tenure as long as it meets the needs of the club and MERA continues to allow us to use their repeater. Face-to-face Board

meetings will occur on an "as needed" basis to take care of business that needs to be done that way

The meeting format has also changed. As those in attendance the last two months have noted, the meeting starts on time and the announcements are much briefer than in previous meetings. This is so we can get to the main reason we meet monthly - amateur radio. Most of the announcements are actually reminders rather than business items. If one person reads them, this saves time. The saved time is used for the scheduled programs. This policy may have offended some members and I am truly sorry if that is the case. If anyone can suggest a better format to remain efficient in the business part of our meeting, I am all ears. However, if anyone has an announcement they wish to be read at the meeting, you may FAX (713-500-6543) or email (marshall@heart.med.uth.tmc.edu) by the morning of the meeting and I will announce it as long as it for to the membership.

Change is never easy. But improving an already great product (such as B-VARC) is a great challenge that the rest of the Board and I are committed to for this year. I guess we must be generating some interest - we had 58 at the February meeting and 67 at the March. We hope to top 100 by the summer. It only makes things more fun. 73 and see you at the April meeting and picnic.

## **B-VARC Rag-Chew Net Check-Ins** *By Sam Wilson, N5CPA*

3.960 Mhz +/- 3Khz Wednesdays at 8.00 PM

03/05/97 - 11

03/12/97 - 12

03/19/97 - 16

03/26/97 - 24

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## HOUSTON SHOT NEWS

by Al Mattis-N5AFV

Ton Henderson - K4CTH, president of Ten Ten International, has announced that Bruce Paige - KK5DO is the new chairman of the Ten Ten International Contest Committee. The Contest Committee is responsible for planning and administering all Ten Ten International contests. By the way, the weekend of May 3-4, 1997 will be the Ten Ten International Spring CW QSO Party. The Houston SHOT chapter has volunteered to score the QSO party. Logs are to be sent to Bruce Paige - KK5DO.

Pete Marson - KC1CP, a member of the Ten Ten International Board of Directors, has been released from the hospital in New Haven, CT after undergoing cardiac surgery.

If you surf the Internet, remember to visit the Houston SHOT chapter home page. 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.

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. The annual Paper Chasers Bash will be held August 13-17, 1997 at the Circus Circus Casino and Hotel in Reno, NV. Attendees should ask for a room on the second floor of the Main Tower when they make reservations.

Paper chasers continue to be active on 28.345 MHz and 28.375 MHz during band openings. Unfortunately, the lack of recent band openings has kept paper chasing at a minimum. In an effort to encourage activity on the band, the

Springbok Chapter (DX) has announced a special contest for paper chasers that will last one year. You must be a member of the Springbok chapter to participate. Word has been received that the Ocean State and Quahog Chapters (RI) have gone QRT. These chapters were very active, and will be missed by many. Ten Ten International is pleased to welcome the Chesapeake Bay Chapter (MD) as the newest affiliated chapter.

Propagation on ten meters this past month was very poor. There were only a few domestic band openings. Occasional DX openings to Latin America 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 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.

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## Meeting of the Board of Directors of The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club March 6, 1996

A quorum of the Board of Directors met on the MERA 145.47 repeater on March 6, 1997. This was the third meeting of the calendar year. The meeting was called to order at 7:28 P.M. by President, Gailen Marshall -- N4SKR.

The following Board Members and guests were present: Gailen Marshall -- N4SKR, Rick Hiller -- W5RH, Terri Van Slyke -- W5BKK, Nizar Mullani -- K0NM, Jackie Burton -- KC5OHJ, John Dryton -- KM5HP, Terry McCoy -- W5TEM, Bud King -- N5UOG, Ron Grimes -- WA5SCE, Mike Hardwick -- N5VCX, Scott Pederson -- KI5DR, Allen Brier -- WB5BIR, Randy Pollard -- AK5G, Joe Sam -- KM5DG, Claude Sessions -- K5HFY, Carl Hacker -- KB5LDY, Sam Wilson -- N5CPA, Jack Van Demark -- WN5A, and Pete Norris -- KJ5SS.

Vice President and Program Chairman, Rick Hiller -- W5RH, stated that programs had been scheduled through July. These programs include: Houston Amateur Television Society, Alan Cross with ARRL, QRP, transmitter fingerprinting, kit building, and refurbishing old radios. He also said that last month's meeting had good attendance.

Corresponding Secretary, John Dryton -- KM5HP, reported that the membership roster had been updated and that copies would be available at March's meeting. He also said that Technical Corner topics would include RF safety, antennas, and SAREX.

Recording Secretary, Terri Van Slyke -- W5BKK, presented the January and February minutes. The minutes were approved with a motion that passed unanimously. She introduced the topic of what kind of food to have at the upcoming B-VARC picnic in April. After much discussion, it was decided that the picnic would be catered. A motion was made to authorize Terri to arrange for a barbecue dinner in the \$ 6.00 - \$ 7.00 a plate range. The club would also furnish drinks in addition to the tea usually included with the meal. This motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer, Nizar Mullani -- K0NM, was present for a treasurer's report, but much of his transmission was lost due to a battery problem.

Board Member, Bud King -- N5UOG, had nothing to report.

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

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

Newsletter Editor and Public Service Chairman, Scott Pederson -- KI5DR, stated that he had 6 people signed up for the K-9 Fun Run and needed two more. He also said he had received comments

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by e-mail regarding the print size in March's newsletter. He stated that he had used the smaller type in order to fit everything in and asked if there was a way to expand the newsletter beyond its current 10-page length. He said it would be worth it to expand the number of pages, even if it would cost more. Claude Sessions -- K5HFY, stated that he had checked into a bulk rate permit, that it was not economically viable and difficult to use. After much discussion regarding postal rates and cost, it was determined it would cost too much to expand the newsletter at this time. Nizar Mullani -- K0NM stated that the newsletter was available on the Web. Gailen Marshall -- N4SKR, said that the Web version was abbreviated. He said the newsletter was also available by e-mail. Bud King -- N5UOG, said that 74 club members currently have e-mail. Scott Pederson -- KI5DR, stated that the electronic version requires a reader that can be downloaded. Nizar Mullani -- K0NM, suggested polling the membership to determine how many would like to receive their newsletters by e-mail. This was approved with a motion that passed unanimously. Carl Hacker -- KB5LDY, suggested sending an announcement to members with e-mail regarding the availability of the newsletter on line. This was approved with a motion that passed unanimously.

Board Member, Jackie Burton -- KC5OHJ, reported that she had not received a newsletter by e-mail or regular mail. She had requested her newsletter in plain text. Scott Pederson -- KI5DR, stated that it was difficult to convert the newsletter to plain text.

After some discussion, it was decided that the newsletter would not be available in plain text on line.

President, Gailen Marshall -- N4SKR, stated that there had been some interest in items with the B-VARC logo, such as shirts and caps. Allen Brier -- WB5BIR, offered to check into finding a supplier for these items.

B-VARC Rag Chew Net Manager, Sam Wilson -- N5CPA, reported that the net was doing well, with 8-17 check-ins per week for the month of February.

President, Gailen Marshall -- N4SKR, presented the topic of acquiring a vanity call sign for the club. He stated that he had contacted Trustee, George Jolly -- N5DE, who will allow the club to do this. He said there would be a contest held to choose a list of call signs, with the Board approving the final list. Allen Brier - WB5BIR, suggested getting started on the contest soon, as many of the 1x2 and 2x1 call signs are running out. Rick Hiller -- W5RH, volunteered to download the list of call signs available and make a presentation to the club at the next meeting. He asked if the \$30.00 required fee had been approved by the Board and Terry McCoy -- W5TEM, said that it had been approved.

Public Service Chairman, Scott Pederson -- KI5DR, reported that he is preparing a proposal for a Public Service Awards program.

Vice President, Rick Hiller -- W5RH, stated that some members did not like the Board Meeting on the air and that a

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Board Meeting in person might be needed. Bud King - N5UOG, agreed with this. Nizar Mullani -- K0NM, suggested meeting 1/2 hour before the regular meeting. Terry McCoy -- W5TEM, said that it was his understanding that Gailen Marshall -- N4SKR, had agreed to run for President on the condition that Board Meetings be held on the air as it was difficult for him to get to Sugarland twice a month. He also said that he liked the Board Meetings on the air. Rick Hiller -- W5RH, said that he liked the Board Meetings on the air, but felt that a formal meeting time was needed for paper work, etc. It was generally agreed that the Board would need to meet in person on occasion.

Allen Brier -- WB5BIR reported on plans for Field Day. He said that he needed insurance forms. He said there was a need to rent or buy a tent and he will bring prices to the next Board meeting. Pete Norris -- KJ5SS, said that Nizar Mullani -- K0NM, had the needed insurance forms.

Carl Hacker -- KB5LDY, stated that he would like to participate in the K-9 Fun Run as he had done in the past, and had not been contacted.

With no further business, this meeting was adjourned by President, Gailen Marshall --N4SKR, at 8:55 P.M., with a motion, second, and unanimous vote.

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## League petitions for RACES flexibility



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The ARRL is seeking a change in FCC rules to relax regulations regarding the Amateur Radio Service and the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES). The League wants the FCC to allow hams actively supporting emergency or disaster communication or involved in drills and tests to communicate "between and among" RACES stations and those stations registered with civil defense organizations operating under RACES. The League also wants the FCC to relax time limitations on RACES emergency drills and tests. This would permit stations operating under RACES (organized under the Federal Emergency Management Agency and operating under local civil defense agencies) to communicate, as necessary during emergencies, tests and drills, with stations operating under the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, or ARES (begun by the ARRL in 1935) or with other non-ARES or non-RACES stations also engaged in emergency communication or drills. Right now, RACES and ARES operate independently of each other, although some hams participate in both organizations.

Relaxing the rules "would permit intercommunication with other amateurs active in emergency communications,



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and enable a form of 'mutual aid' in the Amateur Service," the League said in its filing. "It is time that the Commission permit, but not require, communications between RACES participants and non-RACES amateurs during emergencies or emergency drills and preparedness exercises." The League said the Commission has an opportunity to eliminate a restriction that "arguably should never have been enacted in the first place," and that has "outlived whatever utility it may ever have had."

The League also seeks to increase the time limit on RACES training drills and tests from one hour per week to up to five hours per week.

## How about a Handheld with Built-In GPS?



Garmin GPS 190 Combines a GPS Navigation System With A Handheld Radio Via Link to Garmin, Ltd., U.K., 4 March 1997 Garmin, Ltd. introduces the GPS 190, an innovative handheld radio integrated with a GPS navigation receiver, including a moving map display. This radio is manufactured for aviation use and covers the aviation voice and navigation frequencies. What a great idea!

"Reprinted with permission from Ham Radio Online magazine, available for free on the Internet at <http://www.hamradio-online.com>".

### Scanner Jack's Corner:

Here are some frequencies to monitor during severe weather this spring:

Scanner Jack's Corner:

HouEMO, NWS, Houston DPW are on the following trunking system:

	856	857.	858.	859.	860.
.2625	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
.4375	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
.7375	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
.7625	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
.9375	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

Also check out the following frequencies:

450.5875 - E.A.S. PIES  
145.490 - Fort Bend Co. EOC  
146.840 - Houston EOC  
450.7125 - Metro Traffic  
450.0875 - Channel 2 News  
450.2875 - Channel 2 News  
450.5125 - Channel 11 News  
450.8625 - Channel 13 News  
851.8375 - Traffic

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## Public Service Corner

*By Scott Pederson, ki5dr*

What an Amazing month March was! In case you were not aware, the system I create the newsletter on took a hard crash on me in March. After several hearty attempts at correcting a bad file, I ended up reformatting my disk and re-installing the whole system. Unfortunately, I lost a lot of data necessary for the updated newsletter format. So here I am at 1:45 AM trying to re-create as much as possible. I just love computers. ☺

I coordinated my first "Official" event with the help of Mike Hardwick and Steve Dunkelberger. The 1997 K-9 Fun run came off without a hitch, and many thanks to everyone who came out to help. I was sweating bullets the night before hoping everything came together, and fearing the worst. But, my faith in Hams was assured by the efforts of the many. I don't know how Mike, Steve, Bret, Carl, and all the others handle it so well. These folks deserve MUCH more recognition than they receive. I've been volunteering for over 7 years now, and never understood all the work that went into coordinating a public service event.

The BlueBonnet Express was an excellent success for the MS society. Once again, hams came out and were the silent glue which bonded and connected all points to help the whole operation function so efficiently. Hams who participated were not only helping a worthy cause but got a WONDERFUL

view of the BlueBonnets in full bloom! The countryside is beautiful, and only a preview of what is in store for the MS-150 coming up in a few weeks.

So how many of you have NOT participated in a Public Service Event? Everyone should try at least one event this year.

- Get the cobwebs out of your HTs
- Practice up on your emergency communication skills
- Meet a lot (I mean a LOT) of people
- Help a worthwhile cause
- Further the word of Ham Radio to the General Public

There are so many benefits that ham radio can offer the public, why not show them? I'm beginning a drive to get those folks who run these organizations to get their license. Astronauts do it, why can't they? The idea seems to have some merit, and already it's generated some interest. Just think how much this could affect the B-VARC membership?

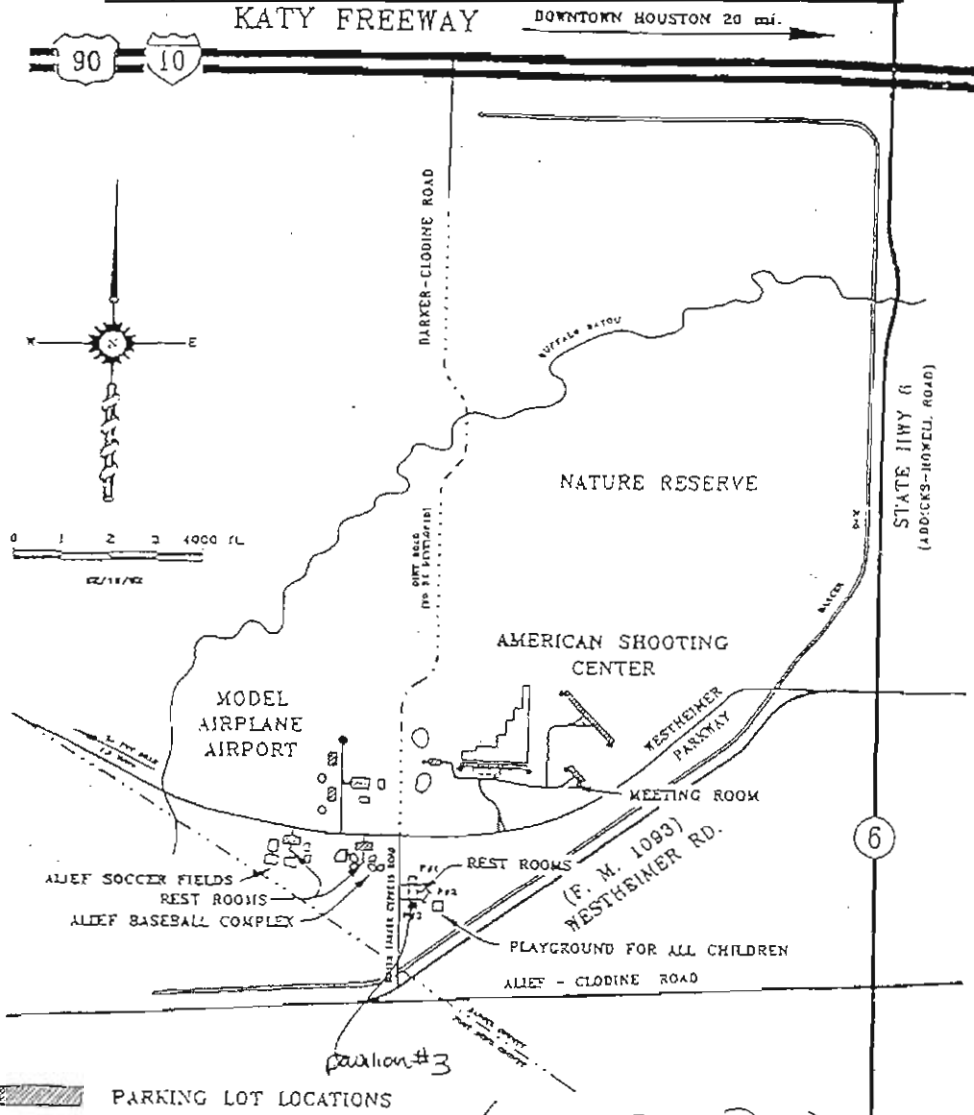
If you haven't participated in an event yet, call me. I can give you a schedule of events coming up this year.


How about an emergency base station antenna building contest? Could you build a portable base station antenna that is lightweight, collapsible, sturdy, rugged, wind-resistant, and on top of all that - performs well? Send me your ideas, or better yet, build it and bring it to the club meeting!

That's all for this month, look forward to seeing you during "Road Ballet" on the MS-150!

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## Map to the 1997 B-VARC Picnic April 12th



 PARKING LOT LOCATIONS  
 P#1 PAVILIONS (#1-#3)

*(George Bush Park)*

**CULLEN BARKER**  
 16756 WESTHEIMER PARKWAY  
 7,800 ACRES

# THE B-VARC BULLETIN



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  
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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 Meeting Schedule

Thursday, April 3rd Board of Dir. Meeting BMOTA  
7:30 p.m. MERA Repeater 145.470  
Open to all B-VARC Members  
Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup> B-VARC Meeting  
7:30 p.m. Sugarland Community Center

#### B-VARC Eating Schedule

Saturdays-7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Location: New York  
Coffee Shop, 9720 Hillcroft @ S. Braeswood  
3<sup>rd</sup> Friday dinners - 6:30 p.m. SHARP! Location TBA  
Last Sunday Lunches - 2:30 p.m. Location TBA

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 4

April, 1997

BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO  
CLUB  
P.O. BOX 1630  
MISSOURI CITY TX 77459-1630  
address correction requested

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

Bud King NSUOG  
814 Bel Mar  
Sugar Land TX  
77478 Jan 98