



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

DECEMBER 2006

VOLUME 30 | ISSUE 12

DECEMBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING HOMEBREW NIGHT

Show off those homebrew projects that you have been working on. It is always refreshing to see these projects. For those that think that no one builds his own equipment any more, here is your opportunity to renew your faith in this art.

The meeting will be held at the Sugar Land Community Center, at 7:30PM, Thursday, December 14.

The November General Membership meeting featured the Chili Supper. As usual, there were many chili dishes to choose from as well as many other goodies.

That evening, there was also a by-laws amendment vote. The proposed by-law amendments were passed as proposed. For a copy of the newly revised BVARC by-laws, go to the website at www.bvarc.org

Annual elections were also held. Those elected were Allen Brier (VP), Sid Sherwood (Corresponding Secretary & Treasurer) and Bill Stone (Director-At-Large). For more details on these and other activities, see the President's Message on the next page.



The chili chow line



Our newly elected officers,
Sid Sherwood, Allen Brier and Bill Stone.

President's Corner

The end of the 2006 is approaching fast and I am wondering where it went. The club has been moving along very nicely but we still have a ways to go on membership. We have been basically holding at 120 members this year but I feel that we can take that number higher. Remember the larger the membership the healthier the club will be financially.

Coming up at the next meeting will be Homebrew night. Everyone should bring the best of their homebuilt equipment and show it to the club. Amateur radio came from homebuilt equipment and there are still many items that can be built to improve amateur radio operation and techniques.

If you have not read the latest QST, BVARC had the highest score for 5A in SE Texas area for Field Day. I want to thank everyone that worked on Field day and the great score that they brought in. Now is the time to start planning for the 2007 Field day!

I want to congratulate the new board members that were elected in November – Allen Brier, N5XZ, returning as Vice President, Sid Sherwood, N5ZKD, moving up to the treasurer/correspondence secretary's position, and Bill Stone, KE5CUT, as a director. I really appreciate them stepping up to help with club functions for the next 2 years and will look forward to their help. I also want to thank Ross Lawler, W5HFF, for his hard work the last few years as treasurer. Ross has put many long hours in working with the club's financial records and other club functions. Thanks again Ross for your hard work.

Don't forget that the nominations for the club awards are needed at the December meeting. Nominations are being accepted for the Order of the Key, The Dr. Bill Award, and the Loop and Zepp Award. These are awarded to club members that have shown an exceptional contribution for amateur radio, amateur radio testing, and HF operation. For more detailed information on the awards, please go to the club web site.

Last but not least the Greater Houston Hamfest is coming up on March 3rd, 2007. This year the Hamfest has the distinction of being the ARRL South Texas Convention with Coy Day, N5OK, ARRL West Gulf Division Director as the featured speaker. There have been over 120 invitational letters have been mailed out to vendors which, hopefully, will attract a large number of them to the Hamfest. We still need volunteers to help the Hamfest so let a board member know if you are interested.

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LICENSE CLASSES

Ross Lawler, W5HFF and John Chauvin, K5IZO will once again be teaching license classes in the new year. The first will either be a Technician Class or a General Class License Class depending on expressed interest. These will be held near the end of January and into early February. To express your preferences, contact John or Ross (contact info at rear of this newsletter). More details will appear in the January issue of the Newsletter.

Monday Night NET Updates

Don't forget the Monday Night Public Service Net starts at **8 pm**, 145.47 (PL -123.0) The order of check-ins start with mobile units first then fixed stations. If you have something for the net, make sure you let Net Control know about it when you check in. We are looking for Net Control Operators. Contact any officer of BVARC if you are interested. Here are recent check-ins with control-ops:

6/19 - 17 - Sid, n5zkd	8/14 - 20 - Bill, ke5cut	10/9 - 27 - Bill, ke5cut
6/26 - 15 Pete, kd5qpx	8/21 - 22 - Bill, ke5cut	10/16 - 16 - Bill, ke5cut
7/3 - 13 - Cam, k5cam	8/28 - 21 - Pete, kd5qpx	10/23 - 21 - Pete, kd5qpx
7/10 - Doug, kc5vvyz	9/4 - 19 - Cam, k5cam	10/30 - 24 - Doug, kc5vvyz
7/17 - 18 - Sid, n5zkd	9/11 - 26 - Mike, k5vcx	11/6 - 31 - Cam, k5cam
7/24 - 15 - Pete, kd5qpx	9/18 - 16 - Bill, ke5cut	11/13 - 22 - Bill, ke5cut
7/31 - 18 - John, k5lkj	9/25 - 18 - Pete, kd5qpx	11/20 - 14 - Bill, ke5cut
8/7 - 29 - Cam, k5cam	10/2 - 22 - Cam, k5cam	11/27 - 19 - Cam, k5cam

BVARC GREATER HOUSTON HAMFEST

March 3, 2007

BVARC is proud to announce that we will also be hosting the
ARRL SOUTH TEXAS SECTION CONVENTION
Featured Speaker: Coy Day, N5OK, ARRL West Gulf Division Director

We now have triple the amount of indoor space that we had last year at approximately 18,000 square feet. There is overnight camping available and lots of space for tailgaters. We are expecting many more vendors, tables, tailgaters and attendees.

Mark your calendars now!
For more details go to the Greater Houston Hamfest web site at
www.houstonhamfest.com

'Tis the SeasonAntenna Season

Rick Hiller – W5RH

Autumn is upon us and winter starts in a few weeks. In Houston, this denotes the start of “Antenna Season” – time to work on ye olde sky hook. The temperatures drop, but more importantly, the humidity drops and it gets comfortable outside to work. Plan at least one day, in the next few weeks, to look at your antenna ‘system’ both physically and electrically. Protect it from the elements during the coming winter months and next years summer months. The “elements” in Houston area can be any of the following: rain, heat, humidity, air pollution (refinery smoke particles, etc.), salt and UV rays from the sun.

Side note: Speaking of winter and those long dark nights, get something up for 80 and 160 and enjoy the chasing DX on those bands too. Larry, W5LJ, says he has been working a fair amount of DX on 160.

Below, I have listed a few things that you can do to improve, or maintain, your antenna system.

Check all transmission line connections outside and in. Water is not very friendly to coax connections. It typically ‘wicks up’ the shield and starts to corrode immediately causing losses that increase over time so that you tend to not notice them until it is too late. Make sure all of the connections are clean, and if outside, sealed well from the elements. You can use a combination of good electrical tape, silicon based clear caulk, products like Liquid Electrical Tape or Radio Shack’s silicon based sealing tape for coaxial connections.

Check all connections at the antenna, whether they are coaxial connectors, lug terminals or simply solder joints. Ensure they are clean, mechanically strong and sealed well from the elements.

Check, clean and re-grease all junctions of aluminum tubing with conductive grease, like “Ox-guard” or “Penrox”.

Replace that older or smaller coax with a more modern lower loss type. Most coax does have a useable life, so it has to be replaced after a few years.

Check your RF and Electrical (both AC and DC) grounds. Make sure that you have clean connections of the proper sized wire protected from the elements. Reference Robert’s (WD5YND) most excellent meeting presentation September....A lot of good basic advice about AC and lightening grounding was presented. I especially liked his idea of the PVC “screw cap” housing over the ground rod connection end.

Check towers, masts, rotators and guy systems, etc. for mechanical soundness. Clean any rusted areas and then paint over the effected area. My rust area treatment consists of the following steps: wire brush the big lumps, then spray with WD-40, clean well with steel wool, rinse, twice, with, specifically, Lacquer Thinner (this cleans the whole area completely), then paint with Rust-oleum.

Replace those marginal support ropes with something that is more resistance to the elements, i.e. Mack’s, W5EET, ‘tarred’ twine from Academy. See “Antenna Guy Line”, page 8 in the April 2006 newsletter.

That should do it, but I am sure you have other things to check or repair with your particular situation.

By the way, if you designed and built any antenna systems in the past year, bring them out to the December meeting, which is Homebrew Night. Even if your antennas are large and you cannot bring them in, take a picture or draw a diagram. Be ready to explain the how’s and why’s to the group. You might just win a prize. Homebrew night is a really fun event where you get to see what everyone else has been doing with their Ham Radio hobby time.

Happy Holidays to you all. Get on the air over the holidays and don’t forget about SKN – Straight Key Night on New Years Eve. Lots of fun for CW Ops of all speeds.

Rick – W5RH

RESULTS OF THE November 14th
B-VARC AMATEUR EXAMINATION SESSION
by: John Moore, KK5NU

B-VARC sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examination session that was held on Tuesday, November 14, 2006 at HCC's Scarcella Technology Campus here in Stafford.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Jeff Fussell, KD5VGE
Larry Jacobson, K5LJ
John Moore, KK5NU
George Ontko, KM5VP

Six examination elements were administered during the evening to five applicants. Three new Technician licenses were attained; and one upgrades to Tech w/HF, with the total number of elements passed being 4. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 66.7%.

Congratulations to the following who attained a license and/or passed an exam:

Michael T. Elfarnawani	- KE5LMH - Technician
Justin Kane	- KE5LMG - Technician
Thomas A. Knapp, Jr.	- KE5LMI - Technician
John A. Knoche	- KE5IXV - Tech w/HF

Many thanks to all the Team Members and Assistants who volunteer their valuable time and effort each month.

All of us at B-VARC again thank everyone at HCC Scarcella Technology Center for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

..... 73

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ANNUAL BANQUET

Friday, January 12th, 2007
Saltgrass Steakhouse Restaurant
9110 Southwest Freeway
U.S. 59 South, between Bissonnet and Gessner

Mark your calendars and plan to attend. Final details will be given in the January newsletter.

Public Service events

Houston Chevron Marathon

6:45 am Sunday, January 14, 2007

<http://www.chevronhoustonmarathon.com/site3.aspx>

For more information on these events, contact Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, at n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Minutes of November, 2006 meeting; Board of Directors

Mike Hardwick called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to order at 7:30 PM on November 2nd, 2006 at Live Oak Grill, 12935 Dairy Ashford Rd, Sugar Land, Texas. Attending were: Mike Hardwick, N5VCX (Pres.); Allen Brier, N5XZ (V P); Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX (Rec. Sec.); Robert Polinski, KD5YVQ (At-Large Dir.); Sid Sherwood, N5ZXD (At-Large Dir.); Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM (At Large); Charles Frost, K5LBU; Rick Hiller, W5RH; Bill Stone, KE5CUT

- 1) Minutes for the October 2006 meeting were approved as published in the October newsletter.
- 2) Treasurer's Report was not presented to the Board.
- 3) Old Business:
 - a) By-Law Changes: Proposed changes, as presented in the October newsletter, are to be voted on by the membership at the November General Meeting.
 - b) 2007 Hamfest:
 - i) Steering Committee is planning to meet at the Fairgrounds to walk through the facility that will be used.
 - ii) Advertisements: Printing on hold pending the decision of the ARRL as to our proposal to make the Greater Houston Hamfest also the South Texas ARRL Convention. Coy Day will in either event be the guest speaker.
 - c) General Meeting:
 - i) November, Chili Supper and Elections: Positions vacant are,
 - (1) Corresponding Secretary / Treasurer
 - (2) Vice President
 - (3) At-Large Director
 - ii) December, Homebrew:
 - iii) January, Banquet:
 - iv) February, Discovering Amateur Radio Night:
 - d) Bill Stone proposed in September that BVARC through its call, KK5W, request a 10-10 International number for contesting purposes. Bill determined that BVARC already has a 10-10 number and volunteered to pay for the yearly dues to 10-10 international. Bill was asked to check with Randy Pollard, as Randy is the call trustee.
- 4) New business:
 - a) The December BoD meeting will be at the Live Oak Grill.
- 5) Other Business, Coming events:
 - a) Austin Radio Round-Up
 - b) NovemberFest Metric Century bike ride
 - c) 25K Warm-up run
 - d) 30K Warm-up run
 - e) Houston Marathon
- 6) Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Submitted by Recording Secretary Peter Sauermilch-KD5QPX

RAG CHEW NET

The report on the Rag Chew Net is not available as of press time. This net meets every Wednesday, on 75M SSB, 3910 +/- 3 MHz, at 7PM. The full report will be provided in next month's newsletter.

2006 Club Officers:

President:

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX
n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

Vice President:

Allen Brier, N5XZ
n5xz@arrl.net

Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:

Ross Lawler, W5HFF
w5hff@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary:

Pete Sauermilch
kd5qpx@arrl.net

One Year Board Member:

Robert Polinski, KD5YVQ
polinski@swbell.net

Two Year Board Member:

Sid Sherwood, N5ZKD
n5zkd@arrl.net

Past President / At-large

Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM
k5cam@arrl.net

Club Happenings:

General Meeting

Second Thursday each month,
Sugar Land Community Center,
226 Matlage Way

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month,
Sugar Land Community Center,
See the website.

Volunteer Examiner Program

BVARC administers Amateur License Exams
on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the HCC
Scarcella Technology Campus,

10141 Cash Rd. in Stafford.
Contact John Moore, KK5NU

Eating Schedule

Third Friday Dinner at 7:30 p.m.
Location announced in text of this edition.

Saturday morning breakfasts –

7:30 a.m. New York Coffee Shop
9720 Hillcroft, Houston

7:30 a.m. Viking Den
2939 S. Main, Stafford

Rag Chew Net

3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays
at 7:00 p.m.

Public Service Net

Monday night on 145.47 (XXXX PL) at 8:00
PM

UPCOMING FEATURED PRESENTATIONS

December – Homebrew Night

January – Annual Awards Banquet

February - Discovering Amateur Radio night

Upcoming Hamfests

Hamfest info for the next few months. More information at:
<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html#listing>

13 Jan 2007

San Antonio Radio Club

San Antonio, TX

Little Joe's Country Gold [7405 Old Pearsall Road](http://www.w5sc.org/)

<http://www.w5sc.org/>

Talk-In: 146.94 - (PL 179.9) & 444.100 + (PL 179.9)

Contact J. C. Smith, N5RXX

PO Box 34263

San Antonio, TX 78265-4263

Email: n5rxs@satx.rr.com

17 Feb 2007

Bastrop County ARC, Smithville, TX

Riverbend Park, [Highway 71 East](http://www.bastrophams.org)

<http://www.bastrophams.org>

Talk-In: 443.750 (PL 114.8); 145.35 (PL 114.8)

24 February, 2007

Orange Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.qsl.net/w5nd/>

March 3, 2007

GREATER HOUSTON HAMFEST

Now hosting the

ARRL SOUTH TEXAS SECTION CONVENTION.

Featured Speaker:

Coy Day - ARRL West Gulf Division Director

Mark your calendars now. BVARC has 3 times the indoor space
than previous hamfests.

Go the www.houstonhamfest.org for details.

BVARC EATING SCHEDULE

SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFASTS:

NEW YORK COFFEE SHOP, 7:30a.m., 9720 Hillcroft, in Houston.

VIKING DEN, 7:30a.m., 2939 S. Main (US90A), in Stafford.

THIRD FRIDAY DINNERS: -

Due to the holidays, the 3rd Friday dinner will not be held in December.



Monthly Publication of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club.
Serving Amateur Radio for Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County
Club Call sign – KK5W
BVARC Website: <http://www.bvarc.org>
Editor: John Chauvin, K5IZO, k5izo@yahoo.com
Production Team: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, k5cam@arrl.net
Claude Sessions, K5HFY, k5hfy@arrl.net

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC) was organized in 1978, primarily as an emergency communications group available to assist the communities of Missouri City and Stafford when required. Since that time, **BVARC** has grown and expanded its activities to become the most active amateur radio club in the Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County area. BVARC is a Non-Profit Corporation classified by IRS as 501-(c)-(3).

Today **BVARC** is truly a general interest amateur radio club with an impressive record of public service. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has recognized the club's commitment of service with the coveted status of Special Services Club. We are proud of our members who represent some of the finest in amateur radio. Membership is not limited to licensed operators, but is open to anyone with an interest in amateur radio. Club meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Sugar Land Community Center, 226 Matlege Way. General membership dues are \$20.00 per year, with student dues \$10.00 per year, additional family members \$2.00 per member per year and life membership \$160.00.

BVARC also administers amateur radio license exams on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Houston Community College's Scarcella campus in Stafford. A Public Service Net is held each Monday at 8 p.m. on the 145.47 (minus offset, PL 123 tone) repeater & a rag chew net is held each Wednesday at 7 p.m. on 3910 KHz +/- 3 KHz.

To obtain information about joining **BVARC** or its activities, contact the club's "Elmer," Ross Lawler, W5HFF at 281-342-3340 or w5hff@yahoo.com or see the BVARC website: www.bvarc.org

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December 2006

**BRAZOS VALLEY
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**General Membership Meeting – December 14 –
Homebrew Night.**

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to renew your membership!*