



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

AUGUST 2010

VOLUME 34 ISSUE 8

Aug 12th General Membership Meeting

BVARC Ice Cream Social!!

How many of BVARC's past presidents can you name? Come on down to the Eldridge Park Conference Center and join the BVARC club presidents for Ice Cream at the annual BVARC Ice Cream Social. Let's honor our past presiding officers and take some time out to eat and talk radio!

If you missed the location change, the meeting will not be at our normal location...but at the **Eldridge Park Conference Center** located at 2511 Eldridge Road – located 2.2 miles north of Hwy 90 on Eldridge between W. Airport and Florence Rd. For a map to the conference center, see the BVARC web page: www.bvarc.org.



July Meeting Report

At the July meeting, Bill WS5H lead us through a discourse on the history of the USS CAVALLA (a WWII Submarine) and the USS STEWART (a WWII destroyer escort - one of only 3 in the world) along with sharing a slideshow and discussion of "Museum Ships" weekend – one of two BVARC operating events in June. After a video taken by Cameron K5CAM of "BVARC Field Day 2010", Jim N5DTT and Kirk KK2 shared the results from FD 2010 -- from the antennas and radios to the food and camaraderie. This was two HOT operating events – literally!





President's Corner

By Rick Hiller – W5RH

The Spoils of Winning

For the past few years we, BVARC, have put on a great local hamfest in March. Not that the hamfest is a war (please, excuse the war reference) it is really more of a battle. A battle of time, materials and coordination. Each year it gets better and each year we, essentially, all win. A lot of folks volunteer their time and effort to put on this hamfest and for that they get the pleasure of attending the event and the satisfaction that they have given back to the local ham community and the hobby. I, for one, have always felt that BVARC should give back more.

From this hamfest intake of funds, we enhance our club coffers to the tune of a few thousand dollars, in a good year. This money on top of the existing balance and dues, helps to run the club by paying fees, insurance premiums, newsletter publishing and mailing fees, etc. Recently, we (the board) have been using some of this money to give back into the local amateur radio community, of which we are a part. I'll call these the spoils of winning. Donations have been made to repeater trustees, contest organizers – TX QSO Party award plaques, the Museum Ships and Field Day events and we were able to subsidize the annual BVARC Awards Banquet.

Another club sponsored event is coming up next week on August 12th, the annual BVARC Ice Cream Social. This year we will also honor all of the BVARC past Presidents, who have all been invited. It looks like there will be about half of the past presidents, and their guests, in attendance. I, unfortunately will not be there to greet you. Kirk, KK2Z, our VP will fill in. Frosty, K5LBU, and I are going to the International EME Conference being held in Dallas that weekend and will be departing Thursday afternoon.

One other sponsorship that was granted recently by the BVARC Board was a large donation to BLT-26. (See the BVARC web site for a copy of the thank you letter) The Houston Balloon Launch Team, flight number 26, will be launching from the Wharton "Intergalactic Spaceport" on Saturday, August 21st. The BLT-26 team is very busy preparing for the flight. A lot of interesting ham radio oriented experiments will be on board and there will be a cross band repeater flying, so you can participate from your home, however, you are encouraged to go to Wharton that morning and see how this is done. More information can be had at Andy's, W5ACM, web site at <http://www.w5acm.net/b26.html> Pretty exciting stuff!

All of this club activity, continually taking place weekly and monthly, has generated a substantial amount of interest in the BVARC organization. In the past month, we have had 11 brand new hams and older hams join the club. Please, say hello when you see them at the club meeting. We look forward to your participation in the BVARC activities that take place year round. Thank you to Suzanne -- KF5GWZ, Paul -- W9PA, Terry -- K5PGF, Allan -- NQ5B, Robert -- N5JSL, Bill -- AE5SA, Forrest -- W5FLC, James -- KF5BMW, Jeff -- KF5HQE and Mike, (aka Grumpy) -- KF5HQG. All of BVARC welcomes you to the club and the hobby.

One other way to participate in BVARC is via the web. BVARC has a, free, Listserver (aka, reflector or bulletin board) that is easily signed up for on line. Initiate your joining at www.bvarc.org the club's great home page. Lots of information is passed to your e-mail, such as net announcements and meeting and event reminders. Some folks chime in with gear for sale or request advice from the BVARC ham community. Join up soon and you will be one step closer to the heart of the BVARC action.

A couple more things are coming up soon. One is the start of the BVARC CW Net on August 17th – more details further inside the newsletter. Another is the interesting, upcoming, meeting topics. Mesh networks in September, which ties into BLT-26, the October meeting has a multi-presenter talk about the test equipment used for ham radio and November is more food, the annual Chili Supper, and "Favorite Ham Gear" night. All of these activities are put on for all of our benefit, for all of our pleasure and all are the result of receiving the spoils of winning with BVARC.

I hope your summer has started off with a bang. Enjoy your hobby. See you on the radio. Rick – W5RH (dit dit)



BVARC Historical Vignettes – The Presidents of BVARC

Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian

Previous Historical Vignettes have related how the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club was formed almost 33 years ago in September 1977. The president of the club has always played a major role in shaping the programs and activities of the club. During the past 33 years 28 individuals have served the club as president. The length of time each served varies from as little as one month (After serving as president for one month, Steve Yates, AA5TB, was transferred to Fort Worth by his employer in February 1988) to as long as six years (Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, served as president from 2002-2007).

The length of the president's term was initially set at one year when BVARC was formed. In 2002 the length of officer's terms was changed to two years to take effect with the 2003 officers. Article II Section B of the BVARC By-Laws states "Officers shall be elected for a term of two (2) years at the regular membership meeting in November preceding the year for which elected, and shall take office at the regular membership meeting the following January. Office positions will be staggered with the Vice President, Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer and At large director elected on even years and President, Recording Secretary and the other At large director on odd years."

The statistic that fewer women than men hold amateur radio licenses is reflected in the fact that there has been only one female president of BVARC. Betty Wilcox, KA0TEN, served as president in 1993. However, the club came close to having another woman president in 1988 when president Steve Yates, AA5TB, was transferred to Fort Worth by his employer. The vice president at the time was Suzanne King, KB5BAY. Article II Section A of the BVARC By Laws requires "that the President must hold a General Class or higher License." Suzanne held a Technician Class license at the time and briefly considered trying to upgrade to General Class, but there was not enough time for her to prepare for and pass the examination.

The upcoming August general membership meeting is entitled the 2010 Ice Cream Social and Past Presidents Night. In preparation for this event, BVARC president Rick Hiller, W5RH, asked past president John Moore, KK5NU, to put his well known computer skills to work and research past BVARC presidents to try to find a mailing address for those who have drifted away from the club so that they could be invited to the meeting. John came through with flying colors and his research has turned up a number of interesting facts.

Of the 28 BVARC presidents, 24 live in Texas. Ron Bolyard, KA5GYG, the 1984 president, lives in California, Carl Cunert, WB8SVR (now AB8CC), the 1995 president, lives in Ohio, and Gailen Marshall, N5GDM, the 1997 president, lives in Mississippi. Regretfully, there is one silent key among the group - Bob Spradling, W5UBD, the 1980 president. Wade Eilers, WN5TEN, the 1979 president, lives in Carmine, Texas, and Dick Bigelow, WD5CTQ, the 1982 president, lives in Austin, Texas. The remaining 22 BVARC presidents reside in the greater Houston metropolitan area.

A special thank you to John Moore, KK5NU, for researching the status of the past presidents of BVARC. We hope that many of the past presidents will attend the August general membership meeting.



Public Service Events

Tour de Pink 2010

7 :00 am Sunday, September 19,

18 operators needed for the event. Operators will meet 4:30 am at the Denny's on FM 1960 just north of Hwy 290

Talk-in and event frequency will be announced at a later date.

BVARC CW Net

Starts Tuesday, August 17th

BVARC will soon embark on yet another weekly net, but this one will be focused on the use of CW. Please don't let that scare you off. The net is intended for hams that have not used CW or that do use CW infrequently. The code speed will be fairly slow, plus the fact that most of the net will follow a format that will be published on the web site, so you can "follow along" (reading) if you need to. Final details will be posted on the BVARC Listserve (so sign up) and on the web site, but so far the net details are outlined below.

One issue outstanding is the frequency. Some say 80 meters, others say 10 meters. So, initially the net will alternate between 80 and 10, week to week, until we can get a good feel for what frequency is best for the local group. Notice that both bands are available to all classes of Ham licenses. 80 meter antennas pose the bigger problem, as they are rather long and more difficult for some to deploy. 10 meter antennas are more readily deployed. A 10 meter dipole is easy to build and will fit in even the smallest of back yards. (Plans for a 10 meter dipole will be posted on the web page)

There will be a BVARC CW NET web page that will have all of the net details. It will also have the pre-amble and post-amble available in mp3 format, so that you can download it and practice receiving it before hand.

Net protocol -- Each Tuesday evening, 7PM on 80 (or 10 meters) – 3.560 MHz (or 28.060 MHz). The net flow will be the same as any net. The net will begin with a 2 minute standard pre-amble sent at 11/15 Farnsworth CW (11 WPM with characters sent at 15 WPM). NC - Net Control will ask for check-ins with a QIN? Stations will respond with their suffix only. NC will acknowledge each station individually. Once all check-ins are taken, NC will allow each station to send a short transmission (under 15 wpm) of whatever the station wishes to send (i.e. GE to all. WX HR is raining. I just wrkd JT6 on 6 meters. BTN (Back to Net) de W5TOM KN) After each station has had their turn, NC might send a short "news" item at 12 WPM to allow all stations to practice copying. After this "news item", NC will send the post-amble and close the net. All this should take between 30 minutes and 45 minutes.

May I PLEASE emphasize that this is a "work in progress". It might go smoothly, it might not. We will revise the protocol over time, in order to make things flow most smoothly. NOTE: No one on the net is a CW expert. This is a hobby and it is meant for us to have fun with another mode of communication. Use your ears and a hand key or use a keyboard and computer interface. It does not matter. As long as you stay within the speed limits imposed (under 15 wpm) all are welcome. If you make mistakes sending, correct it as you would normally with ".....". WE WANT YOU TO SUCCEED! If not the first night, then however long it takes. The CW net mission statement is the same as the hamfest – KISS-KIF Keep it SIMPLE – Keep it FUN!

See you on the Radio Tuesday, August 17th 7PM 80 Meters 3.550 MHz(for the first week). Be sure to check the web site for complete details around August 10th, the week before.

Questions to Rick – W5RH at rhiller@sdicgm.com or call my cell 832-474-3713



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The BLT-26 2-M FM / 10-M DSB Repeater

by Allen Mattis N5AFV

Some of you may remember the South Texas Balloon Launch Team's successful flight of BLT-25 last year that carried a cross band repeater using 2-Meter FM for the uplink and 10-Meter DSB (Double Sideband) for the downlink. This repeater allowed amateur radio operators with 2-Meter FM and 10-Meter HF stations to work each other through the balloon. Amateur radio operators will again have the opportunity to use this repeater when the South Texas Balloon Launch Team launches BLT-26 at 10:00 AM local time on August 21, 2010, from the Wharton "Intergalactic Spaceport," otherwise known as the Wharton Regional Airport located along Hwy 59 five miles southwest of the central business district of Wharton.

BLT-26 will also carry a traditional cross-band FM repeater with an uplink of 147.435 MHz and a downlink of 446.000 MHz, a color amateur-television main payload on 1255 MHz FM running one Watt, two APRS GPS downlinks on 440.950 MHz (250 mW) and 445.925 MHz (300 mW). There is also a new "toy" for amateur radio operators to play with - a ham WiFi server on 2.4 GHz - WiFi channel one (500 mW) running HSMM-MESH (High-Speed, Multi-Media "MESH" firmware).

Well over a dozen operators used the 2-M/10-M repeater last year on BLT-25, and it is anticipated that this payload will be even more popular after last year's success. For BLT-25 the 2-M/10-M repeater output power was in the 100-150 mW range, but this year it has been increased to one Watt through the use of an out-board linear amplifier. Remember that DSB is like AM, but without the carrier.

There is a learning curve to using the 2-M/10-M balloon repeater. First of all, it takes a little practice to tune a DSB signal using USB (Upper Sideband) or LSB (Lower Sideband). Either will work. Your receiver must be tuned almost exactly on frequency to clearly receive the downlink. Those who have operated the AO-16 (AMSAT-OSCAR 16) satellite have the advantage of experience with this configuration. AO-16 was configured for a 2-M FM uplink and a 70-cm DSB downlink. It is helpful, if not imperative to use a headset to listen to the 10-M downlink when working the 2-M/10-M balloon repeater. If you speak too loudly, the audio in the repeater downlink may become distorted, but if you back off the microphone and speak softly, the downlink audio sounds normal. This cross-band system is rather simple and does not include any audio limiting circuitry. The headset allows you hear yourself in the downlink and you can adjust your voice level accordingly.

A balloon repeater is very similar to a satellite repeater. For those with UHF/VHF equipment, working someone on the BLT-26 cross-band 2-M/70-cm FM repeater will be exactly like operating through a satellite except there will be no Doppler shift. Use of a headset to listen to your downlink is standard procedure for operating on amateur radio satellites and perhaps BLT-26 will provide the first step for some for those that have never operated via the amateur-radio satellites.

Make plans to participate in BLT-26 on Saturday, August 21, 2010. You are welcome to go to the Wharton "Intergalactic Spaceport" to observe and participate in the launch, or you can make contacts via the balloon repeaters from your home or mobile station. Regardless, BLT-26 is an amateur radio event you do not want to miss. Information regarding BLT-26 may be found on the BLT-26 web site at <http://www.w5acm.net/b26.html>.

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Meeting Notebook – Upcoming BVARC Meetings

August – Ice Cream Social with the BVARC Past Presidents

September –“HSMM-MESH™ -- High Speed Multimedia Mesh...What is it??” -- Kirk KK2Z, Andy W5ACM

October – The BVARC Elmers presents “Using Test Equipment”

November – Chili Dinner, BVARC Elections, and “Bring your favorite piece of Ham gear”

December – Homebrew Night

January (2011) – BVARC annual banquet and awards





RESULTS OF THE July 13th 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, July 13, 2010 at HCC's Scarcella Science & Technology Building here in Stafford.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Dennis Dietrich, W5DDD
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 class license, one upgrade to General class, and one upgrade to Amateur Extra were attained; with the total number of elements passed being 5. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 83.33%.

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

Julian C. Barr	- KF5HPW	- Amateur Extra
Donna M. Bennett	- KE5WQU	- General
Travis J. Fuller	- {KF5HYT}	- Technician
David M. Shipp	- {KF5HYU}	- Technician
Jeffrey D. Smith	- {KF5HYV}	- Technician

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 Science & Technology Building for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

..... 73



Monday Night NET Updates

Don't forget the Monday Night Public Service Net starts at **8 pm** on 146.94 (167.9). 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:

4/19 - 27 - Dwayne, kb5yta	5/24 - 32 - Pete, kd5qpx	6/28 - 32 - Pete, kd5qpx
4/26 - 29 - Pete, kd5qpx	5/31 - 17 - Syd, n5zkd	7/5 - 30 - Cam, k5cam
5/3 - 31 - Cam, k5cam	6/7 - 34 - Cam, k5cam	7/12 - 27 - kb5yta & kc5jar
5/10 - 41 - Bill & Norma	6/14 - 42 - Bill & Norma	7/19 - 27 - Dwayne, kb5yta
5/17 - 25 - Dwayne, kb5yta	6/21 - 20 - Dwayne, kb5yta	7/26 - 39 - Pete, kd5qpx





THE BVARC Rag Chew Net

July check-ins

3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays at 7:00pm, John Whiteman, K5LKJ, Net Coordinator

06/30/10, K5LKJ (NCS), N5CPA, AF5T, K5NDB, W5RJA (Schulenburg), K5LBU, K5IZO, K5LJ, WS5H, KF5EYX, WB5PNL (Beach City), WA5CYI, WA5JMC, K5YZS (Old Town Spring), W5HFF (M), WA5FMK, W5RH, N5TGL (Katy), K5CWK (T), WB4KTF, W5FZ. (21 Check-Ins)

07/07/10, K5LKJ (NCS), K0NM, AF5T, N5CPA, K5LJ, WS5H, K5NDB, WB5PNL (Beach City), W5TKZ, KC5JAR (Katy), W5RH, KF5EYX, WA5CYI, WA5JMC, W5RJA (Schulenburg). (15 Check-Ins)

07/14/10, K5LKJ (NCS), N5CPA, W5RJA (Schulenburg), K5LJ, K5NDB, W5RH, W5TOM, WA5FMK, WS5H, AF5T, WB4KTF, K0NM, W5HFF (M), KD5TXJ, W5TKZ, K5YZS (Old Town Spring). (17 Check-Ins)

07/21/10, K5LKJ (NCS), WB5PNL (Beach City), WS5H, W5RH, W5TOM, W5RJA (Schulenburg), AA5OA, W5TKZ, K5NDB, N5CPA, K5LJ, KF5EYX, K0NM, W5HFF (M), WA5CYI, WA5JMC, K5LBU, AF5T, KD5TXJ, K5YZS (Old Town Spring).

(20 Check-Ins)

(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (T) = telephone check-in

Thanks.

Regards.

K5LKJ

John C. Whiteman



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2010 Club Officers:

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Rick Hiller, W5RH
rhiller@sdicgm.com

Vice President:

Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z
kmkendrick@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:

Arnold Knoche, K5ADA
jakadaok@aol.com

Recording Secretary:

Pete Sauermilch, KD5QPX
kd5qpx@arrl.net

Board Member:

David Barber, K5NDB
d_barber@att.net

Board Member:

Ross Lawler, W5HFF
w5hff@yahoo.com

At Large Board Member

(Past President):

Charles "Frosty" Frost, K5LBU
frosty1@pdq.net

Club Happenings:

General Meeting

Second Thursday each month, 7:30 PM
Sugar Land Community Center,
226 Matlage Way

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month, 7:00 PM
Fuddruckers, just South of the Fountains
Shopping Center on US 59 outbound..

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
jwm@hal-pc.org

Eating Schedule

Saturday morning breakfasts
Location announced in text of this edition.

Rag Chew Net

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

Public Service Net

Monday night on 146.94 (PL 167.9) at
8:00 PM

BVARC EATING SCHEDULE

SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

59 DINER, 7:30a.m., SW Freeway outbound service
road, near Kirkwood.

NEW YORK COFFEE & BAGEL SHOP, 7:30a.m., 9720
Hillcroft.

THIRD THURSDAY/FRIDAY DINNERS: Cancelled!
Need manager. Please volunteer.

OTHER HAM GROUPS:

WEDNESDAYS – WEDNESDAY LUNCH BUNCH

LUBY'S CAFETERIA, 10:30a.m. to 12:00Noon +, 9797
South Post Oak Road, just south of the I-610 Loop in
Meyer Park Shopping Center.

WEDNESDAYS – AMSAT & QRP GROUP

PAPPAS BARBECUE. 11:30a.m., SW corner
Westheimer & Gessner.



Hamfests

(within 200 miles of Houston)

Hamfest info for the next few months. More information at:

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html#listing>

August 6 & 7, Austin Summerfest 2010

ARRL Texas State Convention

Austin ARC and Texas VHF FM Society

Austin Airport Marriott South, 4415 South IH-35, Austin, TX 73301

<http://www.austinsummerfest.org>

Talk-In: 146.34/.94 MHz (no tone)

October 2, HamExpo

Bell County Expo Center, 301 Loop 121 (West), Belton, TX 76513

Website: <http://www.beltonhamexpo.org/>

Sponsor: Temple Amateur Radio Club

Talk-In: 146.820 (PL 123.0)





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@arri.net
Claude Sessions, K5HFY, k5hfy@arri.net

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC) was organized in 1977, 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 7:00 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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AUGUST 2010

**BRAZOS VALLEY
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 2997
SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

General Membership Meeting – August 12.

If your mailing label is highlighted in color, it's time to renew your membership!