



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 2012

VOLUME 36 ISSUE 9

BVARC September GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7:30 PM, Thursday, September 13, 2012

234 Matlage Way, Imperial Park Recreation Center, Sugar Land, Texas

The featured speaker will be Marc Abramson, KC9VW. Marc is well experienced in the wire and cable industry since 1975, and is founder and owner of ABR Industries. ABR Industries runs a full-page (page 21) advertisement in QST monthly. ABR also displays and sells some of it's products at the Greater Houston HamFest.

This presentation is entitled "Featured Benefits of Coax Cable for Amateur Radio Applications." Marc will discuss the pros and cons of various coax construction and discuss which coax cables would be the best fit in various applications. Join us in welcoming Marc and in learning and enjoying his presentation.



August Meeting Report

Many thanks to Rick W5RH for leading the effort to organize our annual Ice Cream Social in August. With the Help of Pete KD5QPX, we had plenty of ice cream and fixings for the group of 86 (YES!!! 86!!) people that joined us.

During the business meeting, Ken Mitchell KD2KW presented a BVARC Club Special Service Certificate for BVARC's continued efforts in support of service events in our area. Many thanks to Mike N5VCX for orchestrating the renewal on BVARC's behalf.



BVARC CW Net Tuesday 7PM, 3.550 MHz

Join us for a fun filled 30 to 45 minutes of working the CW mode. We welcome new folks with open ears, so join us. Net is transmitted at 11/15 WPM Farnsworth spacing, so it is easy to copy. The net structure is just like the Rag Chew Net on Wednesday nights. NCS sends the pre-amble, then calls for check-ins "QNI?". After checkins, each station is called with "QTT" to invite them to transmit a short greeting or message. Stations may send at any speed they wish – slower or faster than NCS. NCS will respond at that same speed. Net Control Station (NCS) is Rick, W5RH, but some nights Roy, W5TKZ, takes over, so listen carefully right at 7 PM. Frequency is on 3550 KHz (+/- 3 KHz pending QRM).

Just have a listen or join in, but do get on the air and have some fun with the original digital mode.



Remember the TEXAS QSO PARTY – 2012
Saturday & Sunday, September 29 and 30



President's Corner

By Kirk Kendrick – KK2Z

QST...QST...QST...

Have you had an HF QSO in the last month? How about a non-FM contact on VHF or UHF? Okay...how about a SIMPLEX contact on VHF or UHF? Last but not least, have you joined us on one of the repeaters lately? All of these count as "Get on the Air" opportunities you took advantage of. Some of you will have used digital modes (including CW), some will have strained their voices rather than their hands or keyboards, and some may have only used their ears.

Me? I added Hawaii to my list of states during the Hawaii QSO party and attempted to reach Rick W5RH/VK3 (unsuccessfully). I think I over slept the rest of the early birds that talked to him (between 5am and 6:30am on a couple of mornings).

A really fun event for a bunch of us was the annual South Texas Balloon Launch Team gathering at the Wharton Intergalactic Spaceport for the launch of BLT-31. If you aren't familiar with the balloon launches, visit Andy W5ACM's website – <http://www.w5acm.net>. Basically, a latex weather balloon is launched with a string of Styrofoam boxes attached – each with a separate set of amateur radio equipment and experiments. This year, multiple APRS transmitters gave lots of position, altitude, and telemetry data during the flight. A 2.4 GHz camera provided real-time views of the flight...and a plethora of other radios and cameras rounded out the flight. Unfortunately, our normal 147.485 cross-band repeater was NOT functioning, and the 1.2 GHz high resolution camera had downlink problems. In addition to acting as FAA liaison, I worked with Tom K5SAF and Jerod W5JMK on the ground station to provide a downlink for the 1.2 GHz and 2.4 GHz cameras. The overall tracking setup worked well, but was hampered by signal fading (due to the clouds blocking the 2.4 GHz signal) and a heavy rainstorm during the last 45 minutes of the flight. Despite the water in the air, it was a blast that I hopefully can continue attending each year.

And, as I remind you each month, join BVARC on the nets every week!

- Mondays at 8pm CST on 146.94 MHz PL 167.9 is the BVARC Public Service net. Announcements about upcoming club activities and other amateur radio related fun.
- Tuesdays at 7pm CST on 3550 kHz (3.550 MHz) is the BVARC CW net. This is a chance for everyone to try CW on the air – new hams and old welcomed (net control will slow WAY down for the new CW operators).
- Wednesdays at 7pm CST on 3910 kHz (3.910 MHz) is the BVARC Rag Chew net. You never know who will join or where the discussion takes us!

Get on the Air with BVARC!

73 de Kirk KK2Z



Minutes of August 2nd, 2012 Board of Directors meeting of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club:

Kirk Kendrick called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to order at 7:05 PM on August 2nd, 2012 at Fudrucker's, 11445 Fountain Lake Drive, Stafford, TX. Attending were: Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z (Pres.); Ross Lawler, W5HFF (V.P.); Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX (Rec. Sec.); Rick Hiller, W5RH (Past Pres.); David Barber, K5NDB (1yr At-Large Dir.); Bill Stone, WS5H; Norma Stone, KE5NDN; Ron Litt, K5HM; Jerry Muller, KF5EYC; Eddie Runner, NU5K (Webmaster); Suzanne Runner, KF5GWZ; and Mark Lawler.

1. Minutes for the July 2012 meeting were approved as previously distributed by email.
2. Treasurer's Report was not presented because the treasurer was absent.
3. Old Business:

3.1 QSL Manager: Teresa Fenner, KF5QNO, has volunteered to become the QSL manager, replacing Bill Stone.

3.2 Radio Sport: Ron Litt is now Radio Sport Event Coordinator.

3.3 Texas Navy: Museum Ships Texas Navy Certificate sent to 25 recipients. Additional recipients are anticipated.

3.4 Special Services Certificate: ARRL awarding to BVARC the Special Services Club Certificate at the August meeting.

4. New business:

4.1 10-10 Contest: Stone commented that no one contacted the KK5W trustee for use of the club call.

Hamfest: Kendrick announced that the 2013 Greater Houston Hamfest kick-off meeting will be in September, chaired by John Chauvin. Kendrick will put deposit on the fair grounds on 3 August.

4.2 October General Membership Meeting: Kendrick announced that there is a conflict with Sky-Warn for the meeting location. A motion was made and carried that the BVARC meeting will be cancelled and membership encouraged to attend Sky-Warn.

4.3 Banquet: Kendrick asked board for guidance. He wants to have it on a Friday night.

4.4 BLT 31: Kendrick announced that the balloon team has received the funding and expressed thanks to the club.

5. Schedule:

a. September: Program not yet decided.

b. October: Cancelled, conflict with Sky-warn over meeting location, see above.

c. November: Chili Supper & Election.

d. December: Home Brew.

6. Meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM.

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX.



BVARC Historical Vignettes – OSCAR Contacts at BVARC’s ARRL Field Day **Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian**

For nine of the past ten years BVARC’s participation in the ARRL Field Day has included an OSCAR satellite station. While the satellite station does not make many contacts, it does earn a 100 point bonus for making at least one contact. And, in some years, a presentation or demonstration regarding OSCAR satellites was given to those attending the club’s Field Day event to earn an additional 100 points for having an educational activity.

The first actual attempt to work satellites at a BVARC Field Day took place in 1993 when Mr. Murphy dominated the club’s Field Day. A covered pavilion in Bear Creek Park had been reserved by the club for Field Day but heavy rains caused flooding in the park and the picnic area pavilions were under water. Doug Holley, KE5SR, came to the rescue and offered his spacious yard along the Brazos River for use by the club for Field Day. Bruce Paige, KK5DO, brought his Yaesu FT-736 to Field Day hoping to get the 100 point satellite contact bonus for the club. Bruce was able to hear the satellites but for some reason the transmitter in his radio was not working and he was unable to make a contact.

The first actual satellite contact at a BVARC Field Day was probably the one made ten years later by Scott Medbury, KD5FBA, in 2003. Scott attended Field Day without any advance plan to work a satellite. When someone mentioned that there was a 100 point bonus for making a satellite contact, Scott went to his truck and checked his schedule of satellite passes. A satellite pass was just minutes away, and Scott grabbed his Icom W32A HT and a telescoping AL800 antenna and prepared to work the pass. The satellite was moving from south to north, and South Texas would soon be in the footprint. Scott managed a contact with Alex, XE1MEX, before the satellite footprint moved farther north covering the rest of the country and the satellite became saturated with hundreds of stations all calling “CQ Field Day” at the same time.

From 2004 through 2008 a more formal satellite operation was planned in advance. Principal operators were Scott Medbury, KD5FBA, Allen Mattis, N5AFV, and Will Thomas, N5ESA. Darrell Kirk, KC5JAR, Doug Holley, KE5SR, and others assisted by operating receiving stations so that those attending Field Day could hear the satellite. Satellite contacts were made in each of those years and the 100 point bonus looked like a sure thing.

Due to medical issues and a scheduling conflict with the satellite operators, no satellite station was operated at BVARC's 2009 Field Day, but from 2010 through 2012 an OSCAR station was again part of BVARC's Field Day. Satellite operation at the 2010 BVARC Field Day was different than any of the previous years. Two satellites, AO-27 and SO-50, had passes at the very same time. Both satellites have the same uplink and downlink frequencies. To further complicate things, AO-27 had an ascending pass (south to north) and SO-50 had a descending (north to south) pass. The result was that northern Mexico, the United States, and southern Canada were all in the combined footprint at the same time. The QRM was tremendous making it extremely difficult to make contacts.

If that wasn't enough, Mr. Murphy chose to pay a visit. On the east passes of these satellites, a bad jumper cable resulted in not being able to hear the satellite for the first few minutes of the pass. Because the workable portion of a pass for these two satellites is 10 to 12 minutes, the loss of 3 or 4 minutes of operating time is significant. On the west passes, an antenna switch failed, and as a result, only one receiving antenna was usable. Four passes were worked and no contacts were made. The combination of a poor schedule of satellite passes and the visit by Mr. Murphy took its toll.

The BVARC satellite operation during the 2011 field Day was also unsuccessful in earning the 100 point satellite contact bonus. Each year the number of OSCAR stations participating in ARRL Field Day grows and with the increased number of stations all transmitting at once it is very difficult to make a contact. The best the BVARC OSCAR station could do was to get a portion of the KK5W call sign into the bird twice. Clearly a beam antenna with significant gain is now needed to make satellite contacts during ARRL Field Day.

We all know that BVARC does not give up easily, and an OSCAR station was included in the early planning for the 2012 ARRL Field Day. Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z, had acquired a trailer-mounted OSCAR beam antenna system and began to plan for Field Day. Allen Mattis, N5AFV, with significant experience making satellite contacts joined the team, and after many e-mails were sent back-and-forth the team decided who would supply what equipment and plans were finalized. As a result, BVARC successfully earned the 100 point Field Day bonus for making a satellite contact and also made the club's first contact over a linear (SSB/CW) satellite during Field Day. Even before the end of the 2012 Field Day, there was a preliminary discussion of how to improve the OSCAR station for next year.

OSCAR Contacts at BVARC's ARRL Field Day

Year	Contacts	Satellite(s)
1993	0	-
2003	1	SO-50
2004	2	SO-50
2005	2	SO-50
2006	1	SO-50
2007	2	AO-27, SO-50
2008	1	AO-27
2010	0	-
2011	0	-
2012	2	AO-27, FO-29



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:

5/7 - 39 - Cam, k5cam

5/14 - 41 - Bill, ws5h

5/21 - 31 - Dwayne, kb5yta

5/28 - 24 - Pete, kd5qpx

6/4 - 34 - Cam, k5cam

6/11 - 44 - Clint, kf5hdf

6/18 - 36 - Dwayne, kb5yta

6/25 - 34 - Cam, k5cam

7/2 - 42 - Cam, k5cam

7/9 - 41 - Clint, kf5hdf

7/16 - 29 - Ron, k5nm

7/23 - 29 - Pete, kd5qpx

7/30 - 32 - Jerry, kf5eyc

8/6 - 22 - Pete, kd6qpx

8/13 - 27 - Cam, k5cam



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Results of the August 14th BVARC Amateur License Examination Session by: John Moore, KK5NU

B-VARC sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examination session that was held on Tuesday, August 14, 2012 at HCC's Scarcella Science & Technology Building here in Stafford.

"Second Tuesday" License Exam Results - August 14, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Dennis Dietrich, W5DDD
John Moore, KK5NU

Larry Jacobson, K5LJ
George Ontko, KM5VP

Three examination elements were administered during the evening to two applicants. One upgrade to General, one 'grandfathered' General and one upgrade to Amateur Extra class license were attained, with the total number of elements passed being 3. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 100%.

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

Randy D. Goode	- KF5RDR	- General
C. Bruce Richardson, Jr.	- N5DXI	- General
Jerry C. Tripp	- KA5LPH	- Amateur Extra

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

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THE BVARC Rag Chew Net

August check-ins

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

08/01/12, K5LKJ (NCS), K5DLL (Deer Park), AA0ST (Dickenson), W5TKZ, K5LJ, AA5OA, N5CPA, W5HFF, W5TOM, K5NDB, WS5H, N5TGL (Fulshear), AF5T, WB5PNL (Beach City), K0NM, WA5CYI, KL7AX (Katy), N5ASH (El Campo). (18 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 140, SN = 116, A = 6, K = 2

08/08/12, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, AA0ST (Dickenson), K5NDB, W5RH, K0NM, K5DLL (Deer Park), W5HFF, N5CPA, KD7THJ, K5LJ, K5LBU, KC5JAR (Katy), W5TOM, N5TGL (Fulshear), K5IZO, WB5PNL (Beach City), KL7AX (M)(Katy), WS5H, N5VCX. (20 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 129, SN = 96, A = 7, K = 3

08/15/12, K5LKJ (NCS), WS5H, W5TKZ, WA5CYI, N5CPA, K5DLL (Deer Park), K5NDB, AA5OA, K5LJ, WB5PNL (Beach City), K0NM, W5HFF, KL7AX (Katy), N5TGL.

(14 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 106, SN = 44, A = 7, K = 2

08/22/12, K5LKJ (NCS), KE5SR, W5TKZ, AA5OA, K5LBU, K5LJ, K5DLL (Deer Park), K5NDB, N5CPA, W5HFF, WS5H, K0NM, K5CEK, WB5PNL (Beach City), WN5A, AA0ST(R) (Dickenson), N5ASH (El Campo), KF5RMM (Fort Hood).

(18 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 110, SN = 64, A = 3, K = 1

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

Thanks. Regards._

2012 Club Officers:

President:

Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z
kmkendrick@gmail.com

Vice President:

Ross Lawler, W5HFF
w5hff@yahoo.com

Corresponding Secretary / Treasurer

Robert Tomlinson, N5JSL
rbtswim@gmail.com

Recording Secretary:

Pete Sauermilch, KD5QPX
kd5qpx@arrl.net

1 Year At-Large Board Member:

Dywane Jones, KB5YTA
dwaynerdhonda@gmail.com

2 Year At-Large Board Member:

David Barber, K5NDB
d_barber@att.net

Past President:

Rick Hiller, W5RH
rhiller@sdicgm.com

Club Happenings:

General Meeting

Second Thursday each month, 7:30 PM
Imperial Park Recreation Center,
234 Matlage Way.

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month, 7:00 PM
Fuddrucker's, 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

See in adjacent column.

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

CW Net

Tuesday night, 7PM, 3.550 MHz



BVARC EATING SCHEDULE

SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

59 DINER, 7:00a.m., SW Freeway outbound service
road, near Kirkwood.

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

OTHER HAM GROUPS:

WEDNESDAYS – WEDNESDAY LUNCH BUNCH

LUBY'S CAFETERIA, 10:30a.m. to 12:00Noon +,
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>

10/06/2012 | HamEXPO!, Belton, TX

Temple Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.beltonhamexpo.org>

10/20/2012 | Lufkin Hamfest 2012

Deep East Texas & Nacogdoches ARCs

<http://www.lufkinhamfest.com>

01/12/2013 | 2013 Amateur Radio Fiesta

Schertz, TX (NE of San Antonio

San Antonio Radio Club; <http://w5sc.org>

03/24/2013; Greater Houston Hamfest

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Rosenburg, TX





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Serving Amateur Radio for Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County
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BVARC Website: <http://www.bvarc.org>
Editor: John Chauvin, K5IZO, k5izo@yahoo.com
Production Team: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, k5cam@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 Imperial Park Recreation Center, 234 Matlage 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 \$200.00.

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 Scarella campus in Stafford. A Public Service Net is held each Monday at 8 p.m. on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 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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SEPTEMBER 2012

**BRAZOS VALLEY
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General Membership Meeting – 7:30 – September 13, 2012

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