



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

OCTOBER 2013

VOLUME 37 ISSUE 10

BVARC OCTOBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7:30 PM, Thursday, October 10, 2013

2511 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478, Eldridge Park Conference Center

Will you gimmie fifty-five,
To make it fifty-five, to bid it a fifty-five
Sold that pie for a fifty-five dollar bill?

Come and meet the auctioneer at the BVARC first ever monthly meeting auction. This auction will be a fund raiser with proceeds being donated to the club. Dust off that back-up gear that would make good first time gear for the new hams joining our community, clean the old ham shack closest and unclutter that corner the XYL has been griping about. Bring it all down to the October meeting and help out the club, which in a round-about way, will make the XYL very happy.

There's always room for pie and at the October meeting you will get to hear about the wonders of the Raspberry Pi from our very own Matt Tatro. Matt will enlighten us on the use of this device as an addition to the ham shack. Hey, didn't you just create some room by donating stuff to the auction?

Editor's Note: See details of the auction elsewhere in this newsletter.

November meeting – Vote for Chili?

Coming up in November, our annual board member elections as well as the event many look forward to all year long, the gorging of homemade chili. Don't miss it!

September meeting recap – TQP

If you missed the September general meeting, here is a quick recap. Keith Dutson stopped by to give the group some insight into the Texas QSO Party. We learned about the fun had last year and the expected excitement for this year's party.

In case you are still unaware: OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING WILL BE AT THE ELDRIDGE PARK CENTER. LOCATED ON ELDRIDGE ROAD BETWEEN WEST AIRPORT AND WEST BELFORT.



Astronomy Day – Saturday, October 12 –3PM to 10 PM, George Observatory

The Synergy of Amateur Astronomy and Amateur Radio.

For the fourth year in a row, BVARC will have a table with a live HF station at Astronomy Day at George Observatory. This event is attended by typically 3000 people, mostly of young demographics (median age 30-40) who went far out of their way to take part in an outing for a scientific based activity. Because there is a strong commonality between Amateur Radio and Amateur Astronomy, BVARC demonstrates this on the deck of the observatory. There are many telescopes set out for public use under supervision and of course the big 36" research grade observatory telescope in the dome is being shown and also used for public viewing.

If you have some slight interest in astronomy, come help staff the station and meet a lot of young enthusiastic people. Contact Kirk Kendrick (KK2Z) or John Chauvin (K5IZO) for details, free admittance to the park and other details. Chick-fil-A has an on-site concession so plan on a meal there or bring your own picnic dinner. More Astronomy Day specific info is available at: <http://www.astronomyday.net>

President's Corner for Oct 2013

By Kirk Kendrick – KK2Z

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

I missed y'all in September – traveling for work and fun. I traveled with my HT (a Kenwood TH-D72A) to work in Calgary and New Orleans, and with my HT and IC-7000 in my truck for vacation to Colorado. Work trips were uneventful...work...work...and more work. But...

Our vacation trip was SUPPOSED to be to Yellowstone National Park – that trip was cancelled when wild fires reached the part of the park where we were planning to camp. So, we decided to head to Estes Park to visit some close friends who live 2 miles from the entrance of Rocky Mountain National Park. We headed up, attended a Scottish-Irish festival, toured the park, and toured a couple of breweries (☺). That's when the ham radio moment occurred – the rain started...continued...and became massive flash flooding that took out roads, towns, bridges, and our way out. Cell phone towers along the highways were destroyed, and lots of infrastructure simply no longer was usable. The Fall River runs along Hwy 34 north of Estes Park...right beside our friend's house. They live 2 houses from the bridge out that crosses the river. We watched the rivers rise...to cover the bridges...and saw the events on TV that showed that large sections of roads out of Estes Park to the south were blocked or destroyed.

There was no safe-easy way out. The one route out was over Trail Ridge road – over a 12,000 foot high pass – but we were on the wrong side of the park – our entrance was impassible. While we waited for news, the rains caused a landslide that covered the road out of our neighborhood – we were trapped.

I (of course) had ham radio! I unfortunately did not have park or local repeater frequencies. Fortunately, although phones (both cellular and landline) were out, the cable TV/internet was working. I found the frequencies...and asked Net Control to relay a request for road crews to clear the landslide when possible so that the folk in the neighborhood could at least reach the grocery store.

I was thrilled to be able to listen to the ham and park frequencies to learn what efforts were underway. Net control operated from the local fire station, and relayed welfare and status messages out to the community. One ham on the outskirts of town was able to make welfare phone calls when needed. The YMCA camp used ham radio to orchestrate the evacuation of hundreds of youth campers. Ham radio was the lifeline that TV recognized as the way communications were possible. And, I was living it. WOW!!

On my next contact, net control was able to provide circuitous directions around the flooding as long as conditions didn't change. And, luckily, a road crew with a backhoe cleared the landslide around noon on Friday...and 15 minutes later we were following the directions to take "the high road" home. Wow! Ham Radio really DOES work when all else fails!!

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

- Mondays at 8pm CST on 146.36 MHz PL 100.0 (courtesy of TDXS) or 146.94 PL 167.9 (courtesy of Pump Handle Fawcett) is the BVARC Public Service net.
Announcements about upcoming club activities and other amateur radio related fun.
- 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



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I like to have a nice breakfast on Saturday morning and I like to spend it with my BVARC friends. For a long time I came to breakfast not for the food but for the fellowship. Frankly, the service stunk and the quality of the food was in the cellar.

I ordered pancakes one time. Half the pancake was overcooked and the other half was runny. How do you do that on a flat grill? It takes practice. Eggs? FAHGEDABOUDIT! I'd get the eggs cold, the sausage 10 minutes after I finished the eggs and the toast...? I used to save the grease from the bacon or sausage and put it in my car. It was pure SAE 30W. I gave up on eggs a while back and switched to French toast.

The server was an institution. Perhaps she escaped from an institution because nobody complained about her. I'd probably get retribution visited upon me if I objected. Each Christmas the breakfast club took up a collection for her. I've been hoping she'd use the money to buy a one way bus ticket to Tampa.

Lately, things changed for the better. About a month ago, there was a complete change of staff with new management. The institutional server is gone. Maybe she did get to Tampa after all. The rumor is that she's working at the Red Lobster where the tips are better.

Now I get my order in when I sit down and I get the whole order at the same time... and its hot! We even have multiple servers when the group is large on Saturday, so every one pretty much gets served promptly. Maybe I'll try a pancake next week or if I get really daring, I will order eggs again.

This past Saturday, I noticed more changes. There are little folded napkins in a tray on the table. The table setting is clean, no drippy syrup or ketchup bottles left over from last night. The carafe with the decaf was marked with a tied napkin on the handle so us real coffee drinkers would not have cardiac arrest from sudden caffeine withdrawal.

They have definitely stepped up their game. Come on out, if you are up at oh dark thirty on Saturday.

Reporting from the Dark Side, Ron, K5HM

BVARC Elections for 2014 Officers

The November meeting brings us our annual elections (and Chili Supper). With that in mind, the 2014 election committee is looking for a few good women and men to step up and serve their club. Being an elected BVARC official on the BVARC Board of Directors is a bit of work, but it is also fun. You get to see and, more importantly, influence how the club is run.

In November, we will be voting for a new President, a new Treasurer and one At Large member – all 2 year terms. No experience in the art of running a Ham Radio club required, but your dedication to the club and the Ham Radio hobby are certainly welcomed.

Contact me at rhiller@sdicgm.com or call me, day-time, at 713-278-6310 direct to my desk at anytime, if you desire to help the club in the future.

Thank you and 73....your BVARC 2014/2015 Election Committee



Monday Night NET Updates

Don't forget the Monday Night Public Service Net starts at **8 pm** on 147.36 (100.0). 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:

6/17 - 27 - Ron, k5hm	7/22 - 20 - Pete, kd5qpx	8/26 - 30 - Pete, kd5qpx
6/24 - 24 - Pete, kd5qpx	7/29 - 33 - Cam, k5cam	9/2 - 23 - Cam, k5cam
7/1 - 24 - Cam, k5cam	8/5 - 21 - Terry, k5pgf	9/9 - 18 - Willard, kd5eka
7/8 - 27 - Willard, kd5eka	8/12 - 18 - Willard, kd5eka	9/16 - 16 - Willard, kd5eka
7/15 - 19 - Ron, k5hm	8/19 - 25 - Ron, k5hm	9/23 - 26 - Pete, kd5qpx



THE BVARC Rag Chew Net September Check-ins

08/28/13, K5LKJ (NCS), WS5H, W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, N5AFV, W5HFF, AA0ST (Dickenson), K5LBU, W5RH, K5LJ, W5TOM, VK2AJB (Sidney, Australia)(RCS), K5WRN (T), AF5T, KA5KXG, N5ASH (El Campo), KE5OBY, N5CPA, KC5JAR (Katy)(T), KF5PHA, KD5QPX, WN5A, KE5HDF, WB5KIC (P). *** AA5OA, KF5PFJ, (24 Check-Ins)
Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 110, SN = 61, A = 15, K = 1

09/04/13, K5LKJ (NCS), W5HFF, W5TKZ, K0NM, W5RH, KF5TFJ, K5LJ, WA5CYI, KE5OBY, AA0ST (Dickenson), KF5PHA, W5TOM, WS5H, AF5T. (14 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 106, SN = 74, A = 7, K = 1

09/11/13, K5LKJ (NCS), K5WRN, W5HFF, W5TKZ, W5RH, N5CPA, KE5OBY, K5LJ, W5TOM, AF5T, KF5TFJ, WN5A, VK2AJB (Sidney, Australia)(RCS), AA5OA, KE5HDF, AA0ST (Dickenson), KC5JAR (Katy), K0NM (Boston, MA)(P)(RCS). (18 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 95, SN = 23, A = 7, K = 2

09/18/13, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, W5HFF, K5LBU, W5RH, KF5TFJ, K5LJ, AA0ST (Dickenson), N5CPA, W5TOM, KE5OBY (R), AF5T, KF5PHA, WN5A. (14 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 99, SN = 80, A = 8, K = 2

(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (RCS) = remote controlled station (T) = telephone check-in
Come join us each Wednesday.

Regards.
John K5LKJ





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Texas QSO Party – Preliminary Report

Once again, BVARC had a good presence in the Texas QSO Party, possibly the best ever. Many members, more than in the past, participated in one way or another. The KK5W team (Rick, W5RH & Pete, KD5QPX) did their mobile rover thing. Kirk, KK2Z participated from his place near Burnet Texas. Cam (K5CAM) participated from the Barndominium in Cat Spring, Nizer participated from his place in Wharton County, I (John, K5IZO) participated from my place in San Augustine County. The K5T team (Ron, K5HM and Matt, K5NGU) were set to go to South TX and set up at some tri-county locations, but work intervened, so Ron operated that call from his home. Many members participated from their homes in Harris and Ft. Bend Counties. Good showing all! I personally made Qs with 11 BVARCers and broke my personal Q count and score record. We had one member who made 4 contacts and has already submitted his log to TQP claiming his affiliation with BVARC. That member counts as one BVARCer who supported TQP; Those that make hundreds of Qs and submit their scores also each count equally as one BVARCer that supported TQP.

BVARC has historically shown good support for TQP in many ways. A TQP representative is invited to make a presentation at a general membership meeting every 2 years or so; BVARC funds 4 TQP Award plaques; Most important however is that many BVARCers participate and send their scores to demonstrate BVARC presence and support. If you haven't done so yet, do submit your scores, whether it's 2 Qs or 600 and reference your affiliation with BVARC.

A comprehensive article on TQP will be published in the next BVARC Newsletter.

Congratulations to BVARC.



**Results of the September 10th
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, September 10, 2013 at HCC's Scarcella Science & Technology Building here in Stafford, TX.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Jeffery Fussell, KD5VGE	Larry Jacobson, K5LJ	John Moore, KK5NU
George Ontko, KM5VP	Robert B. Tomlinson, N5JSL	

Four examination elements were administered during the evening to four applicants. One new Technician license, one upgrade to General class, and two upgrades to Amateur Extra class were attained; with the total number of elements passed being 4. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 100%.

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

Brian M. Bush	KF5YCF	Amateur Extra
Esteban Cordova	KB5TAJ -	General
Dennis A. Fawvor	{KF5YHH}	Technician
James K. Robertson	KF5WCI -	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.

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Rules for the October General Membership Auction

- 1) Members provisionally donate equipment to the club.
 - 1.1) Donor completes a standard form for donation.
 - 1.2) Donor agrees to donating equipment to BVARC unless minimum is not met.
 - 1.3) Donor writes the following information on a card provided by BVARC.
 - 1.3.1) His name.
 - 1.3.2) The minimum acceptable bid.
 - 1.3.3) Name, model, and serial number of equipment.
 - 1.3.4) Statement as to working or as-is.
 - 1.3.5) Card goes into envelope and is sealed.
 - 1.4) Outside envelope Donor writes his name, equipment model, and condition; either working or as-is. **AUCTION ON THAT EQUIPMENT IS VOID IF CONDITION ON CARD DOES NOT MATCH ENVELOPE EXTERIOR.**
 - 1.5) Equipment is photographed.
 - 1.6) Donor gets a copy of this protocol and signs a second copy which is kept by the club.
 - 1.7) Sealed envelope and equipment is given to the auction equipment master.
- 2) The equipment envelope is NOT opened until after the auction action for that item.
- 3) If the auction creates a bid that is higher the minimum, the donating member has then given the equipment to the club and the bidder gets the equipment. The donating member gets a tax receipt for the equipment. BVARC gets the auction cash. Bidder gets the equipment. Payment is CASH or CHECK ONLY.
- 4) If the minimum is not met the options are as follows.
 - 4.1) Donor accepts highest bid even though it is under the original minimum.
 - 4.2) Donor modifies his offering to make it more attractive.
 - 4.3) Bidding ends with no winner. The equipment is then NOT donated to the club and the potential donor takes it home with them.
- 5) Equipment should be somehow related to Amateur Radio and can be working or not but must be so declared by the donor as to which when it is brought to the auction. Donor must answer questions from the audience about the equipment.
- 6) If the equipment is represented as working and turns out not, buyer can return it within 5 days. BVARC returns the money, donor gets the equipment back. If item is declared as "as-is", then equipment is nonreturnable.
- 7) Return procedure:
 - 7.1) Within 5 days of the auction, the buyer contacts a designee of the board by telephone, 8AM to 5 PM, or through email.
 - 7.2) Buyer describes why he feels the equipment is defective. Presuming that he successfully makes his case, the board designee authorizes the return and arranges with the buyer the details of the physical exchange.
 - 7.3) At the time of the return exchange, the buyer receives a receipt, the designee received the equipment.
 - 7.4) The designee contacts the treasurer and arranges a refund to be sent through USPS to the buyer.
 - 7.5) The designee contacts the equipment donor and arranges for him to collect his property and return the original tax donation statement. The original tax donation statement is required for the donor to receive his equipment.
- 8) If an item is brought to the auction and declared to be working, and is damaged before the bidding is complete, then it still belongs to the donor. Donor can then change the status of the item.
- 9) At time of payment, item belongs to bidder. If it is physically broken after that time, it is still the bidder's



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Confirmed Meeting Locations

Editor's Note: The January location will probably be at the Annual Banquet location – TBD.

Meeting					
Month	Day	Yr	Location	Start	End
Sep	12	2013	Eldridge Park	6:00PM	10:00PM
Oct	10	2013	Eldridge Park	6:00PM	10:00PM
Nov	14	2013	Eldridge Park	6:00PM	10:00PM
Dec	12	2013	Eldridge Park	6:00PM	10:00PM
Jan	9	2014	Eldridge Park	6:00PM	10:00PM
Feb	13	2014	Eldridge Park	6:00PM	10:00PM



Minutes of September 5th, 2013 Board of Directors meeting of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club:

Secretarial Note: A discussion took place before the meeting regarding Rick Hiller acting under proxy for David Barber. Attending board member consensus was that it was allowable because the by-laws did not address the issue.

Michael Wrenn called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to order at 7:00 PM on September 5th, 2013 at Fuddruckers, 11445 Fountain Lake Drive, Stafford, TX. Attending were; Michael Wrenn, K5WRN (V.P.); Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX (Rec. Sec.); Ron Litt, K5HM (2yr At-Large Dir. & Radio Sport); Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM; John Chauvin, K5IZO (Newsletter Editor); Michael Monsour, AC0TX (Quartermaster); Rick Hiller, W5RH (proxy for David Barber); Ross Lawler, W5HFF; Mark Lawler; Matt Tatro, K5NGU; Roy Storey, W5TKZ.

1. Minutes for the August 1st, 2013 meeting were approved as previously distributed by email and appears in the September 2013 newsletter.
2. Treasurer's Report, delivered to board through email by Tomlinson, was presented to and approved by the Board.
3. Old Business:
 - 3.1. Greater Houston Hamfest (GHH): Chauvin willing to be the 2014 chairman under conditions stated in the August minutes. Board approved Chauvin as 2014 chairman. Date is set at March 22nd. Kick-off meeting will be September 19th at Fuddruckers. About 10 tables will be added for 2014. He has been to fair ground to check on status. Marshall is willing to do set-up and tear-down. He is looking for new venue for 2015. Other organizations been approached to participate. NARS and ECHO have not responded. Pearland responded but is not enthusiastic about running tail-gating.
 - 3.2. Astronomy Day: Chauvin stated that it will be hosted by the Houston Museum of Natural Science at the George Observatory, Saturday October 12th.
 - 3.3. Storage Lockers: Monsour produced a survey document of available locations. Discussion followed that a storage locker needs to be separate from the permanent home discussion. Also storage takes priority over permanent home and the need for a standing budget. Laptop computers were discussed as being a non-locker item because of their need for battery charging and software update. Monsour will visit the Public Storage at 888 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land. If it suits our purpose, he will email board. The board will authorize, possibly through e-mail balloting.
 - 3.4. Permanent Home: Chauvin reported that the Permanent Home Committee has not located additional attractive properties. Litt raised objectives about not having financial basics in place before looking at properties. He made the case that the board needs to make a proposal of what the club needs and take that proposal to the general membership. Litt made a motion. "In thirty days, anyone who has an idea about what a permanent home should be and how it would be used, should present that idea to the board." Board approved motion.
 - 3.5. Newsletter: Wrenn reopened topic about electronic versus paper distribution.
 - 3.5.1. Chauvin presented various proposals.
 - 3.5.1.1. Retain status quo.
 - 3.5.1.2. Go all electronic.
 - 3.5.1.3. Go electronic but have post card notice.
 - 3.5.1.4. Make electronic available, with proviso that individual members must opt out of receiving a mailed copy.
 - 3.5.1.5. Make electronic the default, with the proviso that individual members must opt in to receiving a mailed copy.
 - 3.5.1.6. Go all electronic by default, but have surcharge to receive a mailed copy.
 - 3.5.2. Chauvin made the following additional comments.
 - 3.5.2.1. The by-laws do not require a direct notice to members for General Membership Meetings. Such is required only for special meetings.
 - 3.5.2.2. The paper copy costs, on average, 86¢ per copy for printing and postage.
 - 3.5.2.3. Delivery of even one newsletter sets the edition size at twelve pages. (One sheet of paper contains two pages.) The twelve page limit is set by the weight limit of one stamp. Having a separate electronic edition with expansive articles doubles the newsletter editorial work.
 - 3.5.2.4. Many members aren't web, e-mail oriented. They are not likely to accept electronic only distribution.
 - 3.5.2.5. His experience with the Houston Astronomical Society (HAS) showed that they lost about 30% membership when they stopped their paper newsletter. It took three to five years to recover their membership numbers. He noted that HAS has a different demographic from BVARC.
 - 3.5.2.6. A Scientific American article; April 11, 2013; states that an organization should have both electronic and paper newsletters. (Recording Secretary Note: Please refer to item 3.5.7.)
 - 3.5.3. Tatro said the he made a web survey of some East Coast clubs and found that they offer no mail-out newsletter distribution. Hard copy available at meetings. He stated that there needs to be a survey of membership to separate fact from fiction.
 - 3.5.4. Litt stated that it is a foundation of club and membership needs to decide.
 - 3.5.5. Mitchell made point that in a Scientific American Article, people more comfortable with paper. As people age, they become even more comfortable with paper. (Recording Secretary Note: Please refer to item 3.5.7.)
 - 3.5.6. Wrenn said he will put it to the membership on November meeting about electronic versus paper newsletter. Appropriate announcements shall be made on the nets and through an e-mail distribution.
 - 3.5.7. Comment by Recording Secretary: The Scientific American Article that I am told is the source for comments made in items 3.5.2.6 and 3.5.5 above was provided to me by request after the meeting. It can be viewed at the link "<http://www.scientific american.com/article.cfm?id=reading-paper-screens>". I have read the article and

conducted key word searches. I cannot find quotable text to match statements made. I can say that the contest of the article does match statements made at the meeting.

3.6. MSWE: Litt said he has received QSL cards. One thousand QSL cards at printer. He has secured volunteers to filling them out. Cavalla will do mailing. mailing will include park brochure with our QSL card. BVARC will buy food for volunteers.

4. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX

Editor's Note: Re the "comment" 3.5.7, after comparing notes with Cameron, we do not know what exact words were spoken regarding the two points challenged, but do not believe them to be 100% accurate as cited. The comments weren't quotes but rather were references to points made in the article or elsewhere. Cam or I will be happy to discuss this with you offline.



BVARC Historical Vignettes – My First BVARC Meeting

Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian

I was looking through the old BVARC newsletters posted on the club website and came upon the October 1985 newsletter published by Editor Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG. The newsletter contained the minutes of the September 12, 1985 BVARC general membership meeting which was the first BVARC meeting I attended. I had checked into the Houston SHOT net on ten meters a couple of days before and just as the net closed Harold Parker, ND9F, called me and extended an invitation to attend the next BVARC meeting. I had just moved to Houston from Tulsa and was looking for an amateur radio club to join.

At that time, the BVARC general membership meeting was held on the second Thursday of the month in the Council Chambers of the Missouri City Municipal Building. The club had been in existence for seven years. A new roster had just been printed and showed the club membership at 101 members and attendance at the meeting was 39.

President Harold Parker, ND9F, called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM. A standing roll call was held, and members who had received new call signs or updated their license class were recognized. The minutes from the September 5, 1985 BVARC Board of Directors Meeting were read. Discussions were held about the need to inventory club property, find a place to store club property, and having BVARC patches, vests and & T-shirts made.

The major item for discussion was the upcoming Houston Ham-Comm which was being held at the Stouffer Greenway Plaza Hotel on September 22, 1985. Madison Electronics had given the club a good price on a new Kenwood TS-430S transceiver that was the main prize at Houston Ham-Comm. It was decided to sell raffle tickets for \$1 for one ticket or \$10 for twelve tickets.

It was also announced that club had received a Swan transceiver from Harris County District Attorney Johnny Holmes, W5ALG, for use at the Rosenberg EOC. The club also received a Heathkit SB-101 transceiver from Gregory Grimes, KA5OCW, and it would serve as a backup for the EOC.

Announcements included an upcoming public service event, the Walk-A-Thon for Juvenile Diabetes, a Novice class being held at Houston Museum of Natural Science, and the BVARC Nominating Committee chaired by past-President Ron Bolyard, KA5GYG, was working on a slate of officers for 1986.

President Harold Parker, ND9F, adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM and Walter Holmes, WD5GAZ (now K5WH) presented a program about Packet Radio.

I was very impressed by the large number of activities that BVARC was involved in. It is interesting that many of the same issues that were discussed at a club meeting 28 years ago are important issues today. All members of BVARC can be very proud of our club and its rich history.

Radiosport Items of Note for October 2013

Some Major contests this month! Don't miss them

CQ Worldwide DXContest, SSB Oct 26th – 27th
Oceana DX Contest, CW Oct 12th – 13th
ARRL School/Club Roundup – Oct 15 – 19th

And my personal favorite, the CQ Worldwide DX Contest RTTY Sept 28th – 29th

For detailed start times and rules please go to <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

QSO Parties – There are several QSO Parties this month. Make your plans to participate.

Pennsylvania QSO PARTY – Oct 12th – 13th
California QSO Party – Oct 5th – 6th
Arizona QSO Party – Oct 12th – 13th
New York QSO Party – Oct 19th – 20th
Illinois QSO Party – Oct 20th – 21st

Sprints – This month there are some Sprints that have a special QSY Rule which provide an interesting twist to the contest. Any station that solicits a call (by sending CQ, QRZ, “going up 5 kHz” or any other means of soliciting a response, including completion of a QSO where the frequency was inherited, that station is permitted to work only one station in response to that solicitation. The station must thereafter move at least 1 kHz before calling another station or at least 5 kHz before soliciting other calls.

Most Sprints are short duration; only a few hours. That makes it easy to fit into your weekend schedule.

EU Autumn Sprint SSB – Oct 5th. Perfect for a quickie; only 4 hours. Work some EU DX
EU Autumn Sprint CW – Oct 12th. Perfect for a quickie; only 4 hours. Work some EU DX CW Style
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint - Oct 8th
10-10 Day Sprint – Oct 10th One whole day; No QSY rule in this one.
FISTS Fall Sprint – Oct 12th

For detailed start times and rules please go to <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

Special Events in October include:

W5B – Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta – Oct 4th – 14th

74th Anniversary of USCG Auxiliary Oct 19th - Several stations – N1H, N7Z, N4H, N4U, N4A.

NC4AR – NASCAR Days Oct 26th.

For details and more special events visit

http://www.arrl.org/special_events/search/page:5/Date.start:2013-09-01/Date.end:2013-09-30/model:Event

Reporting from the Dark Side
Ron, K5HM



Editor's Note:

This issue of the newsletter is chock-full-of information and events, both as happened in September and upcoming in October. There is also a superb technical article. Accordingly some unusual formatting, font and point size manipulation was required. Enjoy!



Conductors for Grounding: The Choices – In a Nutshell

Compiled by W5RH

(Note: The following information was plagiarized, with permission, from www.GeorgiaCopper.com)

FLAT COPPER BRAID

Braid's greatest advantage is its flexibility. Braid is the conductor of choice where flexibility is required. It is sometimes used for electrically bonding parts of a vehicle, for example an exhaust pipe, door, or hood. At tower sites, braid is good for bonding swinging gates or doors to a ground system - flexibility is a must in such an application. Braid also has some degree of popularity for bonding amateur radio equipment to a common ground buss because of its flexibility. Some people question the effectiveness of braid at radio frequencies. The argument is that each strand of the braid weaves in and out, back and forth across the braid. Currents must either follow that inductive weaving path, or "jump" from strand to strand where strands touch. There are of course many individual strands in parallel, so overall inductance should be low. And another question to consider is, with so many points of contact between strands within a length of braid, could there be a potential for noise in a critical RF environment? In braid's defense, one should keep in mind that coaxial cables for RF applications have traditionally been made with a braided outer conductor (for its flexibility), and it has worked well. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that high performance, low-loss coaxial cables use a solid outer conductor rather than a braided outer conductor. Georgia Copper stocks only tinned braid, because oxidation between various strands of bare (un-tinned) copper braid could seriously degrade its performance.

FLAT COPPER STRAP

Strap's greatest advantage is its surface area. Copper strap (or strip) is the conductor of choice for low impedance RF ground connections. Due to the skin effect, RF currents tend to flow along the outside "skin" of a conductor. Copper strap has a large, smooth surface area to take full advantage of this effect. For decades, copper strap has been widely used in the RF ground systems of broadcast sites.

Lightning - Assuming lightning current is strictly DC, any copper conductor of similar cross-sectional area should conduct lightning current equally well. However, research has shown that lightning is a series of DC pulses with a fast rise time. Conductors with lowest inductive reactance and largest surface area, such as copper strap, should be strongly considered when choosing conductors to handle the fast pulses of lightning current. There's one great benefit of copper strap that is seldom mentioned. In a typical ground system, multiple ground rods are driven and interconnected with bare copper wire or copper strap buried just below the surface of the soil. If copper strap is used for this purpose, the large surface area of copper strap in contact with the soil can enhance any system of ground rods and help lower overall ground resistance. For example, an 8-foot length of 2-inch copper strap would have just as much surface area in contact with the soil as an 8-foot, 5/8" ground rod! And that's only considering one side of the strap! Copper strap's greatest disadvantage is that it is slightly more difficult to install and connect than wire - for example, to go through a wall, one simply has to drill a hole for wire and push it through. Strap requires a little more effort.

COPPER WIRE

Wire's greatest advantage is that it is readily available and easy to use. Wire is the conductor with which we are all most familiar. Of the three types of conductors described on this page, wire is the easiest to install and the easiest to connect. Wire is readily available. Bare copper wire that is solid (as opposed to stranded) in the sizes of 4 awg and 6 awg is commonly used as safety grounds for home electrical panels. These sizes of wire are also convenient for basic grounding of amateur radio equipment and for very basic lightning protection grounds. Larger sizes, such as 2 awg and up, are often used for lightning grounding and bonding. Larger wires are typically stranded instead of solid because a large wire that is solid is difficult to bend. Smaller wire (typically 10 awg) is commonly used for radials around vertical antennas. An AM broadcast tower usually has 120 radials made of 10awg bare copper wire, each at least ¼ wavelength long, buried around the base of the tower in a pattern like the spokes of a wheel. Wire's main disadvantage is that it is round! It has less surface area than strap or braid, and, therefore, is less efficient at handling RF currents where a low impedance ground path is needed, such as from a common ground buss or antenna tuner to a ground system. For example, a 4 awg wire and a 1.5" x .022" strap have the same cross-sectional area (equivalent circular mils), and they're made from the same amount of copper, but the 1.5" strap has 4.7 times the surface area of the wire.

-----Find Georgia Copper LLC on Facebook and Twitter-----



2013 Club Officers:

President:
Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z
kmkendrick@gmail.com

Vice President:
Michael Wrenn, K5WRN
michael.wrenn@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary / Treasurer
Robert Tomlinson, N5JSL
rbtswim@gmail.com

Recording Secretary:
Pete Sauermilch, KD5QPX
kd5qpx@arrl.net

2 Year At-Large Board Member A:
Rick Hiller, W5RH
rhiller@sdicgm.com

2 Year At-Large Board Member B:
Ron Litt, K5HM
k5hm.ron@gmail.com

1 Year at Large Board Member
Travis Burgess, K5THB
travburg1@sbcglobal.net

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
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
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



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>

HamEXPO! 2013 -- the Belton Hamfest – October 5, 2013

Temple Amateur Radio Club
Bell County Expo Center
301 Loop 121, Belton, TEXAS 7
Talk-In: 146.820 – Tone 123.0
<http://www.tarc.org/hamexpo/>

November 1 & 2, Coastal Bend Hamfest, Aransas Pass, TX

South Texas Amateur Radio Club
Aransas Pass Civic Center
700 West Wheeler Avenue
Talk-In Frequency 146.820MHz (-) 107.2Hz
<http://n5crp.org/>

01/11/2014 | [2014 Amateur Radio Fiesta](#)

Location: Schertz, TX
Type: ARRL Hamfest
Sponsor: San Antonio Radio Club
Website: <http://w5sc.org>





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

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 Scarcella 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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OCTOBER, 2013

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

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

- BVARC General Membership Meeting, Thursday, October 10, 7:30 PM
- Astronomy Day, Saturday, October 12, 3 – 10 PM.

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