



# BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

DECEMBER 2016

VOLUME 40 ISSUE 12

## BVARC GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, Thursday, December 8

Don't wait; mark your calendar now for December 8, 2016.

We're trying to get things back on schedule by holding a second Home Brew Night along with an action. Get you project, large or small, ready to present to the club members. Clean out your shack and donate them to the club for our December auction. We even have a volunteer auctioneer with professional qualifications. Clint Davis, AF5QS, has committed to donate several pieces of test gear for the action.

Should be a fun night! See you there.

Jon KF5TFJ



## November Meeting -- Reheat....I mean Recap

November 10, 2016 -- First up was the election for VP, Treasurer, 1 Year At Large and 2 Year at Large. We had one candidate for each position and one vote was taken to confirm all candidates into their new positions (as of January 1). Mark Janzer, K5MGJ, will be VP; Donovan Balli, KF5BDZ, will continue as Treasurer; Scott Medbury, KD5FBA, has the 2 Year at Large and J.P. Pritchard, KF3JPP, will hold the 1 Year At Large position. An extreme expression of thanks, from all, needs to be extended to these four gentlemen. (The remainder of the BVARC membership can now breathe a sigh of relief until next November when the Election Committee comes after them again -- HI)

After the elections, the Chili, in all its' various forms, was awaiting the hungry membership. Scott, KD5FBA, performed yeoman's work in getting it all organized with dedicated assistance from his family members, Louann - his wife; Kelli - his daughter and Warren - his son. Winners of the Chili Cookoff were: Pete, KD5QPX and Jim, N5DTT.

***One special note: Kelli Medbury had passed her Technician test just two days before the meeting and surprised Dad, KD5FBA, with the news of her passing at the meeting. All in attendance congratulated Kelli. Note: Her call has been issued and she is now KG5QJE. Kelli, use your call wisely and frequently. Welcome to Ham Radio!!!***



## The Prez Says

As this newsletter goes to press, this article is not available. Look for it in next month's issue.



### Minutes of the November 5 2016 Board of Directors meeting of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Mike Hardwick called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to at 9:03AM on November 5th, 2016, at Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston 77074. Attending were:

Mike Hardwick N5VCX (President.), Donovan Balli KD5BDZ (Treas.), Jon Noxon KF5TFJ (Vice President), Michael Monsour ACØTX (Rec.Sec./Quart.), Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2yr At-Large Dir), Jerry Muller K9GEM (1yr At-Large Dir.), Jo L Keener KE7NSB (2yr At-Large Dir), Ron Litt K5HM (Radio Sport)

#### Reports:

- 1.1 October's Minutes correction: There will be no SMD instruction in December.
- 1.2 A motion was made and passed to accept the October Minutes per correction stated above.
- 1.3 A motion was made and passed to accept the Treasurer's report.

#### Old Business:

- 2.1 Field Day 2016: Letters of Appreciation still need to be done.
- 2.2 November general meeting: Elections positions that are open: VP, Treasurer, 1 year Director, 2 year Director.
- 2.3 Chili Supper in November. Chili with beans and chili without beans will be judged separately. Everybody will vote as to best chili and the Skeeters will act as a tie-breaker and provide some prizes.
- 2.4 December general meeting: Home Brew Night and auction
- 2.5 January Banquet: January 13<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm – 9:30pm, cost per club member will be \$30 (the club contributes \$25) A motion was made and passed to that effect. There will be no banquet speaker.
- 2.6 February general meeting: Will be locating radio interference.
- 2.7 March general meeting: still open
- 2.8 The Masonic Lodge contract has been mailed.
- 2.9 The Pledge of Allegiance is now part of the general meeting.
- 2.10 Museum Ships work weekend, should start December 10

#### New Business:

- 3.1 Mark Janzer wants to a VE session for Scouts, need details.
- 3.2 BOD meetings will continue at Bayland Park Community Center and the dates are reserved at Bayland.
- 3.3 There is a need to start work on 2017 Field Day. In December there will be a Field Day organization meeting
- 3.4 Web site needs to be updated.
- 3.5 Effective Dec 31 2016 Michael Monsour is resigning the Secretary position and Jon Noxon will be appointed as Secretary. A motion was made and passed to this effect. Michael Monsour will still retain the Post Office key and Quartermaster position.
- 3.6 Effective January, the Newsletter will not be mailed- but will be available on line only. A motion was made and passed to ask the membership at Chili Supper what they think of the Newsletter going on line only.

Meeting adjourned at 10:17 AM

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Michael Monsour ACØTX



**Where in the world is . . .**  
**Howland Island (KH1)**  
**CQ Zone 31**  
**IOTA OC-089**

**Howland Island** is an uninhabited coral island located just north of the equator in the central Pacific Ocean. The island lies almost halfway between Hawaii and Australia and is an unincorporated, unorganized territory of the United States. Geographically, together with Baker Island it forms part of the Phoenix Islands. For statistical purposes, Howland is grouped as one of the United States Minor Outlying Islands. EEEWWW, how would you like to be a Minor Outlying island?

**Howland Island National Wildlife Refuge** consists of the entire island and the surrounding 32,074 acres of submerged land. The island is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an insular area under the U.S. Department of the Interior and is part of the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument. Since Howland Island is uninhabited, no time zone is specified. It lies within nautical time zone UTC-12.



On July 2, 1937, American aviation pioneer Amelia Earhart was attempting to circumnavigate the globe in a modified twin-engine Lockheed Electra when she — and her navigator, Fred Noonan — mysteriously disappeared in the middle of the Pacific Ocean near Howland Island.

They had made several changes to the plane's equipment, particularly its antenna layouts and structure, that may have critically harmed communication between the plane and its ship tender, the United States Coast Guard Cutter *Itasca*. The *Itasca* was standing by at Howland Island to signal the Electra and guide it in. Unfortunately, due to the aforementioned communications problems, the Lockheed and the cutter never made contact. While the ship could hear Earhart, it could not respond to her transmissions on the same frequency.

Howland Island was uninhabited when the United States took possession of it under the Guano Islands Act of 1856. Its guano deposits were mined by American companies from about 1857 until October 1878. George W. Benson formed the United States Guano Company to exploit the guano on Howland Island, with this claim being recognized under the U.S. Guano Islands Act. The island was a known navigation hazard for many decades and several ships were wrecked there.

Colonists, sent to the island to establish possession claims by the United States, built the Earhart Light, as a day beacon or navigational landmark. It is shaped somewhat like



a short lighthouse. It was constructed of white sandstone with painted black bands and a black top meant to be visible several miles out to sea during daylight hours. The beacon was partially destroyed during early World War II by the Japanese attacks, but it was rebuilt in the early 1960s by men from the U.S. Coast Guard. By 2000, the beacon was reported to be crumbling and it had not been repainted in decades.

The entity of Baker and Howland Islands has been on the DXCC list since 1945, but was initially known as Baker, Howland & American Phoenix Islands. QSOs count for Baker and Howland Islands from 1945.

The DXCC entity consists of Baker Island and Howland Island, and, until 1983, also included Canton Island and Enderbury Island. Baker, Howland, Canton and Enderbury Islands are geographically part of the Phoenix Islands. From mid-1947, the KB6 (WB6 for novice stations) prefix was used for Baker and Howland Islands, and continued to be used for Baker and Howland Islands until the US callsign revision of 1978, from which date the prefix became KH1, with AH1, NH1 & WH1 also being used.

According to ClubLog.com, Howland Island is number 4 on its DXCC most wanted list/

Reporting from the Dark Side

Ron, K5HM

## 2017 BVARC Annual Banquet

### Ron Litt, K5HM

Coming soon! Sooner than you expect! The BVARC Annual Banquet is scheduled for Friday evening, January 13<sup>th</sup>. at Maggiano's Little Italy, 2010 Post Oak Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77056.

Get ready for an evening of fun, frivolity fellowship and great food. So don't be shy.

Cocktails and drinks will begin at 6 PM in the Trentino Room on the second floor of the restaurant. An elevator is available. There will be a cash bar.

Banquet tickets are \$30 per person. Advance reservations only. Sorry; we have to provide the restaurant with a firm headcount in advance. **All payments must be received no later than January 5<sup>th</sup>**. Checks or payments received after that date will be returned.

You may purchase your tickets by PayPal or credit card on the BVARC Website ([www.bvarg.org](http://www.bvarg.org)) <http://www.bvarc.org> or by check payable to BVARC. Mail checks to:  
Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club  
P.O. Box 2997  
Sugar Land, Texas 77487-2997

A three course meal with an Italian flair will be served. Guests will have a choice of appetizers and entrees. All courses are served family style.

#### Appetizers:

Mozzarella Marinara  
Calamari Fritte

#### First course:

Choice of  
Caesar Salad or Italian Tossed Salad

#### Second Course:

Mom's Meat Lasagna with Marinara Sauce  
Fettuccini Alfredo  
Salmon, Lemon and Herb Sauce  
Chicken Picatta  
Italian Style Vegetables

#### Third Course

Fresh Fruit Plate  
Chocolate Zuccotto Cake

Served with fresh Ciabatta Rolls, Coffee, Iced Tea and Soft Drinks  
Cash Bar for adult beverages.

The balance of the program, including speaker will be announced as we get closer to the banquet date.

You can email me if you have questions. Get your reservation in early. Don't miss it.

## BVARC Rag Chew Net

Below is the BVARC Rag Chew Net check-in information:

10/26/16, K5LKJ (NCS), W5VOM, W5HFF, WW5PA/5 (M)(Shreveport, LA)  
K5LJ, K0NM, AA0ST (Dickinson), KE5ZS, KE5ZS (La Vernia), KA5KMS (Weatherford), KJ5Y (Pearland),  
AA5OA, W5TOM. (12 Check-Ins)  
Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 77, SN = 17, A = 60, K = 5

11/02/16, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, W5VOM, KD5O, W5HFF, K5LJ, W5TOM, KJ5Y (Pearland), (9 Check-Ins)  
Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 76, SN = 12, A = 10, K = 3

11/09/16, K5LKJ (NCS), AA5OA, W5HFF, AA0ST (Dickinson), KG3JPP, KJ5Y (Pearland), K5LJ, KF5TFJ, W5RH,  
AF5XL, NE5MC, NE5MC (New Iberia, LA), KE5KG (New Iberia, LA), W5VOM. (13 Check-Ins)  
Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 80, SN = 0, A = 7, K = 3

11/16/16, K5LKJ (NCS), AA5OA, KJ5Y (Pearland), KG3JPP, W5HFF, W5TKZ, WA5RAC, WW5PA/5  
(M)(Uvalde), KA5LMZ (Morgan City, LA), WIBG (Katy), W5RH, AF5XL. (12 Check-Ins)  
Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 81, SN = 29, A = 5, K = 2

11/23/16, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, W5TOM, K5IZO, WD6CQO (Nederland), KB5TWL (St. Martinville, LA), K5LJ,  
W5HFF, AA0ST (Dickinson), W5VOM, AF5XL. (11 Check-Ins)  
Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 78, SN = 0, A = 18, K = 3

(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (RCS) = remote controlled station (T) = telephone check-in

Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening. Regards. John K5LKJ



### BVARC BOD & Greater Houston Hamfest Meeting Schedules October to December 2016

Meetings will be held at Bayland Community Center except for the September meetings due to the Labor Day Weekend. The BOD meeting will be a conference call that will be held on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The call-in information will be posted on the BVARC web site the week of the meeting.

The Greater Houston Hamfest organizational meetings will be held immediately after the BOD meeting except in September. The Hamfest meeting will be held on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The location will be published the week of the meeting on the BVARC web site.

December 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Bayland Community Center	9:00 am to 10:30 am	BOD Meeting
		10:30 am to 12 noon	Greater Houston Hamfest

## **BVARC Historical Vignettes – BVARC Awards** **Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian**

There are a number of awards that may be presented by BVARC each year. These awards are presented to the recipients at the January BVARC Awards Banquet.

The Order of the Key Award is the highest and most prestigious BVARC award. The early club newsletters in my possession do not tell how the award originated, but we do know that the Order of the Key Award is unique to BVARC, and that it was conceived by a club member. The first Order of the Key Award was given in 1980. A total of 41 Order of the Key Awards have been awarded. The club confers the Order of the Key Award on those members whose service and commitment to the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club has been exceptional and outstanding. Nominations for the Order of the Key award may be submitted by any BVARC member to the BVARC president no later than the December regular membership meeting. The vote by the Board of Directors must be unanimous for the award to be conferred.

The Dr. Bill Ossenfort Award was established by BVARC in 1988 to recognize the outstanding Volunteer Examiners on BVARC's VE team. Dr. Bill Ossenfort was one of leaders of the first BVARC VE team when it was formed in 1984, and he became a silent key (SK) in 1985. The first Dr. Bill Ossenfort Award was awarded in 1988 and 14 BVARC members have received the award. This award is presented to a person identified as the outstanding Volunteer Examiner by the VE team leader. To receive the award, the candidate must also receive unanimous approval of the BVARC Board of Directors.

The Loop and Zepp Award was established in 1989 to stimulate more HF activity by BVARC members. Any member of the club may make a nomination(s) for the Loop and Zepp Award. Nominations must be made in writing, and must be submitted to any BVARC officer or board member no later than the December regular membership meeting. There shall be no more than one award presented each year, unless in any one given year the Board of Directors elects unanimously to award more than one award. It is not mandatory that the award be made each year if in the board's majority opinion, no nominee is selected.

The Appreciation Award was established in 1990 for the president to recognize club members that have significantly helped the club in various ways during the past year. A total of 42 Appreciation Awards have been given. This award is left to the discretion of the BVARC president.

The Outstanding Service Recognition Award was established in 2003 and requires approval by the BVARC Board. Only seven BVARC members have received this award. Any BVARC member may submit nomination for this award subject to approval by the BVARC Board.

The K1JT Award originated in 2013 has only been awarded three times. This award was established to promote activity on the VHF/UHF bands. Only three BVARC members have received this award. Nominations by any BVARC member for this award for this should be submitted to the BVARC Board for approval.

Visit the BVARC website to learn more about the club's awards. Please support our club and nominate someone who you feel is qualified for these awards. The future of our club depends on members coming forward and participating in BVARC's future.

# **The Radio Hotel** - Antennas You've Never Heard Of (probably)

By Rick Hiller -- W5RH

We all know the usual suspects when it comes to antennas. Dipoles, verticals, loops, Zepps, Yagi's etc. Even branching out into the semi-esoteric skyhooks you have others such as the G5RV, 4-Square, Bob-Tail Curtain, etc. But, these are just plays on the basic antenna forms with a bit of magic thrown in. Now, have you ever heard of the Herring Bone, the Landstorfer, the Franklin, the Bruce Array, the Discone or the Alford Slot? How about the Ham Radio specific, Hi-Rizer, the Maxcom, the Bilal Isotron, the Sommer or the Hentenna? Now we're getting into some interesting beasts.

People have loaded up folding chairs, bed springs, shopping carts. Even our resident RF Weasel, W5TOM, has loaded up his Ford Explorer (see [www.w5tom.com](http://www.w5tom.com)). But I am not talking about just loading up weird stuff. I am talking about legitimate antenna arrays designed for real life RF situations. Designers have been driven to achieve success in getting around problems with size, feed impedance, efficiency, multi-band coverage, gain, f/b, etc. and they have come up with some really weird configurations and solutions. Now, due to space limitations, I cannot go into the attributes of each individual antenna. That is your job. Remember: TRH philosophy is to serve as an introduction to different ideas and topics and for you to use the Internet to dig further. Let me see if I can do just that and give you some hints as to what to research.

The Herring Bone, the Bruce Array, the Franklin and the Sterba Curtin were wire antennas developed many years back for shortwave HF communication and broadcasting. Legacy antenna books tout the benefits and attributes of these antennas and others. The free, downloadable, 1952 Edmund LaPort's [Radio Antenna Engineering](#) is a good place to look for information. (Google "[Radio Antenna Engineering ebook](#)" – it's 2.5 Mb)

When it comes to initialisms, there are plenty of antennas known by them...the DDRR, TTFD, CFA, EH, or the CCD. Even in the Ham Radio quadrant we have a couple -- the EDZ and the LPDA. Many articles have been written about all of these "abbreviated" skyhooks. All are easily Google'd. For Ham specifics, let's start with something fairly well known -- the [Bilal Isotron](#). You've seen the pictures in QST. It kind of looks like a bird cage. You can read an in depth analysis of this strange antenna at the [isotronantennas.com](http://isotronantennas.com) web site.

The [Maxcom High Speed Automatic Antenna Matcher](#) is well known as sort of a scam antenna. In short, it is like putting a dummy load at the feed point and running dipole wires out from there. Both QST and 73 magazine gave it a bit of an expose' and certainly exposed its' fallacies. **See QST Nov. 1984 and 73 March 1988.**

A sub-group of Ham antennas in the "severely loaded" category are the Little Giant, Tak-Tenna, The Petlawany Dipole and the Untenna Hi-Rizer. All have either massive coils or they have end loading spirals or radials to assist in resonating the antenna. The Little Giant is **US Patent #2,891,498.** The Petlawany was originally in World Radio, but can be seen at [iw5edi.com](http://iw5edi.com). The Tak-Tenna is currently in production at [tak-tenna.com](http://tak-tenna.com). The Untenna Hi-Rizer a unique mobile antenna looking similar to a DDRR, but not. Google [Untenna Hi-Rizer](#) and look for the [Radioexperimenter.us](http://Radioexperimenter.us) url in the listing.

I am out of space and didn't get to talk about the Hentenna, the Landstofer element (very interesting!), the Sommer beam, the OWL, the LFA or the OP-DES, but a Google search will show you what they are. There are many other esoteric antennas out there, but the above mentioned ones are the few that I have been intrigued by for many years. Enjoy your hobby. GL ES 73 DE W5RH

## **Next time.... Diversity – A Deployable Advantage**

*The purpose of **The Radio Hotel** is to give you a practical kickstart into exploring the workings of antenna systems. Google the buzz words and find out what they mean. Read up on antenna system theory to see how it all works together. You will be glad you did.*

**Results of the November 8th  
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, November 8, 2016 at HCC Southwest College Stafford Campus - Scarcella Building in Stafford, TX 77477.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Richard Goldy, K5GOL	Larry Jacobson, K5LJ
John Moore, KK5NU	George Ontko, KM5VP
Randy Pugh, AA5OA	

Two examination elements were administered during the evening to two applicants. One new Technician class license and one upgrades to General class were attained, with the total number of elements passed being 2. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 100%.

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

Sergio Amaral	-	W7SER	-	General
Kelli N Medbury	-	{KG5QJE}	-	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 Southwest Stafford Campus - Scarcella Building 77477 for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

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**BVARC Monday Night Public Service Net Updates**

Don't forget the BVARC Monday Night Net starts at **8 pm** on 146.94 (167.9). The order of check-ins starts 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 Rick, w5rh, if you are interested. Here are recent check-ins with control-ops:

8/15 - 20 - Rick, w5rh	9/19 - 25 - Ron, k5hm	10/24 -19 - Terry, k5pgf
8/22 - 27 - Clint, kf5hdf	9/26 - 14 - Clint, kf5hdf	10/31 - 19 - Jo, ke7nsb
8/29 - 22 - Ron, k5hm	10/3 - 19 - Dave, n5ekw	11/7 - 19 - Dave, k5ekw
9/5 - 15 - Dave, n5ekw	10/10 - 16 - Steve, kf5yyz	11/14 - 15 - Steve, kf5yyz
9/12 - 18 - Steve, kf5yyv	10/17 - 17 - Ron, k5hm	11/21 - 15 - Jo, ke7nsb

**BVARC QUICK STATS**

Date	Members	Newsletters	Life Members
11/22/16	182	191	66

# BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

This newsletter is a monthly publication of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club. For a full listing of officers and information about BVARC, please go to [www.bvarc.org](http://www.bvarc.org). Detailed information will be published in the newsletter every 3 or 4 months. Similarly, the "Eating Schedule" will be published every 3 or 4 months unless there is a change.

General membership dues are \$25.00 per year, with student dues \$10.00 per year, additional family members \$5.00 per member per year.

Club meetings are normally held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Sugar Land Masonic Lodge, 421 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478. Check the above website for any possible changes.

**BVARC** also administers amateur radio license exams on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 281-701-7602 or see the BVARC website: [www.bvarc.org](http://www.bvarc.org)

Other contacts include:

President., Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, n5vcx@att.net

Newsletter Editor, John Chauvin, K5IZO, k5izo@yahoo.com

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**DECEMBER, 2016**

**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, December 8**



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