



BVARC BEACON



Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club
AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

DECEMBER 2017

VOLUME 41 ISSUE 12



BVARC DECEMBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, December 14th, 2017 7:30pm, 421 Eldridge

It's Homebrew Night at BVARC – bring your project(s) large or small. Describe to BVARC what it is, how it works, and does it work. You might also describe what new things you learned. A group build of the historic QRP rig the NORCAL 40A is also in the works – boards and matched crystals (for the IF filters) will be available at the meeting.

See related articles within this issue of the BEACON, both referring to the 100 Gift Certificate for Gigaparts.



Report on the November General Membership Meeting

Chili Night was a gas! We had many pots of bean and no-bean chili, with all the fixin's. Thanks to Rick and his able assistants for organizing the event and the solicitation for chili pots. Our discussions included the upcoming plans for the Greater Houston Hamfest as well as upcoming contests and holiday events. We also had officer elections! The results are posted deeper in this newsletter



Newsletter mailing problems

The Post Office “did a number” on us and bounced about 80% of the November Newsletters last month. So some of you didn't get your newsletter until very late. No apologies from here: We did exactly as we have done the past 10 years. We believe we know where they screwed up so we are doing a coordinated, traceable mailing this month (December) so we can assess for sure what they did.





The Prez Says

By now everyone is getting over their Thanksgiving dinners and their binge football watching and back to amateur radio. Some of you just finished participating in the CQ World Wide contest and the ARRL Phone Sweepstakes over the last few weekends. I hope everyone that participated did well and had a great time. I am glad the events and contests continue which help keep amateur radio alive.

Speaking of keeping amateur radio alive, BVARC's chili supper is one event that does that very well. Even though the amount of chili brought that night was a little light, I feel no one went home hungry. BVARC's annual chili supper has been a great function for the club over the years and it brings the members together for a good evening of comradery and friendship (I believe there is a little story telling in there as well). Hopefully next year we can bring the BVARC picnic back which was a great function for many years.

We also had the BVARC Board of Directors elections for positions that were open. I want to thank the new members of the board for volunteering their time and their participation in the club. I also want to thank all the current members of the board for their service and hard work over the years for the club. Without their work and participation, the club would soon start to die.

While I am thanking everyone, I would like to thank Rick Hiller, W5RH for organizing the chili supper and managing the elections. Rick has worked tirelessly for the club on many functions from being president to organizing the banquet to doing club presentations. Thank you again Rick for your hard work for BVARC.

Speaking of the banquet, it is just around the corner on January 12th, 2018. I know Rick will be generating an article on the banquet for the newsletter so keep your eyes open for it.

For everyone that has been waiting, Homebrew Night is coming up this month in December. Jon Noxon, KF5TFJ, will be the master of ceremonies for the event so get with Jon if you would like to enter in the event. I know Jon has been planning it for several months and should have it well organized.

Hopefully everyone read my article in last month's newsletter. If you have not, it was a plea for someone to step up and coordinate the Greater Houston Hamfest. Having the Hamfest is really needed in Houston and I had hoped someone would step up and take the reins but no one has. Not one person even called to ask about the position to find out more about it. I even approached to other clubs in the Houston area to join forces to manage it with no avail. It seemed dying cause and it just seemed like stake through the heart of Hamfest, BVARC and amateur radio. It is sad.

After discussing the issue with many club members, I have decided to try and manage the Hamfest myself. This is not the best solution but I feel it is better than not having the Hamfest. I have already applied to ARRL for a sanction Hamfest and they have granted the Greater Houston Hamfest the South Texas Section Convention title. I did not ask for it but since it was granted I will work toward making it happen. I have several people that will be helping so hopefully the event will still happen. There is still a chance that it can be cancelled but that will be determined toward the end of January. So there still is time for someone to step-up. However if not and the Hamfest happens on March 16th and 17th, 2018, complaints are not allowed. If any complaints are heard, I know who will be the Hamfest coordinator for 2019.

73,
N5VCX





Club Elections Held; Results are in!

The following fine lads were elected to terms of office for club governance during the November meeting:

President (2018-2019) Mike Hardwick N5VCX
Recording Secretary (2018-2019) Jon Noxon KF5TFJ
Director 2 Year (2018-2019) Jo Keener KE7NSB
Director 1 Year (2018) Scott Royall W5RUA
Corresponding Secretary (balance of 2017 thru 2018) Keith Stolle KE5ITH

The following continue in office:
Vice President (2017-2018) Mark Janzer K5MGJ
Director 2 Year (2017-2018) Scott Medbury KD5FBA
Treasurer (2017-2018) Donovan Balli KG5BDZ



Left to
Right: Balli, Keener, Noxon, Royall, Hardwick, Janzer, Medbury
Not in photo: Keith Stolle (he had to work that night)
Photo credit: Travis Burgess (<https://www.saatchiart.com/art/Photography-Texas-Hill-Country-Cactus/1038290/3917920/view>)
Not in photo: Keith Stolle (he had to work that night) Photo credit: Travis Burgess
(<https://www.saatchiart.com/art/Photography-Texas-Hill-Country-Cactus/1038290/3917920/view>)





Home Brew/Makers Night in December!

Bring your project to Home Brew/Makers Night on December 14! Maybe you will be taking home this:



This lavish prize awaits the winner of the best project. Awesome!



The Radio Hotel- Life's Standing Wave

By Rick Hiller -- W5RH

I must apologize for the absence of this month's The Radio Hotel. The mis-match of family life, work, health issues and BVARC volunteerism produced a large reflected wave and high SWR due to the torrid confluence produced. I had little time to even think about the column. I usually research and think about a column subject for a few months and then in the last days I bang it out. This time, Patented Antennas did not get finished. Again, my apologies.

So, the January Beacon will have the Patented Antennas column and then I will start a multi-part series on Full Wave Loop Antennas. There is much to report on that subject, as I have been jacking with full-wave loops for about 25 years and have collected a heaping stack of information. Loops are very interesting antennas and can be deployed in multiple configurations in order to suit just what you want to do depending on what your support system is and how big a loop you can make it. So stay tuned, starting February, for The Radio Hotel Sage of the Full Wave Loop.

Lastly, have a great holiday season. Spend some time working on your antenna system, even if it is just to check the connections, solder joints, etc. A bit of maintenance goes a long way to keeping your enjoyment high, the QSO count increasing, the maximum power out and input signal to the receiver clean. Have fun and enjoy your hobby. 73.....Rick – W5RH

Next time.... Patented Antennas (I promise)

*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.*



MINUTES

Board of Directors Meeting Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

November 4, 2017 9:00 AM
Bayland Park Community Center
6400 Bissonnet, Houston, Texas

Board Members Present:

Mike Hardwick N5VCX (President)

Mark Janzer K5MGJ (Vice President)

Jon Noxon KF5TFJ (Rec. & Cors. Secretary)

Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2yr @ Lg Dir)

Jo Keener KE7NSB (2yr @ Lg Dir)

Donovan Balli KG5BDZ (Treasurer)

Non-voting attendees:

Rick Hiller W5RH

Micheal Monsour AC0TX (Quartermaster)

John Chauvin K5IZO (Parliamentarian)

A business quorum was established.

Recorded by Jon Noxon, KF5TFJ Recording Secretary

- 1) Call to Order: The President called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM.
- 2) Establishment of Quorum: A business quorum was established.
- 3) Approval of Agenda: A motion made and seconded to approve the agenda as modified.
- 4) Club President's Opening Statement: The President thanked those present for attending the meeting.
- 5) Emergency Business: None
- 6) Approval of Minutes from Previous BOD Meeting: The Board approved the minutes for the October BoD meeting without dissent.
- 7) Approval of Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was discussed and approved.
- 8) Old Business:
 - 8a. General Membership Meetings scheduled as follows, with topics not listed to be determined:
 - November 9 Chili Supper and Elections. RH to handle elections.
 - December 14 Home Brew/Maker's Night. Hosted by KF5TFJ.
 - January 2018 Awards Banquet to be at Papadeaux's Seafood on Westheimer near Kirkwood, 6:30-9:30 January
 12. Speaker has been selected (JP Prichard-30 years in broadcasting).
 - February 2018 TBD
 - 8b. Still on the burner: Club donations to the Undersea Warfare Center in support of Museum Ships activities was discussed, and included purchase of an automatic remote antenna tuner (to be retained by BVARC for possible use at other Club events), and funding a split a/c unit for the USS Stewart Radio Room. Also, junk teletype donation discussed, possible go to Lexington and needed electrical rework in the Cavalla radio room. In addition, coordination of the "locked in sub" letter to be between the President and Vice President. See item 8c.
 - 8c. Open Item: Status of any actions resulting from August BOD meeting regarding Emergency Business (people locked in sub)
- 9) New Business:
 - 9a. Planning for 2018 Museum Ship's Weekend discussed.
 - 9b. Planning for 2018 ARRL Field Day discussed.
 - 9c. Inventory of club stuff in storage locker; per MM, inventory current on major items. Projector and spool of #14 wire stolen from locker. Determination to be made for any applicable insurance coverage. Discussion conducted about replacement of the projector; seeking donation projector.
 - 9d. Discussion of various clubs' participating in next year's Field Day. Pecan Grove Fire Station probable location again. Possible new location (Duchek Park) being investigated.
- 10) Next BOD meeting dates:
 - December 9 and January 6, 2018
- 11) Comments: Nothing of substance
- 12) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 AM.

Ham radio operators are saving Puerto Rico one transmission at a time

By Paul P. Murphy and Michelle Krupa, CNN

Reprinted from CNN website September 27, 2017

Submitted by Mike Hardwick, N5VCX.

(CNN) The phone call from the Red Cross came in late Friday night, just as the full scale of Hurricane Maria's calamity began taking shape. "We need 50 of your best radio operators to go down to Puerto Rico."

In the days after the worst storm in three generations hit the American island -- and for many more to come -- public electrical, land-line and cellular communication systems showed few signs of life. And radio networks used routinely by police officers, power company workers and other first responder still were down. Yet, a key mode of communication -- one not reliant on infrastructure vulnerable to strong winds and flooding -- still crackled: the "ham" radio.

Answering the phone that night in Connecticut was the emergency manager for the American Radio Relay League, the group's CEO said. For more than a century, this group has served as a hub for amateurs licensed to operate the dependable, if archaic, medium known as ham radio and eager to pitch in when disaster strikes. When the Red Cross made its latest appeal for heroes, these were the people it had in mind.

Jumping to respond to disaster

Already gearing up on his own that night to go to work, turning knobs and flipping switches, was Oscar Resto. As one of dozens of hams -- shorthand for "amateur" -- operators across Puerto Rico, Resto had been authorized by the Federal Communications Commission to use radios, computers, satellites or the Internet to assist and support public safety during emergencies.

Often untethered from wires and cables, operators share information by voice, Morse code and other methods on a wide range of frequencies above the AM broadcast band. Such communications were critical during rescue operations after the 9/11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina.



Oscar Resto works with another volunteer to pass along information at the Red Cross headquarters in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

For three days after Maria hit, Resto sawed through the downed trees that separated his home from the road, he told CNN. Then he packed his car with radio gear, left his family and made the 25-mile journey to a makeshift Red Cross headquarters, where generators and batteries could power his equipment. "I have the responsibility to establish the required emergency communications that the American Red Cross needed for understanding the needs of the citizens impacted by the hurricane," said Resto, a section manager for the American Radio Relay League, which boasts 160,000 members.

Survivors needed food, water, shelter and fuel to power generators after Maria knocked out the entire electrical grid. They also needed to communicate, to share critical information about diabetics nearing the end of their insulin reserves, babies threatened by dehydration, families rationing crackers. Transmitting radio signals to other ham operators in the Caribbean, Resto and his shortwave brethren traded National Hurricane Center reports on Maria's position. He also contacted a ham operator in Florida, and asked "just to tell my daughter, Astrid, that we were fine," he recalled.

Before long, Resto and his compatriots realized their messages were the only ones getting off the island. In an instant, their mission expanded: Anyone with the requisite skills and equipment was conscripted.

Shoulder to shoulder with first responders

Two ham volunteers, Raul Gonzalez and Jose Santiago, set up a radio control hub run by generator power in Monacillo, near San Juan, and other centers quickly followed suit. There, ham operators work shoulder to shoulder with public safety and utility officials to transmit information to other ham operators working with teams in the field.

A full week after Maria battered their homes, Resto and two dozen other Puerto Rican ham operators were still running radio operations for the police and the local power company, whose own wireless communications systems rely in part on computers and power sources knocked out by the storm. For instance, ham operators riding with police use radios tuned to the special broadcast frequencies to transmit calls to other ham operators hunkered down at the command centers with officers, who in turn respond with orders.

A power company generator low on fuel? A ham operator from Resto's team deployed with the power company calls his counterpart at the command center and coordinates a fuel delivery.



Raul Gonzalez and Jose Santiago work to maintain the communication infrastructure they set up between ham radio operators in the Monacillo Control Center.

For his part, Resto learned Tuesday via a ham radio at the command center that an unsanitary hospital in western Puerto Rico was transferring patients to another hospital. It was just one of countless threads of information squawked across the operational frequencies in a massive effort to deliver relief and supplies.

"I am very proud of them," Resto said of his crew of amateurs. "They are the real heroes."

More help on the way

Less than 48 hours after the American Radio Relay League's emergency manager fielded the Red Cross' call, 350 ham operators had offered to help, said Tom Gallagher, the group's CEO. Fifty of them prepared this week to embark upon a three-week deployment to Puerto Rico. They include retired executives and public safety officers, and hail from places from Washington to Texas to New Hampshire, he said.

"It's an incredibly personal sacrifice from individuals who are dedicated to serving communities," Gallagher said. "They have the skills and the motivation and the sense of responsibility." Volunteers will be outfitted with self-sustaining kits provided by radio manufacturers and dealer partners so they can be agile and won't burden those they're trying to help, he said.

Southwest Airlines was due to transport the equipment for free Wednesday from the group's New York headquarters to Atlanta, where volunteers planned to convene Thursday to board a chartered JetBlue flight for San Juan, Gallagher said. There, they plan to connect with the Red Cross and likely spread out across Puerto Rico to continue the life-saving work of radio operators already well underway, Gallagher said.

"It's the first time they've asked us to do this on this scale," he said. "This is why we're here."

Reprinted from CNN website September 27, 2017



BVARC Monday Night Public Service Net Updates

As this goes to press, this information is not available. Look for a double-up article next month.



BVARC Historical Vignettes

As this goes to press, this information is not available. Look for a double-up article next month.



Annual Awards Banquet – January 12, 2018

It is all set! Mark Friday, 1/12/18 on your calendar for the BVARC Annual Awards Banquet. The venue will be **Pappadeaux's Seafood Kitchen** 12109 Westheimer (1/2 mile west of Kirkwood).

We have chosen a menu of a starter salad with 4 entre's – Shrimp Brochette, Chicken Breast, Atlantic Salmon and a Sampler Platter (of shrimp, tilapia, crawfish with chicken tenderloins). Dessert is coffee with Vanilla Cheesecake or Crème Brulee.

Plus, the entertainment for the evening, besides the awards and the annual slide show will be our own **K5JPP, J.P. Prichard**, talking about his career in radio broadcasting. J.P. says there are quite a few anecdotes to let us in on. You'll not want to miss this one.

We are limited to 70 people, which should handle the normal BVARC crowd. Tickets are on sale on the BVARC web site. See the link on the Home page. **\$30 per person for your dinner.** Special BVARC "drinks menu" purchases will go towards the restaurant's minimum \$'s requirement. Don't worry, a full bar menu will be accessible outside of the BVARC specials.

Should you have any questions:

Please, give me a call at **832-474-3713** or send me an e-mail at **rickhiller73@gmail.com**



Hamfests

(typically within 200 miles of Houston)

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

01/13/2018 | San Antonio Radio Fiesta 2018

Location: Schertz, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: San Antonio Radio Club

Website: <http://w5sc.org>

02/24/2018 | Orange (Texas) Hamfest 2018

Location: Orange, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Orange ARC & Jefferson County ARC

Website: http://www.qsl.net/w5nd/index_files/HAMFEST%20INFO/hamfest%20info.htm

Learn More

03/16-17/2018 | South Texas Section Convention (Greater Houston Hamfest)

Location: Rosenberg, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://houstonhamfest.org/>



BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

11/01/17, K5LKJ (NCS), KF5TFJ, W5TKZ, WW5PA (M)(Kerrville), W5VOM, W5TOM, K5LJ, KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton), W5RH, AF5XL. (10 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 74, SN = 11, A = 3, K = 1

11/08/17, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, W5TOM, KF5OXF (Needville), W5RH, K5IZO/5 (P)(Jasper), KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton), KF5ONT, KD5O, WW5PA, AF5XL, W5VOM.
(14 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 68, SN = 0, A = 36, K = 5

11/15/17, K5LJ (NCS), K5JPP, W5RH, W5TOM, AA0ST (T)(Dickinson), KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton), W5TKZ, K5LJ, AF5XL, WW5PA (M)(Rosenberg, WIBG (Katy).
(11 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 74, SN = 14, A = 14, K = 3

11/22/17, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, W5TOM, K5LJ, KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton), W5HWZ/5 (RCS) Hugo, CO. (7 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 74, SN = 0, A = 12, K = 3

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

Net conditions have been Fair this month. Stay Active.
Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening.
Regards.
John K5LKJ



"I coulda been a contender!"
Submitted by KF5TFJ, Jon Noxon

Surely one of the most famous lines in the movies, but will YOU be uttering the same phrase at the close of December's BVARC general membership meeting, all because you did not exhibit? The December meeting is Home Brew/Makers Night, with a \$100.00 Gigaparts Gift Certificate at stake, and the more "contenders" we have the more fun we will have. You still have time to 'train' for the 'bout', held later in December on the 14th this year (second Thursday of the month). AC, DC, AM or FM (or anything else) bring it to the meeting. Not only will you be a 'contender', you may be crowned this year's champ.

Hint: Terry Malloy ([Marlon Brando](#)) [On the Waterfront](#) 1954



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

This newsletter, the **BVARC BEACON**, 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. Detailed information will be published in the BEACON 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 2nd 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 amateur radio testing is being reorganized. Check upcoming newsletters or the BVARC website for developments.

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

Other contacts include:

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

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

Newsletter Printing, Assembly and Mailing: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, k5cam@arrl.net ;

Jo L. Keener, KE7NSB, jolkeener25@gmail.com ; Keith Stolle, KE5ITH, keith@ke5ith.com

NOTE: Officers, advertising and eating schedule are on the website. They will only be published in the Newsletter every few months.

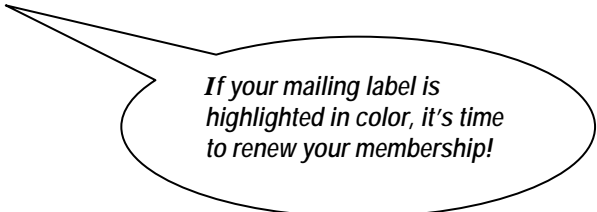
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**BRAZOS VALLEY
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SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997
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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

BVARC General Membership Meeting – Thursday, December 14



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