



# BVARC BEACON



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

JANUARY 2021

VOLUME 45 ISSUE 1

## BVARC JANUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

For Thursday, January 14th, 2020 there will be an online ZOOM meeting. Presentation will tentatively be Mark Janzer – K5MGJ – Galveston Naval Museum – Museum Ships.

Zoom invite details will be posted pre-meeting. We won't be having IN PERSON meetings for at least another few months (the Sugarland facility is still closed). Club Business meetings will continue to be held over ZOOM.



## Ham-Com (Plano, TX) closed permanently

From the HamCom website:

After 41 years, **Ham-Com** has decided to close its doors in lieu of the restrictions in place for COVID-19 and the rising costs of putting on a show. The decision was not made lightly, but the safety and wellness of our volunteers, vendors, clubs, presenters, and attendees is our paramount concern.

Editor's Note: This was apparently the 5<sup>th</sup> largest Hamfest in the nation and the largest in TX and possibly the SW.



## BVARC Annual Awards Banquet Cancelled

I had hoped it would be possible to hold the Annual Awards Banquet this year but problems with the COVID-19 virus continues to get worse. It was wishful thinking that the infection rate would decrease but as everyone can tell from the news, that has not happened. So, unfortunately the BVARC Annual Awards Banquet will not be held on January 15<sup>th</sup>. Instead, there will be a ZOOM awards program sometime in February. The information will be posted in newsletter, web site and posted on the weekly e-mail blast.

Hopefully with the introduction of the COVID vaccine, the "new normal" will slowly disappear on the first part of 2021.



## The Prez Says

A new year is just a few days away and it cannot start soon enough. With the COVID virus, hurricanes, politics and the "new normal" everyone has had a challenge on just making it to the next day. With the new year, BVARC starts a new chapter as well. The club will be coming up on its 44<sup>th</sup> birthday in the coming and it has taken a lot to get there.

Since joining the club in the early 90's, the club has had so many changes. With membership ranging from 25 to 300 to 80 and now back to 250, the numbers make the stock exchange tame. The club has also had testing sessions in the past that would have 30 to 40 people tested each month (I was one of those in 1991). BVARC has had so many functions from picnics to RV campouts to roving HF stations to VHF phone patches from La Grange to Houston. So, to bring the club into the new year, I would like to start a few new activities:

1. A membership drive would help the club increase in numbers as well as keep our current members. We need new members with fresh new ideas and energy. As we had in the past (and once COVID rules are relaxed), a new member meeting night should be started. We can start with a ZOOM meeting in the near future and change a regular meeting when possible.
2. We now have a monthly training session available at Bayland Community Center. Contact Mark Janzer for more information. This is open to anyone whether a club member or not.
3. The BVARC picnic needs to be started again. What more can you say to that!
4. When COVID rules are relaxed, we should start having more intra-club meetings. We had, in the past, a meeting swap with TDXS and this needs to be restored along with meetings with other clubs. Also, more road trips are needed (when possible) for a general meeting. Maybe a trip to Mission control at NASA would be attractive.

If you have not heard, both the BVARC banquet and the Greater Houston HamFest have been cancelled. With the infection rate on the rise for COVID-19, the board cannot, in good conscious hold an event where someone might get affected. Keep your fingers crossed that we will be back to normal in 2022.

As I have mentioned, the club needs to look toward the future. The club still needs to bring in younger members to make the club survive. We do not want the club to end up like it was 20 years ago with only about 20 active members (the club had 85 members at that time but there were only 20 active ones). So, reach out in your neighborhoods, schools, churches and see who might be interested in becoming a ham. You might be surprised.

If you have ideas for programs for the general meetings, contact the BVARC BOD. I know everyone would be glad to have fresh ideas for the club's programs and activities.

73,  
N5VCX



### December VE - FCC TESTING SESSIONS RESULTS

Bayland Community Center is open, though they still have a restricted headcount, limiting the number of people in the test room. For Saturday, December 5th, we had 5 candidates and conducted 9 tests.

#### New Licensees:

Rahman S. (**General**)

Drew V. (Technician)

Elliott W. (Technician)

Faust J. (Technician)

Freeman Z. (Technician)

Congratulations to all!

A GREAT, **GREAT** thank you to the VEs in attendance – K5GOL, W5JAZ, and K5LJ.

The next BVARC test session is Saturday January 9<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30am.

Examination sessions are held each month, usually on the same day as the Saturday BVARC Board meeting.

These sessions are at the Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St., Houston TX 77074

Details for candidates are found at [www.bvarc.org/home/amateur-license/](http://www.bvarc.org/home/amateur-license/)

Call/Text Mark Janzer, K5MGJ at (832) 875-0526 or eMail: ([k5mgj@yahoo.com](mailto:k5mgj@yahoo.com)) to pre-register

# **The Radio Hotel** A Brief Look, Way Back, in Amateur Radio

by Rick Hiller - W5RH

If you are new to the hobby, this Radio Hotel is targeted to you. You might know, intimately, microprocessors, operating systems, networking, applications, html, and all of the other wonderful portions of the current computer technology. And now being a ham, you are having a great time interfacing and playing with computers and radio. But, please, take some time this year and read about the history of ham radio.

The computer world had, and has, technology leaders like Kilby, Hoff, Cerf, Kahn, Roberts, Berners-Lee, Tomlinson, Gates and many more, as the developers of the IC, microprocessors, multi-network packet switching technology, ARPANET, OS's, etc. Plus, we've seen the merger of these developments into the current worldwide network architectures and applications. Ham radio also has its' list of technology leaders: Maxim, Godley, Grammer, Goodman, DeMaw, McCoy, Meyerson, Schwartz, Burdick, Youngblood and many others.

I recently reread the May 2020 QST editorial by Steve Ford, WB8IMY, editor of QST magazine. In it he commented on the fragmentation of the current and future times of Ham Radio, especially in reference to the publications. In a survey taken amongst a wide swath of licensees they found that younger hams could not relate to the "tradition oriented tone of QST", nor could they understand the technical articles presented. They didn't like the ham history or the vintage radio topics presented. SK listings were not at the top of their list either.

I realize that everyone is not interested in history, but if you love the hobby of Amateur Radio it is best, IMHO, to know from whence we came. Know that at one point we were nothing and almost lost our privilege to exist and our frequencies taken away. One man was mainly responsible for saving ham radio: Hiram Percy Maxim. This cat was a genius of many hats-- autos, guns, movies etc. but his work in lobbying the Washington pointed heads at that time was a blessing for which we hams should all be thankful.

Ham Radio started in the "teens" of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a de facto service, by relaying messages around the country. 10 to 50 to 100 miles maximum -- relay point to relay point. That is the way this "traffic" traveled. That is all radio could do at the time with the frequencies in use and the equipment that was built from scratch. There was not a DX Engineering store or even a Radio Shack in every town. To generate the spark gap produced modulation, there was an ignition coil from a Ford Model A in the barn and "iron wire" for the antenna purchased at the local feed store. But as higher frequencies were experimented with and radio technology improved (all thanks to the Radio Amateurs with an initiative to make their stations better) distances got longer.

Knowing ham radio history will provide you with a firm foundation on which to build and enjoy your newly found hobby. Keep in mind that the physics of electronics and radio has not changed. It is only the practical applications, implementations and the materials that we use that have changed. Combining the classic physics with the ever changing contemporary, physical tools allows us to move forward in the continual development of the hobby and the electronic world that surrounds us.

I can suggest a few books that I have read for your delve back into distant ham radio history: [200 Meters and Down](#) by Clinton Desoto, [Hiram Percy Maxim](#) by Alice Schumacher, [Hello World](#) by D. Gregory and P. Sahre and, finally, [Syntony and Spark](#) by Hugh Aitken. Also, [The Radio Hotel](#) columns in March, April and May 2016 of the BVARC newsletter document the origin and a few years of the initial history of antennas. More on this topic can be found on the BVARC.org/techpages under the title of [A Brief Look, Way Back, in Amateur Radio](#).

Enjoy your hobby.....73, W5RH

## Cutting Through the Static



Of course, ham radio is a public service and electronics hobby, and it also provides an opportunity to be around like-minded people who enjoy fellowship and friendship.

That's really the theme of this, my first column of the year for the BVARC Beacon. I really do enjoy studying and dealing with the technology of amateur radio, but friendship is one of the reasons I love this hobby so much. My life has been immeasurably enriched by my associations with fellow hams.

Like a lot of men, I've spent most of my life focused on career. There's not been a lot of time for actual friendships. But now, even though I still work at a job, I have new priorities. I probably could have done it long ago, but I wasn't open to it until I reached the age at which my father died.

He passed over at age 65, and his father died at that age as well, so I had always wondered if I would be different.

When I got through my 65<sup>th</sup> year and I was still alive, well, I not only said a prayer of gratitude, but I also became aware of a shadowy figure that I know is always lurking just behind me. There's nothing like an awareness of your mortality to help you adjust your priorities.

It sounds kind of morbid, but I like to read obituaries. I think there's a lot to be learned there. Where were the deceased person's priorities, when he or she was among the breathing?

There's a famous story about Alfred Nobel, a man well known as the inventor of dynamite. Seems he sat down for breakfast over a newspaper one morning and read with great surprise that he had died.

The Stockholm newspaper had accidentally published his obituary before Nobel had actually crossed the "great divide." And worse still, he felt the article made him seem like a force of evil, describing his great financial success through his most famous invention, which by then was facilitating a new kind of warfare that surpassed even the great misery of old style mayhem.

He vowed that day to make sure his second obituary, after he had really died, would tell the story of a man who used his great resources to celebrate and encourage positive contributions to the world. And with that, the Nobel Prizes were born, handed out every year on the world stage.

So, I ask, what will my obituary say about me? At age 72, I've become well aware of my inevitable encounter with the "lurker," the dark figure who's always nearby. As a common man, I don't think there'll be much of an obituary, but I hope I will be thought of as a kind and generous person. So that's my ongoing goal, year-to-blessed-year of life. And at the risk of sounding sappy, that's my very simple resolution for 2021 – a vow to keep trying to be a kind and helpful person during each new day. I know from experience, it's not always as easy or simple as it sounds

# The Feed Point

## BVARC Members - How We Got Here

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

Amateur radio started out for me when I was around six years old. My father, who had an interest in electronics and ham radio, took me to a friend's house in Kingsville, Texas, so I could see something new. When I walked into a room in the house, there was a huge cabinet off to one side with lights and meters. I did not understand anything around me then (in some cases, I still don't, but that is another story) but the friend started talking into a microphone. After a few moments, the friend started to talk to someone who said he was in Dallas. Then my father's friend asked me if I wanted to say, "hi" to his friend in Dallas. Now up to this point in life, any communications over a distance was by telephone and to relatives. This was something new talking to someone that I didn't know through something I didn't understand. I finally got the nerve up to say hi, tell this person my age and where I went to school. This was really a strange feeling talking to someone, hundreds of miles away like they were next to me and with no time limit, like on the telephone. This started my brain cells moving into a new direction.

A few years later, I ended going down a similar road, like that of another member of BVARC (Hello Rick), with Dick Tracy Walkie-Talkies and a Knight Kit Ocean Hopper receiver. With the Ocean Hopper, I remember listening in the late 60's to an AM NET, that I believe was the 7290 kHz. I heard stations all over South Texas, and this really gave me the ham radio bug.

Finally, in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I crossed over to the "dark side" (Hi Ron). My science teacher invited a ham to school to demonstrate and operate his radio. He set it up on the outdoor basketball court using two, 40-foot sprinkler pipes up through the hoops, supporting a dipole antenna. The antenna was attached to a Heathkit SB101 that he had built. The ham, Lynn Bailey, K5AVJ or "Awful Vicious Jackrabbit" was an EE student at Texas A&I University and had done this a few times for the science teacher before. The demonstration really kicked the brain cells into gear. It was not long before I Lynn helped me get my Novice license – WN5ZPV.

Lynn administered my novice test, and I was off running. It was not long before I ended up with a fairly nice novice station – Heathkit DX40 transmitter and HR10B receiver with 20-feet of tower, a Hornet TB-500 tri-bander, AR-20 rotor, boxes of electronic goodies and magazines galore. For a fourteen-year-old boy it was a gold mine that I was able to get for only \$50. Boy, have times changed!

For the next two years I made contacts on the east coast and in central America. I built my first power supply to operate the T/R switch as well as field strength meters and dipole antennas while working on my code and prep for my general. Since the DX40 was crystal controlled, I also learned how to modify crystals by changing their frequency with either pencil lead or Bon-Ami powder. However, as a Novice, staying in band was always a concern. I had a great way of checking frequency though; I simply called the FCC monitoring station that was only three miles from my house, and they checked my signal. I definitely had to stay on the up-and-up, but I really enjoyed it. I even ended with another Elmer who worked at the FCC station, so those two years were a great experience.

Unfortunately, the two years ended too soon, and the ham radio equipment was shut down. Due to family and life issues, I abandoned ham radio completely. It took twenty years to the day before I got back into the hobby.

I tried a few times to get back into ham radio, but it was 1991 before I finally was licensed again. After almost three hours of studying and taking my test with a large ham club in SW Houston called Brazos Valley ARC, I ended up as N5VCX. I joined the club in 1992 and have been active ever since.

I have been the club's special events coordinator, on the Board of Directors, Vice President, President, Ham Fest Coordinator, Field Day coordinator and the best PITA the club has ever had. I have also been involved in many special events serving as communications coordinator for the BP MS150, the Marathon Warm-up Series, various other bike rides and many other special events in the greater Houston area. I have also coordinated communications for events in Montana and California for the Junior Diabetes Research Foundation.

I am now working on my ?? year as president of the club and looking forward to starting monthly training classes as well as intra-club coordination and meetings. Hopefully, the future of amateur radio will not be damaged too badly by the COVID virus, and the hobby will continue to grow.

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club**  
December 5, 2020 9:00 AM - Via Videoconference

Members Present:

Mike Hardwick N5VCX (President)	JP Pritchard K5JPP (1 yr at large director)
Mark Janzer K5MGJ (Vice President)	Jeff Greer W5JEF (Cor. Secretary)
David Ely N5EKW (Treasurer)	Mark McGrath
Michael Monsour AC0TX (Quartermaster)	Chris Luppens KG5BBF
Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2 yr at large director)	Sheree KF5LMJ
Rick Hiller W5RH (2 year at large director)	

Recorded by Jeff Greer W5JEF Corresponding Secretary

1. Call to Order: The President called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM
2. Establishment of a Quorum: A business quorum was established, with 7 Board members present.
3. Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved.
4. Club President's Opening Statement: The President thanked those in attendance for taking the time to join the meeting.
5. Emergency Business: None.
6. Approval of Treasurer's Report: Approved.
7. Corresponding Secretary: CS gave the CS report.
8. Old Business:
  - Warehouse move planned; we can be there until last week of Dec; if we're still there, we can renew for 2 more months.
  - Rick W5RH to speak at virtual hamfest in March.
  - Upcoming general membership meetings:
    - i. December: Mark Janzer is organizing a program on finding Amelia Earhart.
    - ii. January: Reserving space at Bayland for a banquet; trying to organize a meeting with Centerpoint, but that may happen in February.
    - iii. Feb: Allen/TDXS with Scott M
      - Museum Ships – best to come on a weekday; working on getting Stewart's original call sign
9. New Business:
  - FCC comment period for fees has passed.
  - Hamfest cancellation information was posted.
  - No decision yet on Field Day 2021.
10. Cost Saving Measures:
11. Next BoD Meeting Date: January 9, 2021
12. Comments:
13. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:54 AM



**To all BEACON article authors:**

In the past, there was a request to limit the length of the articles as submitted and if the article needed to be longer, that the full featured article can be put on the website and have an overview published in the BEACON. Be advised that we need to limit the length of the BEACON to 12 pages in order to not incur additional postage. Accordingly, currently the Editor reluctantly must periodically take such actions as reformatting some articles, changing font size, and even delay publishing an occasional article. The Editor tries to retain the "flavor" of the article as submitted, and thus deliberately does not change the author's font size, type style or appearance unless unavoidable.

Accordingly, henceforth, to accommodate longer articles, we need to implement the following policy:

1. Limit the article as printed in the BEACON to 1-1/2 pages, with shorter preferred.
2. If the author wants the article to be longer than 1-1/2 pages, then the BEACON article should include a placeholder for a link to the full featured article as uploaded to the Website.
3. Both articles should be submitted to the Editor and the Editor will work with Eddie Runner to get the full article on the website and put the link as then determined into the BEACON summary article.
4. On occasion, if space permits, the Editor, at his discretion, might publish the full article in the BEACON. In this event, if the author actually wants the article on the Tech Page of the Website, that can be done as a separate action.

We trust that you understand the necessity of this and will cooperate accordingly.

## Who is BVARC

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio club just passed its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an Affiliated Club with the American Radio Relay League. In 2017 we celebrated the club's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday since it was started. The club has gone through many changes and problems over the last 43 years of existence (I know the numbers don't match to the newsletter but that is another problem for another day), but we are still surviving. Even with COVID-19, the club has continued to grow.

For a club that started with only 25 members, we have grown to just over 250 members. The club was over 300 in the early 90's but then dropped to 80 by 2000. It has taken twenty years to build it back to where we are today.

Being the largest amateur radio club in Houston does take work and it takes its members to do it. Just to give everyone an idea of how many people it takes to run the club, I put together a list of members that work to keep the club going. I know I will be missing members that help and I apologize. Hopefully, I manager to cover the bulk of everyone involved.

### 2021 Officers

President – Mike Hardwick, N5VCX      Vice President – Jimmy Vance, NA5D      Treasurer – Dave Ely, N5EKW  
Recording Secretary – Mark McGrath, N5VCM      Corresponding Secretary – Jeff Greer, W5JEF

### 2021 Directors

1 Year – Sheree Horton, KF5LMJ      2 Year – Scott Medbury, KD5FBA      2 Year – Rick Hiller, W5RH

### Officers (Appointed)

Parliamentarian – John Chauvin, K5IZO      Quartermaster – Michael Monsour, AC0TX

### Club Support (Appointed, Volunteered, Drafted, Shanghaied)

HF NET Coordinator – John Whiteman, K5LKJ

VHF NET Coordinator – Rick Hiller, W5RH

VHF Traffic Net Coordinator – Dan Villalanti, K55V

(I apologize for not listing the various NET Controls. They will be listed in an upcoming article in the newsletter!)

### Newsletter

Editor – John Chauvin, K5IZO      Production – Daphne Rawlinson, K5VQY; J P Pritchard, K5JPP; Ester Pritchard  
Contributors – Rick Hiller, W5RH; Ron Litt, K5HM; JP Pritchard, K5JPP; John Whiteman, K5LKJ; Mark Janzer, K5MGJ;  
Dave Ely, N5EKW; Allen Mattis, N5AFV; And Many Others!

### Web Master & Web Site Entry

Web Master - Eddie Runner, NU5K

Entry – Jeff Greer, W5JEF

### Testing and Training

VE and Club Trainer - Mark Janzer, K5MGJ; and too many VE's to list here. Stay tuned for a Testing and Training article

### General Meeting Food Coordinator

Daphne Rawlinson, K5VQY

Kelli Medbury, KG5QJE

### Banquet

Coordinator - Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

Programs – Rick Hiller, W5RH; Ron Litt, K5HM

### Field Day

Coordinator – Open for 2021

Antennas - Bill Cordell, W5VOM

Food – Daphne Rawlinson, K5VQY

### Greater Houston HamFest

Coordinator – Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

Assistant – Jimmy Vance, NA5D

Commercial Sales – Eddie Runner, NU5K

Programs – Ron Litt, K5HM

Raffle – Suzanne Runner, KF5GWZ

Ticket Booth – Daphne Rawlinson K5VQY

Testing – Mark Janzer, K5MGJ

Security - Rick Hiller, W5RH

Signage – Rick Hiller, W5RH

As you can see, many members are doing double, triple or even quadruple duty. For a club with over 250 members, this is unfortunate. I would love for more people to volunteer their time so others can step back and enjoy the club and ham radio. If you haven't noticed this is plea for volunteers. More people are needed to help the club in its day-to-day functions. We are needing more people for the monthly newsletter production. The time required varies but is normally 6 to 7 hours a month. Give me a shout if you would like to help. Hopefully, this helps everyone see that it takes a lot of people to keep the club going. With the problems of COVID, it has hurt the club some, but I believe we can continue and once the barriers are released, the club will jump back to normal very quickly. If you can make the time, think about helping the club. Remember the club needs your support and is here for your benefit.

Where is the world is . . .

## The French Southern and Antarctic Lands - Terres australes et antarctiques françaises (FT)



In part 1, previous month we showed the readers only half of what the TAFF department of France has to administer. TAFF is not only responsible for the French Scattered Islands in the northern Indian oceans but another part of the world as well,

People who live in these lands are part of French Overseas Territory and are French Citizens. Last month, we covered the Scattered Islands, located in the Northern Indian Ocean where the climate is decidedly tropical. In the Southern and Antarctic lands, the climate is well, Antarctic.



These lands include Adélie Land, Crozet Islands, Kerguelen Islands, Saint Paul and Amsterdam Islands. The population of these islands varies Approximately 150 (in the winter) to 310 (in the summer). Persons live in the French Southern and Antarctic Lands, they are military personnel, officials, scientific researchers and support staff. The territory has legally no permanent civilian population.

Adélie Land (IOTA AN-017) sits squarely on the Antarctic continent and named by the French explorer Jules Dumont d'Urville after his wife. It is claimed by France and stretches from a portion of the Southern Ocean coastline all the way inland to the South Pole. France has administered it since 1955 and followed the Antarctic Treaty System rules since 1961. France has had a permanent station in Adélie Land since April 9, 1950. The current Dumont d'Urville Station has a winter population around 25, but this goes up to about 78 during the Antarctic summer.



Figure 1 Discovery of Adélie Land in 1870

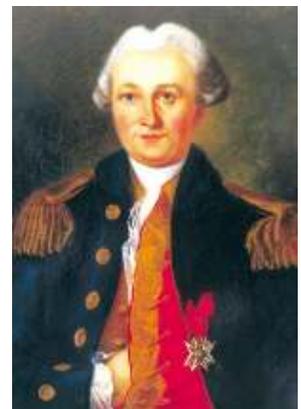


Figure 2 Penguins and Elephant seals on Crozet.

Crozet Islands (IOTA AF-008 FT#W) The **Crozet Islands** are a subantarctic archipelago of small islands in the Southern Indian Ocean. It is generally uninhabited. They were discovered in 1772 by French explorers. The archipelago was named for the second in command Jules Crozet.

In the early 19th century, the islands were often visited by sealers, and the seals had been nearly exterminated by 1835. Vessels also visited the island for whaling was the main activity around the islands. Such exploitation was short-lived, and the islands were rarely visited for the rest of the century. There were many shipwrecks on the Crozet Islands. For some time, the Royal Navy dispatched a ship every few years to look for stranded survivors. Crozet is listed as number 3 on the Clublog DXCC Most wanted list

Kerguelen Islands (IOTA AF-048 FT#X) The **Kerguelen Islands** also known as the Desolation Islands (Îles de la Désolation in French), are a group of islands in the Antarctic. The Kerguelen **Islands** are located 2,051 miles away from any sort of civilization. There are no native inhabitants of the **island**, but as part of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands it is permanently occupied by 50 to 100 French scientists, engineers, and researchers at any given time of the year. The climate is subantarctic, which means cold. It was discovered in 1772 by a French expedition commanded by the guy at right, Yves-Joseph de Kerguelen-Trémarec. Soon after its discovery, the archipelago was regularly visited by whalers and sealers (mostly British, American, and Norwegian) who hunted the resident populations of whales and seals to the point of near extinction, including fur seals in the 18th century and elephant seals in the 19th century. The sealing era lasted from 1781 to 1922 during which time 284 sealing visits are recorded, nine of which ended when the vessel was wrecked. Kerguelen ranks tenth on the DXCC Most wanted list



Amsterdam and St Paul Islands (IOTA AF-002, FT#Z) **Amsterdam Island** in the southern [Indian Ocean](#) that together with neighboring Saint Paul 49 nautical miles away to the south. The islands of Île Amsterdam and Île Saint-Paul were first claimed by Martin Dupeyrat for France in 1843 and took formal control only in October 1892.

In January 1871, an attempt to settle the island was made by a party led by a party French. After seven months, their attempts to raise cattle and grow crops were fruitless and abandoned the cattle on the island



From 1987–98, there were frequent amateur radio operations from Amsterdam Island. There was a resident radio amateur operator in the 1950s, using callsign FB8ZZ.

In January 2014 Club Log listed Amsterdam and St Paul Islands as the seventh most-wanted DXCC entity. On 25 January 2014 a [DX-pedition](#) landed on Amsterdam Island using MV *Braveheart* and began amateur radio operations from two separate locations using callsign FT5ZM. The DX-pedition remained active until 12 February and achieved over 170,000

two-way contacts with amateur radio stations worldwide.

I was fortunate to be among those who made several confirmed contacts with FT5ZM during that time in 2014. Today, Amsterdam and St Paul rank 47<sup>th</sup> on the DXCC Most wanted list

## Reporting from the Dark Side

Ron, K5HM



## BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

10/28/20, K5LKJ(NCS), K5JPP, AB5RJ (Cypress), WIBG (Katy), K2MPP, K5LJ, W5TKZ, K5TNL (Spring), W5ALW, KI5HCK (League City), K5APB (Linden, LA), KF5ONT, W5VOM, W5DRB (Brazoria), K5IZO, KL7AX (Katy), KG5NLQ (Clinton, LA), WW5PA, (18 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 87, SN = 22, A = 11, K = 3 / Band Rpt: Good

11/04/20, K5LKJ, (NCS), K2MPP, WB4KTF (Austin), W5TKZ, WW5PA, W5RH, W5VOM, W5ALW, KE4DRF, K5JPP, WA5ANF (T), WD5L (T), W5THC (14 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 89, SN = 15, A = 3, K = 1 / Band Rpt: Good

11/11/20, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, KI5HC (League City), K5PGF, W5TOM, K2MPP, W5VOM, KE4DRF, K5JPP, WW5PA, W5THC, K5LJ, W5ALW, KC5VEC, KG5WDF, W5RH, K5EQ, WA5ANF (T), W5DRB (Brazoria), KG5LJZ (T), K5HEC. (21 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 86, SN = 27, A = 4, K = 1 / Band Rpt: Good

11/18/20, K5LKJ (NCS), K2MPP, W5TOM, K5JPP, W5TKZ, K5LJ, AB5RJ (Cypress), W5VOM, K5IZO, W5RH, WA5ANF (T), W5ALW, K5PGF, WW5PA, WB4KTF (Austin), KG5WDF, NT5SM. (17 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 78, SN = 11, A = 4, K = 1 / Band Rpt: Fair

12/02/20, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, W5TOM, K2MPP, K5LJ, W5RH, K5JPP, KI5HOC, WA5ANF (T), K5PGF, NT5SM, KG5WDF, WW5PA. (13 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 106, SN = 46, A = 2, K = 0 / Band Rpt: Good

12/09/20, K5LKJ (NCS), K2MPP, WW5PA, W5VOM, W5ALW, KI5HOC, K5LJ, KG5WDF, W5JEF, KF5PHA, KF5EYX. (12 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 82, SN = 11, A = 4, K = 0 / Band Rpt: Good

12/16/20, K5LKJ (NCS), N5VCX, WW5PA, KF5ONT, W5TOM, W5TKZ, W5ALW, KI5HOC, KC5VEC, K5LJ, W5VOM, K5PGF, W5RH, W5JEF, WD5L (T). (15 Check-Ins) / Band Rpt: Good. Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 83, SN = 25, A = 3, K = 0

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

Net conditions have been fair to good this month. Fire up the rig and hear what others are doing and share your own experiences. Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening. Regards. John K5LKJ

## 2021 Officers:

President (2020-2021)  
Michael Hardwick, N5VCX  
[n5vcx@att.net](mailto:n5vcx@att.net)

Vice President (2021-2022)  
Jimmy Vance, NA5D

Recording Secretary (2020-2021)  
Mark McGrath -- N5VCM  
[mark@mcgrath-co.com](mailto:mark@mcgrath-co.com)

Corresponding Secretary (2019-2020)  
Jeff Greer, W5JEF  
[greerjw@hotmail.com](mailto:greerjw@hotmail.com)

Treasurer (2021-2022)  
David Ely, N5EKW  
[Davidely@prodigy.net](mailto:Davidely@prodigy.net)

2 Year At-Large Board Member A: (2020-2021)  
Rick Hiller, W5RH  
[Rickhiller73@gmail.com](mailto:Rickhiller73@gmail.com)

2 Year At-Large Board Member B: (2021-2022)  
Scott Medbury KD5FBA  
[smedbury@windstream.net](mailto:smedbury@windstream.net)

1 Year At Large (2020)  
Sheree Horton, KF5LMJ  
[sher5456@gmail.com](mailto:sher5456@gmail.com)

### Regularly Scheduled Club Happenings:

#### General Meeting

Second Thursday each month, 7:30 PM  
Imperial Park Sugarland Recreation Center at  
234 Matlage Way, Sugar Land TX, 77478

Due to COVID-19, as this goes to press, the meeting will be held online. Check [www.BVARC.org](http://www.BVARC.org) for more current info.

#### Board of Directors Meeting

The Saturday before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, 9:00 AM (For Sept., check website)

Bayland Park Community Center  
Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston.

Due to COVID-19, as this goes to press, the meeting will be held online. Check [www.BVARC.org](http://www.BVARC.org) for more current info.

#### Volunteer Examiner Program

The monthly ham testing session takes place on the same day and location as the BOD Meeting, but at 10:30 AM. However, please check the BVARC website for any last minute changes or updates. The meeting location is open, however please check the [www.BVARC.org](http://www.BVARC.org) for updates.

#### Rag Chew Net

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

#### Public Service Net

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

SPECIAL NETS during these COVID-19 times:

A breakfast net is held on Saturday mornings and a "Stir Crazy" net is held each weekday at noon. Check [www.BVARC.org](http://www.BVARC.org) for current info.



### **Advertising in the BVARC Newsletter**

Rates are as follows; \$25 per monthly for ½ page, \$125 for six months and \$250 for one year. The rates for a full page are as follows; \$50 per month, \$250 for six months and \$500 for the year.



## **BVARC EATING SCHEDULE**

**Most of these events have resumed while complying to the Social Distancing and Mask requirements. Check with the respective entity to see the actual status.**

### SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

IHOP, 7:00a.m., SW Freeway inbound service road, near Kirkwood. Masks and social distancing are required.

### OTHER HAM GROUPS:

#### WEDNESDAYS – WEDNESDAY LUNCH BUNCH

Due to COVID-19, this is currently not taking place. When it does, information will be posted in the BEACON, and sent to the BVARC Reflector.

#### WEDNESDAYS – AMSAT & QRP GROUP

PAPPAS BARBECUE. 11:30a.m., SW corner Westheimer & Gessner. Not meeting now, but some show up.



## **Hamfests**

(typically within 200 miles of Houston)

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

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

### **01/08/2021 - 01/09/2021**

#### **Radio Fiesta 2021**

Location: Schertz, TX  
**CANCELLED**

### **03/06/2021**

#### **Greater Houston Hamfest**

Location: Rosenberg, TX  
**CANCELLED**

### **June 2021**

#### **Ham-Com, Plano, TX**

**CANCELLED permanently**

# 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](http://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 temporarily virtual via ZOOM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. If you have signed up for the reflector, you will receive notice and the attendance password, etc. It will also be on the website (above) a few days beforehand.

**BVARC** amateur radio testing has resumed. It takes place typically on the Saturday before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 10:30 AM. Location: Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, 77074. BEFORE GOING, because of COVID and scheduling conflicts, please check the BVARC website for any changes. Masks and social distancing are required.

A Public Service Net is held each Monday at 8 p.m. on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 tone) repeater.

During COVID-19 a "Stir Crazy Net" is also held weekdays at 12 Noon on the same frequency as above.

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, see the BVARC website: [www.bvarc.org](http://www.bvarc.org)

Other contacts include:

President:, Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, [n5vcx@att.net](mailto:n5vcx@att.net)

Newsletter Editor, John Chauvin, K5IZO, [k5izo@yahoo.com](mailto:k5izo@yahoo.com)

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Jeff Greer, W5JEF, [greerjw@hotmail.com](mailto:greerjw@hotmail.com)

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**BRAZOS VALLEY  
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
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SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997  
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January 14, BVARC General Membership Meeting



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