



BVARC BEACON



Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

VOLUME 48 ISSUE 7

JULY 2024

General Membership Meeting is July 11th at 7:30 PM

Community Volunteer Fire Department Community Center, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston 77083

The program will be on the timely topic of *Dealing with Repeater Jammers*. See the article elsewhere in the newsletter for some information on responsible repeater usage.

The BVARC Food Team will be providing Chili Cheese Dogs, Corn Dogs, and Chips.

The BVARC Board of Directors Meeting will be July 7th at 5 PM via ZOOM.

July 2024 – Amateur Radio Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
P: Pub Svc Net 8 PM Mondays	1 P S	2 Q S T	3 R S	4 S	5 S	6 VE Testing 10:30 AM Bayland Park
7 BVARC Board Mtg 5 PM Zoom	8 P S	9 Q S T Brews w/ BVARC	10 R S	11 S BVARC Mtg 7:30 PM	12 S	13 Texas City Hamfest
14	15 P S	16 Q S T	17 R S	18 S	19 S	20 POTA Sheldon Lake 9:00 AM-4:30 PM
21	22 P S	23 Q S T	24 R S	25 S	26 S	27
28	29	30	31	R: Rag Chew, 3910 kHz, 7 PM Wednesdays S: Stir Crazy Net Noon Monday-Friday T: 10-10 Int'l Local SHOT Net, 8 PM Tuesdays		

Tidelands Texas City Hamfest 2024 is Saturday July 13, 2024 at Doyle Convention Center, 2010 5th Ave N, Texas City, TX 77581 from 8 AM – 2 PM. Admission is \$10.

POTA – Another Houston Parks on the Air event is scheduled for July 20, 9 AM to 4:30 PM at Sheldon Lake State Park, 14140 Garrett Rd, Houston TX 77044. Park admission is free. The talk in frequency will be (simplex) 146.520 MHz.

Brews w/ BVARC Tuesday July 9, 6:30 PM, Texas Leaguer Brewing Company, 13503 Pike Rd, Missouri City, TX 77489. Brewery Website: TXLeaguer.com. Food Truck Website: HearthAndDome.com.

Life Members

Members who sign up for Life Membership are supporting the club for the long term. The new members are:

Robert Beauchamp – AI5QE Ronald Mahle – N6RAM

Thank you for your support for the club!

BVARC reserves a four-hour block for training or programs at Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St, Houston, TX 77074. If you would like to do a program or have a training class, please contact Mike Hardwick, N5VCX at n5vcx@att.net to reserve your date. The classroom is available from 9 AM to 1 PM. The reservation is free to the club and any member can use it. Available Dates in 2024:

July 20 August 17 September 21 October 19 November 23 December 28

Field Day 2024

I want to take time out today to thank everyone that participated in this weekend. I considered it a success on Saturday after lunch. I saw that my image for a group of individuals came together, set up, operated, and ate together. Everyone had each other's back.

I know I set some high goals and wanted a lot. You all stepped up and even in the small space we have, met every one of them and even one more. I was told it was going to be tight, and that was true, any more we were going to need to start sharing chairs. We already needed to share rooms. But with flexibility and everyone communicating, it all happened. We even had a few people that were not assigned jobs filling in for those that did not get jobs done, including myself.

Please, when you see Daphne and the food team, please let them know what an AWESOME job they did. It is a lot of work to get everything they did done, and they still pulled it off. The team even gave us a couple of sit down and served meals.

When you see Bill and the Antenna team, thank them for being in the heat and getting set up. Bill even stayed there late Friday, after everyone left, for the delivery of the man-lift was going to be late and waited for them. He then showed up early the next morning to get it received. And for those who know what happened, that was my first panic and thought we were going up in flames :)

As for Glenn and team, thank them for computers and data collecting. Also Rick Hiller for submitting all that.

Jimmy and team for coax, lots of boxes, and some air conditioning. That is not easy and getting all that coordinated took time in and outside.

All our teams for helping with tutoring new people and keeping the magic smoke in the boxes in our Phone Room.

Jeff McMillen for Satellite points, outside in the dark by himself and every biting pest out there. I personally went out and only made it about 5 min before I was tired of the piranha-mosquitoes eating me alive.

Our CW team deserves a round of applause since they now know the secret of working a 36 hr shift and not sleeping. Some even worked CW and Phone too.

And each of our class teachers, thank you. They put together material that definitely was informative and interesting. They also did it with a very tight schedule and got back to contesting too.

And as I said in the beginning, thank each other for an awesome job and teamwork that was put into the whole weekend.

And last but not least, save the date. **Field Day will be June 28, 2025 – June 29, 2025** with setup on June 27th, 2025. If I am allowed to lead again, we will have Zoom calls every Thursday at 7pm starting in April. Make sure to tell your friends and family, we are going to have even a bigger day than this year. I have already talked with the food team and we are going to eat well again.

Join us for the Biggest and Baddest Field Day Operation in Texas...

Richard Bonica
KG5YCU
kg5ycu@gmail.com

Museum Ships Weekend – May 31-June 2, 2024

We operated at the Galveston Naval Museum ships from the afternoon of Friday May 31st through Sunday morning June 2nd, aboard the USS Stewart destroyer escort and the USS Cavalla submarine.

The three stations on the Stewart (N5FKP) were all IC-7300's (CW, SSB and FT8). The antenna farm included an end fed antenna hung from an anti-aircraft gun and the ship's yardarm and the other was the BVARC yagi tribander trailer which was parked alongside the Stewart's aft. We'd used a triplexer and band pass filters so two transceivers could connect to the yagi. There were air conditioning and electrical quality issues in the Cavalla, so all stations were on the Stewart vs. the sub.

Generally, the bands were in pretty poor condition, though we found that 20 meters was the most active and conditions on 40 meters improved later into the evening. The notable sister museum ships we contacted included, USS Nautilus (CT), USS Midway (CA) the Elissa (across the Galveston ship channel), USS Tennessee (TN), USS Razorback (AR), USS LST325 (IN), USS Lucid (CA), Grand Camp (Texas City), USS Pueblo (CO), Watson Naval Shipbuilding Museum (MA), SS William A Irvin (MN), and the USS Iowa (CA). Our tally of 405 QSOs: FM=14, CW=42, SSB=228, FT8=121.

We also activated the SS Selma (a WW1 concrete hulled merchant ship) and achieved 81 QSOs for it.

The Saturday evening dinner consisted of a spread from Leon's World Famous BBQ. Museum staff were included in the dinner invite. For both Friday and Saturday, BVARC operators were berthed overnight in the Stewart aft space.

Many thanks to Bill (W5VOM) for transporting, setting up and taking down the BVARC trailer as well as those attending and operating, including K5IZO, KS5V, K4USN, KG5BBF, AA7EJ and K5MGJ.

We're looking to conduct more frequent operations on the ships between now and the next MSWE. We'll have some field trips to the ships and any BVARCians are welcome to join in the effort, stay tuned.



The operating area in the aft kitchen area of the Stewart.



BVARC trailer alongside the USS Stewart. An EFHW wire can be barely seen extending from the ships yard arm.



HAM EXAM QUESTION

Why should effective radiated power to a satellite that uses a linear transponder be limited?

- A. To prevent creating errors in the satellite telemetry
- B. To avoid reducing the downlink power to all other users
- C. To prevent the satellite from emitting out-of-band signals
- D. To avoid interfering with terrestrial QSOs



Repeater Etiquette: Best Practices, Do's and Don'ts

Posted by Sean Kutzko, KX9X on June 26, 2020 at 1:52 pm

The local repeater is often where new Hams make their first contact. I recall feeling a bit nervous when I tuned in to my local repeater for the first time. Would I “do it right?” Would somebody hear me? How should I tell people I wanted to talk to somebody?

I would hope that, as it was for me many years ago, your local repeater has some welcoming folks who use it. There may even be a weekly net you can be a part of. But like other shared resources in our community, we need to use it with others in mind. Here are some basic rules you can use to make your time on the repeater pleasant for you and your fellow Hams.

Before Transmitting

As with other aspects of Ham Radio, always listen before transmitting. If somebody else is using the repeater, and you don't have an emergency, wait until the repeater is free before making your call. When you do, ask if the repeater is in use first.

Soliciting a Call

The best way to make a call is simply call the station you're trying to reach—“NOAX, this is KX9X calling.” If you're just looking for a conversation, simply announce you are available for a call. Some examples are “KX9X monitoring 146.760” or “KX9X monitoring... anybody free to chat?” One thing to not do is call CQ; it is generally frowned upon to call CQ on a repeater. Except under circumstances where you know who you are talking to, it's a good practice to use **phonetics** on a repeater, especially during a net.

Many repeaters have what is called a “courtesy tone” or “courtesy beep.” You'll also notice that many repeaters stay active for a few seconds after somebody stops talking. Be sure to leave some space in the conversation to let the repeater stop transmitting. This helps prevent the repeater from “timing out” due to too long of a transmission. It also leaves room for another person to jump in if they have an emergency.

Try not to interrupt an ongoing conversation. It's not pleasant to be interrupted in real life, so please avoid it on the repeater as well.

Lastly, remember that there are people of all backgrounds that could be listening to your conversation. Just as when you are in public, use conversational, polite language. You never know when you may speak with a Ham who doesn't care for bad language or has small children who are listening.

In general, be polite and use common sense and common courtesy.

Jumping into an Ongoing Conversation

You may encounter a situation when you either want to jump into a conversation or need to use the repeater while it is already in use. In those circumstances, wait until there is a pause in the conversation, then send your call with a short explanation of why you are chiming in. Some examples are, “This is KX9X, may I join this conversation?” or “KX9X here, may I make a quick call?” Wait for a response. If you need to make a call to another user, make the connection and relay your traffic as quickly as possible. If you are going to need more time, tell the person you're speaking with to wait until the current conversation is over, or make arrangements to move to a different repeater or another frequency where you can keep talking.

Emergency Traffic

If you have a genuine emergency and a repeater is your only means of communication, use the word EMERGENCY. If the repeater is free, keep it simple: “KX9X EMERGENCY” or “KX9X with emergency traffic; somebody please respond.” If the repeater is in use, wait until there is a pause in the conversation and then jump in using your call and the word “emergency.”

Nets

Whether it is for a health and welfare event—such as an ARES activation or severe weather—or merely a weekly on-air gathering of club members, nets are more structured and follow a protocol. Every net will have a Net Control Operator who takes the primary role of coordinating stations participating in the net. Nets have a format; most nets will read the format over the air at the beginning of the net, outlining how to check in and when you will be called on to speak to the net. Other nets will post their format on a website. If you're still unsure how your local net functions, ask Hams in your area who participate in nets for guidance

before checking in. Listening to the net and how people are checked in can provide answers, as well.

If a net is for severe weather or some other emergency, do not check in or transmit to net control unless you have valuable information for the net or net control has asked you for something. Seconds count in emergencies and unnecessary traffic ties up the net. Feel free to listen, but don't check in if you don't genuinely have something to offer the net. Always listen to net control's instructions during an emergency net.

Other Good Practices

Sometimes Hams simply hold down their mic for a second and let go, just to see if they are able to access the repeater. This is known as *kerchunking*. It's bad practice to kerchunk a repeater. If you want to see if you're hitting the repeater, simply say your call: "KX9X testing." If you hear the courtesy tone when you let off your mic, you're making it into the repeater. And by giving your call, you may spark a conversation with another Ham!

There may come a time when you need to know if your radio sounds good into a repeater; perhaps you're having a technical issue, or you've made an adjustment to your radio. It's perfectly fine to get on your repeater and ask for assistance. For example,

"KX9X testing; can anybody give me a signal report?" will do nicely. Be mindful of the time and don't tie up the repeater too long trying to diagnose a problem. If there's a lingering issue, move to a simplex frequency to continue diagnostics.

Earlier I noted that repeaters have a "time out" feature. The repeater will stop transmitting after a certain amount of time if it has been engaged without a pause. Three minutes is a standard timeout setting. Ensure that your transmissions aren't so long that you risk timing out the repeater. Enjoy your conversation, but keep an eye on the clock, too.

Finally, repeaters are a social hub of your local Ham community. Be courteous and friendly. If you hear a new Ham on the repeater, welcome them and help make them feel at home.

Repeaters are still the backbone of many a club, offering a genuine public service to your community. Do your part to help keep the repeater an inviting hub of activity in your area. Join your local club; dues often help keep a repeater on the air. If you're ever in Champaign, Illinois, you can find me on the K9CU 2 meter repeater on 146.760 MHz, PL 162.2. Let's chat!

Reprinted from "ON ALL BANDS" 2024, <https://www.onallbands.com/repeater-etiquette-best-practices-dos-and-donts/>

BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

05/22/24, K5LKJ (NCS), K5JPP, K5LJ, K5ONT (Conroe), K5DBL (Manvel), KI5SKL, W5ALW, W5TKZ, K5TPC (Bellaire), KI5HOC, W5VOM, K4USN. (12 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 191, SN = 120, A = 9, K = 0 / Band Rpt: FAIR

05/29/24, K5LKJ (NCS), AA5OA (Percy, AR), KG5ICR, K5LJ, KI5HOC, W5RH, W5LIC (Channelview), KI5RLZ (Channelview), KF5ONT (Conroe). (9 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 166, SN = 152, A = 6, K = 1 / Band Rpt: FAIR

06/05/24, KG5ICR (NCS), K5JPP, K5TPC (Bellaire), W5TKZ, W5RH, K5DBL (Manvel), W5ALW. (7 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = , SN = , A = , K = / NO DATA / Band Rpt: FAIR

06/12/24, KG5ICR (NCS), K5LJ, W5TKZ, KI5HOC, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5VOM, W5RH. (7 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = , SN = , A = , K = / NO DATA / Band Rpt: FAIR

06/19/24, KG5ICR (NCS), K5LJ, WW5PA, W5LIC (Channelview), W5TKZ, KI5HOC, K5LKJ (T), AA5OA (Percy, AR), W5RH, KI5RLZ (Channelview), K5RBC (Lake Jackson).

(11 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 25: SFI = , SN = , A = , K = / NO DATA / Band Rpt: FAIR

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

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

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Minutes

June 9th, 2024 @ 5:00pm via Video Conference

Board Members

President - Mike Hardwick - N5VCK	Vice President - Kori Rahman - WX5KR
Recording Sec. - Sean Linkenheimer - N5LNK	Corresponding Sec. - Jeff Greer - W5JEF
Treasurer - Dave Ely - N5EKW	2 Year At-Large - Drew Dasher - N1ER
2 Year At-Large - Terry Leatherland - K5PGF	1 Year At-Large - Daphne Rawlinson - K5VQY

Strikethroughs indicate member not present

Guests Present

- Rick Hiller - W5RH, Richard - KG5YCU, Seth Lurie

Board of Directors Meeting

- ❖ Establish Quorum - **Yes**
 - Minimum of 5 Board Members with at least one At-Large position.
 - Article V - Meetings, Section G, Item 2
- ❖ Call Meeting to Order - **5:07 PM CST**
- ❖ Opening Statement(s) - **Thanks to all**
 - Special thanks and congratulations to Kori and Eileen on the birth of their baby girl Natlie
- ❖ Emergency Business - **none**
- ❖ Agenda Review - **approved**
- ❖ Treasurer's Report - **approved**
 - 4 new Life Members
 - Sean Linkenheimer - N5LNK
 - Jonathan Taylor - KI5OZK
 - Bryan Usry - K5BLU
 - Thomas Larsh
 - 5 new members
 - Dave has registration sticker for the antenna trailer.
- ❖ Corresponding Secretary's Report - **reported**
- ❖ Old Business
 - Expanded Survey for Annual Awards Banquette survey is forthcoming. NMSS willing to give us access to their survey account. (Mike waiting to hear back.)
 - Monthly (weekly?) restaurant dinners are going well.
- ❖ Programs
 - Field Day - June 22-23 (planning session June)
 - Report from Richard
 - Budget up to \$1500 approved
 - July - GMRS?
 - August - more to come
- ❖ Committees
 - Historical Archives - Eddie Runner, Jeff Greer, Sean Linkenheimer
 - By-Laws
 - Finance
 - Events and Membership
 - Food Team
 - Club Website
 - Newsletter
 - BVARC On The Air
 - Elmer/ SME
 - Museum Ships Wknd
 - Field Day
 - Greater Houston HamFest
 - GHHF Website

- Banquet
- ❖ New Business
 - BVARC On The Air (BOTA) – more info coming soon
 - Houston POTA Group
 - Sheldon Lake State Park July 20th, 9:30-4:30
 - Brews with BVARC Tuesday, June 11th @ 6 or 6:30 at No Label. (Address on bvarc.org.)
- ❖ Next Meetings - Pursuant Article V Section G Item 1 of the Club By-Laws
 - June 13th (General Meeting)
 - July 7th, 2024 Board Meeting @ 5:00pm via Zoom
- ❖ Closing Statement(s) **Thank you all for coming.**
- ❖ Meeting Adjourned – **6:10 PM CST**

Recorded by: Jeff Greer – W5JEF & Sean Linkenheimer – N5LNK

JUNE VE - FCC TESTING SESSIONS RESULTS

For the June 8th test session at Bayland Park - we had 6 candidates and conducted 10 tests

<u>New Licensee:</u>	<u>Upgraded Licensee</u>
Ruchotzke, L (General)	KE5QY (Extra)
Spiotto, M (Technician)	N6RAM (Extra)
White, R (Technician)	W4TWM (Extra)

VEs in attendance – K4USN, K5GOL, WM5N, and KG5ICR – **THANKS!**

Congratulations to All!

The next BVARC test session will be **Saturday, July 6th** at 10:30am.

Pre-registration is required.

For new licensees the testing fee, paid at the session is \$15. An additional \$35 license fee (totaling \$50) will be collected by the FCC separately for new, renewal and vanity calls. License upgrades **do not** pay the added \$35 fee, just the \$15 session fee.

YOUTH LICENSING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The ARRL has created a youth program (18 and under) to defray the licensing costs to a total of \$5 (deducting the \$35 increase and \$10 off the \$15 VE session fee). See: <http://www.arrl.org/youth-licensing-grant-program>

Also, BVARC is implementing its own program for **youth** licensing.

We'll provide a **new VHF/UHF transceiver (Baofeng, limited supply)** at the VE session, to youth that successfully pass their Technician test. This is the result of a very generous donation (Dec. '23) from a BVARC member, THANKS!

Bottom line, a young person for \$5, can walk into a test session and walk out with a new radio and a pending license.

Examination sessions are held each month, most times the first weekend of the month and usually on the same weekend as the Sunday BVARC Board meeting. These testing sessions are at the Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St., Houston TX 77074

Details for candidates are found at <https://bvarc.org/home/ham-radio-license-testing-houston/>

Pre-register to attend a test session at: <https://hamstudy.org/sessions/arrl/77008/inperson>

For questions, Email Mark Janzer, K5MGJ at (k5mgj@yahoo.com).



River Oaks Car Stereo

Since 1990

4129 Richmond Ave
Houston TX 77027

713-626-7627 -
help@riveroakscarstereo.com

riveroakscarstereo.com

NUSK - Eddie
KBSYTA - Dwayne
KBSOBB - Eddie Jr
KFSRJK - BLake
WSLIC - Anthony

BVARC EVENTS

Saturday Breakfast 6:30 AM, IHOP Stafford 12725 Southwest Fwy, Stafford, TX 77477

Friday Dinner 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM, Los Tios Mexican Restaurant 9527 Westheimer Rd, Houston, TX 77063

Wednesday Lunch Bunch 11 AM to Noon, Luby's Cafeteria 10575 W Airport Blvd, Stafford, TX 77477

Brews w/ BVARC 6:30 PM, Texas Leaguer Brewing Company 13503 Pike Rd, Missouri City, TX 77489

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 few months. Similarly, the "Eating Schedule" may be published every few months unless there is a change.

General membership dues are \$25 per year, with student dues \$10 per year, additional family members \$5 per member per year.

Club meetings are both in-person and via Zoom on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. If you have signed up for the email reflector, you will receive notice and the attendance password, etc. It will also be on the website a few days beforehand.

BVARC amateur radio testing takes place typically on the Saturday before the 2nd Thursday of each month at 10:30 AM.

Location: Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, 77074. **Before going** please check the BVARC website for any changes.

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

A "Stir Crazy Net" is also held weekdays at 12 Noon on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 tone) repeater.

A Rag Chew net is held each Wednesday at 7 PM on 3910 KHz +/- 3 KHz.

To obtain information about joining BVARC or its activities, see the BVARC website: www.bvarc.org

Other contacts: **BVARC President** Mike Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net, **Newsletter Editor** Donovan Balli KG5BDZ dballi@mail.com, **Editor Emeritus** John Chauvin K5IZO k5izo@yahoo.com, **Newsletter Printing, Assembly, and Mailing** Mike Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net, Jeff Greer W5JEF greerjw@hotmail.com, Gokhan Koralturk KG0KHN gokkor@gmail.com

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JULY 2024


**BRAZOS VALLEY
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SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

Board of Directors Meeting – Sunday July 7, 2024, 5 PM, Zoom

BVARC General Meeting – Thursday July 11, 2024, Community Volunteer Fire Department, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston 77083



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