

B-VARC BULLETIN

The Monthly Publication of the
BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
Serving Fort Bend and Harris Counties

Editor-in-Chief: Robert K. Ricketts, N5JKD

About the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club...

Organized in 1977, the club has been growing steadily. It is a gathering place for HAM radio operators in Southwest Harris and Ft. Bend Counties and surrounding communities. It is a general purpose type of HAM club offering a variety of activities open to all interested persons. Membership is open, not only to licensed HAM operators, but also to anyone interested in the hobby. In addition to regularly scheduled membership meetings, the club conducts classes leading to amateur radio licenses each year and sponsors a volunteer examiner team which offers examinations in all levels of HAM licenses each month.

For more detailed information about the club and any of its activities, please call Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG, at (713)777-3345.

Volume: 11 Issue: 2

February 1988

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

From:

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
P.O. Box 1630
Missouri City, TX 77459
Telephone (713)777-3345



Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG
7401 Heilig
Houston, TX 77074

PREAMBLE FOR B-VARC NET

NOTE: '>>' = Transmit these words
'*****' = Comment to you (don't transmit)

>> QST, QST, QST.... This is (your call), net control station for this evenings session of the Brazos Valley Public Service Net. This net is made possible through the courtesy of MERA and the KA5DUU repeater.

>> This net meets every Monday at 21:00 and we invite all amateurs with license authorization for this frequency to join us each week. This is a directed net and we request that all calls go through net control.

***** Please don't "Standby for emergency traffic". This is redundant! *****
***** If there is any emergency traffic, then by definition, it takes *****
***** priority and the party will break in when necessary. *****

>> This is (your call) net control, and I will now accept check-ins for call suffixes (A-Alpha through H-Hotel.)
(I-India through Z-Zulu.) If this is your first time to check in with us, please state your name after your call.

***** Wait for about 5 seconds of silence, then repeat calls. *****

***** Now call for license suffixs I-India through Z-Zulu *****

>> Anybody else wishing to check-in to the Brazos Valley Public Service Net Call suffixes A-Alpha through Z-Zulu please call now.

>> Tonight's agenda will include...

- >> 1. B-VARC club news and general announcements.
- >> 2. Equipment for sale, swap, or purchase.
- >> 3. Calls for technical assistance.
- >> 4. ARRL bulletins ***** If anybody has it *****
- >> 5. Westlink report ***** Takes about 10 minutes *****
***** Usually will be provided. *****

>> Anybody with (Say each time for 1 through 5) please come now with your call sign only.

***** Jot down all calls. When silent, call back each caller *****

***** After all callers for a catagory have stated their *****
***** business, proceed onto the next number. Same format. *****

>> I will now accept any late check-ins for the Brazos Valley Public Service Net. Please call now.

***** Wait for about 5 seconds of silence *****

>> That concludes the scheduled agenda for tonight's net. Does anybody else have anything for the net before we close?

***** Wait for about 5 seconds of silence *****

>> There were a total of (xx) checks-ins for the net this evening. This is (your call) net control station for the Brazos Valley Public Service returning the KA5DUU repeater back to normal amateur use. 73's to everybody and will see you next Monday at 21:00.

Thanks Jack...

Just a note to thank Jack Van Demark (WN5A) for standing in as our club secretary. A new secretary will be appointed soon. Jack's efforts in filling the gap are greatly appreciated by all.

Club Yearbook

Suzanne King (KB5BAY) started a club yearbook. In it, she will keep copies of meeting notes and remembrances of club activities for the year 1988.

The yearbook will serve two purposes. One, it gives us something to look back on, just as our high school yearbooks do. Second, it documents the events and activities that qualify our club as a public service organization.

Pictures of club events, certificates, letters of appreciation and other material for the yearbook should be sent to the B-VARC P.O. Box. Please, print "YEARBOOK" in the lower left corner of the envelope.

Super Job Bill,

Bill Kemp (KG5CB) is one of the driving forces behind the B-VARC westside socials at Bear Creek Community Center. These meetings are a smashing success.

Last month, there was a super program on bulletin boards for packet radio. It was great. So was the pie!

This month, Bill has promised us a program on DX. Don't miss out. It will be on the fourth Thursday, at Bear Creek Community Center. The meeting starts at 7:00 pm. Talk-ins are on 145.47 and 442.50.

Technician Class Planned.

That's right. B-VARC is planning a technician class. Sure, we know you have to get your novice license first.

The class is planned to take the beginner from ground zero through the technician class license. The two Lee's (KB5EST and KASWJB) will be two of our instructors for this course.

The class starts April 4 at Strake Jesuit. Classes run from 7:00pm to 9:00 pm, and will cover the code, theory, and regulations required to obtain the novice and technician class licenses.

The class uses the "HEAD START" approach. This means students must preregister through Stu Lamkin (WB5IGG). Stu can be reached at 777-3345.

Changes at MERA

The MERA (Memorial Emergency Radio Association) supports the 145.47 repeater. B-VARC supports MERA. In fact, all members of the MERA board are B-VARC members.

The resignation of repeater trustee and vice-president Robert Ricketts (N5JKD) surprised and saddened us. Robert has done a great job.

Because of his new job, Robert will be out of town most of the time. This inhibits his ability to function as repeater trustee.

The board elected Gerald Borg (N5APW) as the new repeater trustee and vice-president. Suzanne King (KB5BAY) consented to join the board as our new secretary.

Ray Dillard (WASF) and Mike Kana (KA5WOT) were appointed to the technical committee. The board voted to enstate Robert Ricketts (N5JKD) as an "at large" board member.

We want to thank Robert for his service to MERA and wish him well in his new job. In addition, we wish to congratulate the new officers and committee members.

--- IMPORTANT INFORMATION ---

All written communications to B-VARC must be sent to our P.O. Box. All mail sent to the box goes to our treasurer. The treasurer is Frank D'Armas (KB5EQG).

Frank routes the mail to the appropriate B-VARC committee chairman or board member.

This method may seem a little slower, but it is reliable.

If you are sending an article for the newsletter, please print "NEWSLETTER" in the lower left corner of the envelope.

All membership applications (new or renewal) should be sent to the box. Membership fees should be paid via check or money order. It is not wise to send cash through the mail.

The official mailing address is:

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
P.O. Box 1630
Missouri City, Tx. 77459

No one would give the order. Captain Warms was overwhelmed by what was happening and failed to recognize the distress signal should have been sent with the first notice of "stand by boats." There was so much confusion on the bridge Warms could not respond to every demand.

By 3:10 AM all electric wiring had burned though and the ship was in darkness. They lost the gyrocompass, the electric steering apparatus and the standby hydraulic system. There was no telephone communication. With no rudder steering was done by the engines.

At 3:15 AM the silent period found no order to send the distress signal. The silent period for safety at sea of passengers grew out of the "worlds safest ship" Titanic disaster when the radio operators refused to stop sending commercial messages and failed to receive the warning the ship was headed into a dangerous field of icebergs.

The emergency was so great both Rogers and Alagna agreed they must do something. As soon as the silent period was reached, Rogers did what he thought was necessary to alert the shore stations.

Let's look at the official log of WIM, 250 miles north of Cape Cod.

"3:15 AM EST Silent period.

3:16 AM EST KGOV CQ WSG (Tuckerton)
KGOV QRX 3 mins KGOV seconds later calls CQ no QRZ may have emergency call."

Rogers had sent "CQ KGOV." KGOV is the call letters of the MORRO CASTLE. Tuckerton had replied to remain silent for three minutes. During the silent period, short of the actual distress signal, the shore stations demand absolute silence and all stations be on listening status.

Again, Alagna is on his way forward; surrounded now by discolored glowing bulkheads.

For the first time Captain Warms talked directly to Alagna and orders the SOS sent at 3:18 AM. The exact position is obtained, but it would be several minutes before Alagna can fight his way through the smoke and flames to reach the radio room.

Before Alagna can find the radio room the engins stop. There is one long blast of the whistle for "abandon ship." The anchor is dropped.

In the radio room the smoke is so thick a flashlight has to be held six inches from the transmitter key to see where it is. Rogers is not fully aware of his situation. He feels intense heat through the deck and his feet are blistered. Smoke and flames are coming in through the open port holes.

Rogers is nearly unconscious when he tapped out the SOS. Before he could finish the batteries disintegrate in a violent explosion throwing metal and acid in every direction. The emergency generator starts again. Rogers managed to tap out the location. A final explosion of the outside gasoline tank and the transmitter dies.

Boiling battery acid covered the floor, blinding smoke and fumes filled the radio room but somehow Alagna helped half drag Rogers out into the corridor. These radio operators stayed at their posts until every item of equipment was useless, and by what could only be termed a miracle were still alive. They were still far some safe. Moving on their now blistered feet was painful.

(continued next month)

Results of the January 12th Exams

by Harold Parker, ND5F

B-VARC again sponsored the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examinations that were held on Tuesday, January 12th, 1988 at the Strake Jesuit School in Houston.

The V.E. Team:

Bill Kemp, KG5CB
Randy Pollard, AK5G
Ray Dillard, WA5F
Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG
Harold Parker, ND5F

A total of thirty-one (31) exams were administered during the evening to sixteen (16) applicants. Of those, we have four (4) with their new license and eight (8) upgrades with a total of nineteen (19) elements passed. The overall pass rate for the evening was sixty one (61) percent.

Congratulations to all the following who qualified for a new license, upgraded or passed exams.

Gerald Babin - Technician
Richard Beekmann - Novice
Patricia Brown, KB5FBR - Technician
Freddie Ferrara, KA5WBV - Advanced
Gerald Gibson - Technician
Barry Horwitz, KB5EYJ - Technician
Lee Lance, KB5EST - Element 3B
Richard Nerf, NSLUS - Extra
George Pavlik - General
Charles Prochaska, KB5EQJ - Element 3B
Irvin Smith, KB5EXM - Technician

Results of the February 9th Exams

by Harold Parker, ND5F

B-VARC again sponsored the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examinations that were held on Tuesday, February 9th, 1988 at the Strake Jesuit School in Houston.

The V.E. Team:

Bill Kemp, KG5CB
Henry Morrison, W5RIY
Ray Dillard, WA5F
Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG
Harold Parker, ND5F

A total of thirty-two (32) exams were administered during the evening to fifteen (15) applicants. Of those, we have four (4) with their new license and eight (7) upgrades with a total of twenty (20) elements passed. The overall pass rate for the evening was a very impressive sixty three (63) percent.

Congratulations to all the following who qualified for a new license, upgraded or passed exams.

Bruce Cranford - General
Myrna Freuler, KB5CHI - Technician
Ron Harris - Novice
David Hell - Novice
Charles Hluchan, N5KWE - Extra
Robert Jones - Technician
Stephen Klemann, KB5EIA - Technician
Diana Knox, KB5CMG - Technician
David Lance, KB5EYK - Technician
Lee Lance, KB5EST - General
Robert Malloy, KB5FBY - Technician

Thanks to everyone for all the great help, especially to Vincent, WA5ETS, for making this great site available for the Tuesday night exams each month.

Stories From Our Members....

The following story was written and submitted by Henry Morrison, W5RIY. This story will be run in serial form over a period of several months. Thanks to Henry for this creative work!

SOS de MORRO CASTLE (3rd of 5)

Smoke and heat was building rapidly in the radio room. Operator Maki was told to get some towels, wet them and they could put them over their heads and breathe through the towels.

By this time Alagna had to fight his way through heavy yellow acid smoke and flames to the radio room. No one on the bridge would give the order to send a distress signal. Warms at this point was certain the fire could be contained even though the Derby fire panel had completely lit. Warms was not aware the ship's fire fighting system had been designed for only a few units to be needed at one time. Now every hydrant that could be used to fight this out of control fire was needed, and the pressure was not available for every station. Some of the hydrants were out of order or capped so tightly they could not be opened. Some had even been sealed.

At about 3 AM Maki was checking the battery connections to the emergency transmitter when the Lyle guns' (designed to fire a breeches buoy to another ship for passenger evacuation) one-hundred pounds of gun powder exploded. The fire now spread further through shattered windows.

Alagna was on his way to the bridge; this time wearing his Radio Officer's cap so he could be better recognized. The passageway was a wall of fire so time was lost going down and then coming back through the inside bridge ladder.

Fortunately, B-VARC has provisions for such occasions. We call it the ORDER OF THE KEY. Congratulations George!

Congratulations Joe Ross (AA5BD). In 1987, Joe spent 36 weeks teaching three novice/technician classes for B-VARC. A group of amateurs (former students) gave Joe an award for being such an outstanding ELMER.

Thank-you Mike Eason (N5KRU) for spending some time working at the banquet. Seems like every time there is a tough job to do, you and Bill Kemp (KG5CB) are there, "volunteering" to help.

Thank-you Father Vincent Orlando (WA5ETS). Without your help B-VARC would not be able to use the outstanding facilities at Strake Jesuit. These facilities are ideal for B-VARC public service programs like the VEC testing headed up by Harold Parker (ND5F). Again, Thank-you Father Vincent, and a big THANK-YOU to Strake Jesuit.

Thank-you Gerry Borg (N5APW) for taking over responsibility for the B-VARC Public Service Net. And for taking the time and trouble to provide the net with the WESTLINK REPORT every week.

Thank-you Robert Ricketts (N5JKD) for publishing our newsletter this year. Your effort is making our newsletter very successful.

Thank-you Lee Lance (KB5EST) for volunteering to help me organize and teach a B-VARC novice/technician class. Your teaching experience will be a big help.

Thank-you Frank D'Armas (KB5EQG) for your efforts in getting our newsletter copied each month.

Thank-you to the members whose contributions helped pay for a new power supply for the 442.50 repeater. Your contributions have improved amateur radio service for Hams in the Houston area.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words:

At the banquet, We spent time reflecting on the best of 1987. Each cherished memory came as a result of B-VARC members working together to benefit a common cause.

This year, ask what you can do for B-VARC. Spend the time and effort to do it. Help build cherished memories.

73 de KA5UXP

And Yet Another One Leaves Town...

by Robert K. Ricketts, N5JKD

It seems that everytime somebody gets elected to a post, they leave town. Steve Yates, KA5DUU, was elected president of B-VARC and vice-president of MERA. Steve left town to accept an outstanding job offer so we had to find replacements for these positions. I was elected to serve as vice-president of MERA.

Now it's MY turn to hoist. I was offered, and I accepted, a job that will require my being out of town probably 90 percent or more of the time. Because of this, I'll have to resign from these various positions. It's a pain to uproot like this but the job must come first - for without jobs, there would be no hobbies!

This also means I will no longer be writing the newsletter. There are several people I'll be talking to about taking it over. If any of ya'll have a particular desire to handle the newsletter, please let me know.

I'll be calling a MERA meeting soon and will meet with the B-VARC board of Directors to figure out how to best handle this.

Renewing your B-VARC Membership

Now is the time to renew your membership with the BVARC! It's been a fun year and this year will be no exception.

Please renew now and your membership (including the newsletter) will be uninterrupted.

The dues for 1988 is \$12.00 for an individual membership and \$2.00 for each additional family member.

The club has really been involved in public service events during the 1987 year. Our specialty is helping out with the various fun runs held through the year. Just look at the honor roll and see how active the club has been!

Also, remember when the club meetings were held in the Missouri City Fire Hall? Well, we've reserved use of the fire hall for BOTH the BVARC board meetings (first Thursday) AND the general membership meeting (second Thursday) for the entire 1988 calendar year! It's the opinion of many club members that the fire hall was always more fun - felt more like a real HAM club meeting.

I became the BVARC Bulletin editor about four months ago and plan to stay with the job for a good while. Each month the news letter gets more interesting. I'm even working on having full color photos included in some issues.

Won't you please renew or join again if membership has lapsed? Things are really getting interesting these days.

B-VARC Officers and Directors

President	Dave Dyer, KASUXP
Vice President	Suzanne King, KB5BAY
Secretary	Robert Ricketts, NSJKD
Treasurer	Frank DeArmas, KB5BQG
Past President	George Jolly, ND5E
1-year Director	Clint Gilliland, NSFNA
2-year Director	Jack Van Demark, WNSA
3-year Director	Carl Albrecht, KASQLQ

Committee Structure for 1988

ARRL and Public Liaison ARRL Affiliation * Subscriptions * Public Liaison	Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG
Emergency Communication ARES Emergency Coordinator Ft. Bend County RACES Liaison	Edgar Harwell, WSVWX Jerry Caudill, N4IVI
Finance	Gerald Borg, NSAPW
Hamfest	David Dyer, KASUXP
Membership Services Name Tags B-VARC Roster Database	Carl Albrecht, KASQLQ Robert K. Ricketts, NSJKD
Operating Events Field Day B-VARC Net Scheduling	Steve Yates, KASDUU
Programs	Mike Eason, N5KRU
Public Service	Johnny Ray Dillard, W5AF
Publications B-VARC Bulletin * Membership Packets	Robert K. Ricketts, NSJKD
Training	Joe A. Ross, AA5BD
Volunteer Examination Program	Harold Parker, ND5F Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG Johnny Ray Dillard, W5AF
Youth Outreach	Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG Kathy Jolly, KASWHK

Past Presidents

Jerry Albright, WD5HQU	1978
Wade Eilers, WN5TEN	1979
Bob Spradling, W5UBD	1980
Richard Shankle, N5KV	1981
Dick Bigelow, WD5CTQ	1982
Steve Gottlieb, W5OEN	1983
Ron Bolyard, KASGYG	1984
Harold Parker, ND5F	1985
Steve Schuster, W5AF	1986
George Jolly, ND5E	1987
Steve Yates, KASDUU	1988 (Jan)

Order of the Key

Bob Spradling, W5UBD	1980
Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG	1981
Ron Bolyard, KASGYG	1982
Wade Eilers, WN5TEN	1983
Steve Gottlieb, W5OEN	1983
Allen Hanus, KASRXX	1984
Harold Parker, ND5F	1984
Dick Hagerman, WB5SRN	1985
Vance Peterson, NSFLQ	1985
Ray Dillard, W5AF	1986
George Jolly, ND5E	1987

Silent Keys

John Amorin, NSISW	Bill Campbell, N5EUL
Joe Noles, NSBOK	Bill Osenfort, NG5C
Bob Spradling, W5UBD	Robert Weber, KASSLO
Bill Alexander, K5DRG	

Our President Says

by Dave Dyer, KASUXP

B-VARC and me:

I am Dave Dyer, KASUXP. I took my Technician class exam at a B-VARC sponsored VEC exam in April of 1987. That is where I first learned of B-VARC.

Friendly people like Stu Lamkin (WB5IGG) and Gerry Borg (NSAPW) really impressed me and made me want to join up and get in on some of the fun.

Thanks to a class headed up by Joe Ross (AA5BD), my wife, Karla, earned her novice class license.

With time, effort, and the support of B-VARC members, my wife is now NSLGS, a Technician working on her General. I am still KASUXP. But now, I am an Advanced working on my Extra.

As Director of Software Engineering for a Houston company, I am really into computers. I look forward to getting started on packet radio this year.

THE PLEDGE:

I shall work to be the best that I can be. I shall work to make B-VARC the best that it can be.

AN AMAZING FEAT:

A scant two days before the annual B-VARC banquet, we learned that our banquet hall had gone out of business!

We needed a miracle... and, we got one. Our Vice-President, Suzanne King (KB5BAY) saved the banquet.

She found an alternate location where we could meet. One that would give us the same menu for the same price. She made the reservations.

Suzanne made sure every person holding a reservation was notified of the change in location. And, she got back the \$100.00 deposit from the owners of the closed business.

For myself, and speaking for every member of B-VARC, THANK-YOU SUZANNE. Your outstanding effort is an example for us all.

MY THOUGHTS ON THE BANQUET:

If you did not go to the banquet, you missed a really great party.

But you missed more than a great party, you missed the opportunity to meet with fellow B-VARC members to look back on the good times we shared in 1987, to look ahead and dream about times to come, and to honor fellow members for their efforts.