

B-VARC BULLETIN

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

Editor-in-Chief: Roland Torres, KB5EQH 622-7810 (0700-1600 hrs)

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 Fort Bend and Southwest Harris 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 each year conducts classes leading to amateur radio licenses, and each month sponsors a volunteer-examiner team that offers examinations in all levels of HAM licenses.

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

Volume: 13 Issue: 2

February 1990

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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

Allen Mattis N5AFV
5314 Wigton
Houston, TX 77096

B-VARC MEETING SCHEDULE

Thurs, February 8	General Meeting
7:30 pm	Missouri City Fire Station
Program:	OSCAR
By:	Andy MacAllister WASZIB
Thurs, March 1	Board Meeting
7:30 pm	Missouri City Fire Station

B-VARC CALENDAR: FEBRUARY 1990

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
HOUSTON AREA V.E. EXAM INFO: STU (WBSIGG) 713-777-3345	FUTURE B-VARC & PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS: MARCH 5: NOVICE CLASS STARTS APRIL 21-22: MS-150 BIKE RIDE			BOARD MEETING 1930 hrs M.C. FIRE STATION #1 (KEY MAP 570-T)	LUNCH BUNCH 1130 hrs: LOCALE VARIES (CHECK IN: 442.5 OR 443.15)	C.W. B-VARC BREAKFAST 2030 hr 0730 hrs DENNY'S 147.32 SHARPSTOWN	
4 HARRIS COUNTY RACES 1900 hrs 146.94	5 ARES B-VARC NET 2000 hrs 2100 hrs 147.30 145.47	6 10 X SHOT 2000hrs 28.488 AMSAT 2200 hrs 145.45	7 B-VARC C.W. CODE RAG-CHEW PRACTICE 2000 hrs 2030 hrs 3.960 147.32 (Busy? +3 kHz)	8 GENERAL MEETING 1930 hrs @ MC FS #1 PROGRAM: OSCAR BY: ANDY MacAllister WASZIB	9 LUNCH BUNCH 1130 hrs: LOCALE VARIES (CHECK IN: 442.5 OR 443.15)	10 C.W. B-VARC BREAKFAST 2030 hr 0730 hrs DENNY'S 147.32 SHARPSTOWN	
11 HARRIS COUNTY RACES 1900 hrs 146.94	12 ARES B-VARC NET 2000 hrs 2100 hrs 147.30 145.47	13 V.E. EXAMS 1900 hrs, STRAKE JESUIT STU (WBSIGG), 777-3345	14 B-VARC C.W. CODE RAG-CHEW PRACTICE 2000 hrs 2030 hrs 3.960 147.32 (Busy? +3 kHz)	15 NOTE: Nets meet weekly, even if not shown.	16 LUNCH BUNCH 1130 hrs: LOCALE VARIES (CHECK IN: 442.5 OR 443.15)	17 C.W. B-VARC BREAKFAST 2030 hr 0730 hrs LE PEPE 147.32 GESSNERWESTHEIM SIDEWALK SALE - MISSION.	
18 HARRIS COUNTY RACES 1900 hrs 146.94	19 ARES B-VARC NET 2000 hrs 2100 hrs 147.30 145.47	20 10 X SHOT 2000hrs 28.488 AMSAT 2200 hrs 145.45	21 B-VARC C.W. CODE RAG-CHEW PRACTICE 2000 hrs 2030 hrs 3.960 147.32 (Busy? +3 kHz)	22 WEST-SIDE SOCIAL 1900 HRS @ BEAR CREEK OPTIONAL DINNER @ 1815 HRS LUBY'S: CLAY & HWY 6	23 LUNCH BUNCH 1130 hrs: LOCALE VARIES (CHECK IN: 442.5 OR 443.15)	24 C.W. B-VARC BREAKFAST 2030 hr 0730 hrs DENNY'S 147.32 SHARPSTOWN	
25 HARRIS COUNTY RACES 1900 hrs 146.94	26 ARES B-VARC NET 2000 hrs 2100 hrs 147.30 145.47	27 10 X SHOT 2000hrs 28.488 AMSAT 2200 hrs 145.45	28 B-VARC C.W. CODE RAG-CHEW PRACTICE 2000 hrs 2030 hrs 3.960 147.32 (Busy? +3 kHz)	FUTURE MEETINGS: MAR. 1: BOARD MEETING MAR. 8: GENERAL MEETING			Please send info and corrections to Roland (KB5EQH) 622-7810 (Day)

NOTES FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT
by Al Mattis NSAFV

A Word From The President . . .

Last year was a good year for B-VARC, thanks to Jack, WNSA, the Officers and Board, and to many other people who made things happen. 1990 promises to be another good one for us, hopefully the best we have ever had.

We have already had a record turnout for our January banquet with an attendance of 71, and I am looking forward to working with our new Officers and Board of Directors, who are simply the best in the business.

Standing Committees have been formed or are being formed in the areas of Membership, Programs, Finance, Publications, Club Activities, Technical Advancement, ARRL Liaison, Emergency Communications Public Relations, for starters. I would appreciate hearing from anyone desiring to serve on any of these particular committees, or in any other capacity not already named. More to follow as things develop.

I, along with the other Officers and Directors, deeply appreciate your confidence in us, and your support. I am asking for input from anyone who has ideas as to how to make our Club even better, and welcome your calls.

Bill, NSKXU

Greetings to everyone in the club, and thank you for your participation in our recent activities. It's nice to see such support as we begin a new year with a new group of officers. Please bear with us as we get our feet on the ground.

If you don't know what the "mush pot" is; you probably haven't been attending the Saturday morning B-VARC breakfasts. It's been nice to see so many B-VARC members attending these BAM breakfasts at Denny's at Sharpstown. On the third Saturday of the month, the breakfast is held at Le Peep at Westheimer and Wilcrest, because it is closer to the Mission Communications sidewalk sale. Come and join the group on Saturday morning, but don't be late or you might end up in the "mush pot." Thank you to Steve Gottlieb, WA5OEN, for his continuing unofficial leadership of this long time B-VARC tradition.

Our special committee on establishing guidelines for B-VARC public service events has been meeting, and is making progress on its challenging task. The committee hopes to complete its work prior to the busy Spring season of public service events. More on that topic as things progress.

We had a great turn out at the annual banquet in January - a record 71 persons! Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time. The larger than expected turn out made service a little slow for some, and a number of members had to sit on the second level just outside of the room. I guess that's the price we pay for being one of the most active amateur radio organizations in the Houston metropolitan area!

That's it for this month.

LETTER FROM THE RETIRING EDITOR

by: Irv (KB5EXM)

Over the past two years I have had the pleasure of serving as your editor. This has been rewarding and has given me the opportunity to interface with many more B-VARC members than I would have if I had merely been a semi-passive new ham.

The press of work and other "play" responsibilities led me not to seek reappointment for 1990. Rest assured that your newsletter will be in good hands with Roland (KB5EQH). Roland worked with me, as publisher, and by pursuing the idea that B-VARC could get gratis copying services in return for a modest blurb for Warner Cable, saved our group many dollars. B-VARC wisely recognized Roland's contribution by honoring him with the "Order of the Key" at our recent banquet.

Each month your editor is faced with the challenge of filling both sides of 6 pieces of paper (the maximum we can mail with one stamp). I confess to not being terribly creative in coming up with original stuff, but I was a whiz at copies of others' work (always with credit, I hope). And, folks such as Harold (ND5F), Allen (N5AFV) and Stu (WB5IGG) fed me a monthly supply of material. Steve (KA5DUU) and Henry (W5RIY) sent in nice articles. My apologies to anybody else I missed.

Roland will want input from the members. Send him articles, magazine clippings, original fiction, equipment reviews, etc. For example, right now there is an opportunity for someone to write a story about the radio club (K5WW?) at the medical center. This well-equipped station needs volunteers at all hours of the day and night. For someone without any HF gear, here's a chance to do some DX'ing. Contact Tom (KC5NU) for information about operating there, and then send in an article to Roland after your visit.

Help is also needed in publishing the newsletter. Somebody has to collate, staple, stamp and mail about 100 copies each month. It must be timely, because the Newsletter serves as official notice, per the By-Laws, of our meetings. Let Roland know if you can help.

B-VARC AWARDS

ORDER OF THE KEY:

Roland Torres (KB5EQH)
Jack Van Demark (WN5A)

DOCTOR BILL:

Stu Lamkin (WB5IGG)

LOOP & ZEPP:

Bill Todd-Brown (N5NPM)

B-VARC GENERAL MEETING
February, 1990

On Sunday evening, 21 January, 1990, thousands of Hams were listening to 3.840 megahertz, and other pre-arranged frequencies, to a live description of the launch of the Ariane 4 Rocket. On board were 6 new Oscar satellites. Pacsat-Oscar-16, Dove-Oscar-17, Webersat-Oscar-18, Lusat-Oscar-19, UoSat-Oscar-14 and UoSat-Oscar-15. Applause and a world wide sigh of relief greeted the final word that "all lights are green." Six new amateur satellites were in orbit.

On Monday, 22 January, 1990, one of these new "Birds", (Dove), was heard on FM handy talkies with a rubber duckie, mobile rigs and home station 2 meter FM receivers, cranking out its packet. By prearrangement, Harold, ND5F and I, N5MPN were tuned up on our respective rigs, (with a telephone communication to compare notes), to test our ability to receive Dove, based on Harold's Commodore program of the Keplerian Elements. It was his first attempt and he hit the acquisition of signal within 2 minutes. Using his FM rig, a standard packet unit and his Commodore printer, he had perfect packet printout. We then switched over to my SSB rig and were able to copy CW from another "Bird" and the beacon from a third. All, in less than 15 minutes, while learning how to change frequencies to compensate for Doppler shift, on our everyday equipment.

In order to bring more clarity to these new "play pretties" as well as accurate information on the satellites that were already up prior to Sunday's launch, Andy MacAllister, WA5ZIB, has agreed to be our February speaker for the monthly meeting. Andy will tell us what's up there, how to receive it and how to get on "The Bird." For those of you that may not know Andy, be advised that he is one of the most qualified men in the world to speak on RF Satellites and on Dove. Andy is currently a Director of Amsat North America, Vice President of User Services of Amsat N. A., Author of the monthly column HAM SATS in 73 Magazine, Amsat Awards manager, International Control Station of the ZRU tests and internationally respected Satellite expert.

Come join us on Thursday, 8 February, 1990 at 7:30 P.M. in the Missouri City Fire Station for what promises to be a very enlightening and enjoyable evening.

73

Bill Todd-Brown, N5MPN
Program Chairman

BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
(B - V A R C)
1990 - 1991

OFFICERS

N5KXU Bill Dessens President
Res: 721-1844; Bus: 782-1212
6014 Wigton, Houston, TX 77096

N5AFV Allen Mattis Vice- President
Res: 721-3637; Bus: 752-5853
5314 Wigton, Houston, TX 77096

N5OUT Dick Kruse Recording Secretary
Res: 530-0470; Bus: 530-0470
11509 Beechnut, Houston, TX 77072

KB5ICO Susan Edwards Corresponding Secretary
Res: 498-7425
15802 Los Altos, Houston, TX 77083

AK5G Randy Pollard Treasurer
Res: 729-6484; Bus: 729-6484
5507 Braesvalley, Houston, TX 77096

DIRECTORS

WB4LZG Glenn Edwards 3 Year Director
Res: 498-7425; Bus: 776-4024
15802 Los Altos, Houston, TX 77083

N5APW Gerry Borg 2 Year Director
Res: 771-2969; Bus: 953-8521
8426 Stroud, Houston, TX 77036

AA5JW Carl Albrecht 1 Year Director
Res: 495-6443; Bus: 495-6443
11711 Bolero Ct., Stafford, TX 77477

WN5A Jack Van Demark Past President
Res: 495-1121; Bus: 975-8670
7514 Winter Glen, Houston, TX 77072

Technical Advancement

Volunteer Examination Program
WBS166 Stu Lan kin
ND5F Harold Parker

Novice Classes
WB4LZG Glenn Edwards
N5APW Gerry Borg

Initial Coordinator - Novice Class
WBS166 Stu Lan kin

ARRL Liason
WBS166 Stu Lan kin, Chairman

Special Service Club
ND5F Harold Parker

Emergency Communications

Public Relations

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

N5OUT Parliamentarian
Dick Kruse

Net Managers
N5APW Gerry Borg
B-VARC Monday Night Public Service Net

N5AFV Allen Mattis
B-VARC Wednesday Night Rag Chew Net

STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership Committee
KB5ICO Susan Edwards, Chairman
B-VARC Roster
Name Tags and Member Packets
New Members
Renewal Members

Programs

NSMPN Bill Todd-Brown, Chairman
NSNAS Vick Richard
ND5F Harold Parker
WN5A Jack Van Demark
N5OUT Dick Kruse
WB4LZG Glenn Edwards
N5KXU Bill Dessens

Finance

Newsletter Advertising
Other Fund Raising

Publications

KB5EQH Roland Torres, B-VARC Newsletter Editor
KB5EXM Irv Smith, Bulletin Preparation, Mailing

Club Activities

Field Day
Picnic
Transmitter Hunts
Banquet

B-VARC SPRING '90 NOVICE COURSE

Stu Lamkin WB5IGG

Our new Novice Course will have its first class meeting at 7 PM on Monday, March 5 at Strake Jesuit Preparatory School. At this writing fourteen students have enrolled. If the enrollment rate continues this will be another good-sized class.

Please pass the word about this new Novice license course and tell anyone who would like to take this first step in joining our hobby to call me at 777-3345 for additional information.

* * * * *

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE EXAM SESSIONS

Stu Lamkin WB5IGG

B-Varc's Volunteer Examiner Teams offer exams for all classes of Amateur Radio Operators every month in the year on the second Tuesday evening. The Team does not take walk-ins and preregistration is necessary to secure a place at the exam session. Call me at 777-3345 to pre-register or obtain any information regarding the exam procedure or license requirements.

* * * * *

BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
1990 PUBLIC SERVICE HONOR ROLL
compiled by Allen Mattis N5AFV

A. HOUSTON TENNECO MARATHON

Abbott, Brenson	KF5VZ	A
Borg, Gerry	N5APM	A
Cheek, Ralph	KB5DNT	A
Dillard, Ray	W5AF	A
Dyer, Karla	N5L6S	A
Edwards, Glenn	WB4LZG	A
Edwards, Melanie	KB5KLH	A
Edwards, Susan	KB5ICO	A
Freedenberg, Henry	N5HF	A
Gordon, Hy	NCSA	A
Gordon, Irene	N5AYX	A
Hagerman, Dick	WB5SRN	A
Jacob, Travis	N5DON	A
Lamkin, Stu	WB5I66	A
Mattis, Allen	N5AFV	A
Morrison, Henry	W5RIY	A
Nance, Herb	N5GZM	A
Parker, Harold	N5SF	A
Ricketts, Robert	N5JKD	A
Van Demark, Jack	WNSA	A
Wade, Don	WB5IBT	A
Warden, Mike	WB3HZP	A

PLEASE REPORT CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO N5AFV

B-VARC RAG CHEW NET CHECK-INS
3.960 MHZ 8:00PM WEDNESDAY
compiled by Allen Mattis N5AFV

DECEMBER 20, 1989

N5AFV NCS, AK5G, KF3VZ, AA50A, N5MPN,
K6SKV, KB5ION

DECEMBER 27, 1989

N5AFV NCS, AA50A, N5MPN, AK5G, N5ECP,
N15I, K6SKV, KB5JIZ, KB5ION, AASLF,
WJ5B, NSKXU, K6SJT

JANUARY 3, 1990

N5AFV NCS, AA50A, N5PRC, K6SKV, W5SSCE,
W5RNK, KA5DUU, N5MPN, KB5ION, AASLF,
KF5VZ, WB5IBT, W5ZJG

JANUARY 10, 1990

N5AFV NCS, N5ECP, N5MPN, N5PRC, KA5WOT,
WB5I66, KA5DUU, KB5IUA, W5RNK, KB5ION,
W5SSCE, W5DEN, AA50A, AASLF, K6SKV,
WB4LZG, KB5IOE

JANUARY 17, 1990

N5AFV NCS, AA50A, N5MPN, W5RNK, N5ECP,
N5PRC, N5SF, WB5I66, KA5WOT, KF5VZ, W5SSCE,
AK5G, WB5IBT, KB5ION, NSJKY, WB5BIR, W5ZH,
K5CDH, AASLF, WJ5B, NSILI, W5TNK

Back Splatter....

Well, I have taken on the responsibility of editing the B-VARC Newsletter. I will try to do my best to make it as informative and entertaining as possible. I hope it will become something you look forward to receiving each month.

If you will be submitting an article for publication in the newsletter, I ask that it be typed and "camera ready". The deadline for articles will be the 22nd of each month.

I will be making a few changes in the format of the newsletter as time progresses. Submitting articles with compressed print will allow more items to be published in the limited space we have.

Please send me your comments and/or suggestions about this newsletter. I will be more than happy to hear from you. Until next time.....

Roland KB5EQH
Editor

A special THANKS goes to Warner Cable, for supplying the materials to publish the B-VARC Newsletter.

RESULTS OF JANUARY 9TH EXAMS:

by: Harold Parker, N05F

B-VARC again sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examinations that were held on Tuesday evening, January 9, 1990 at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston.

The V.E. Team and Assistants:

Carl Albrecht, AA5JW
Randy Pugh, AA5OA
Stu Lan kin, WB516G
Harold Parker, N05F

A total of fifteen (15) exams were administered during the evening to nine (9) applicants. One (1) unlicensed candidate received his new Technician license. Three (3) other candidates upgraded their licenses with a total of six (6) elements passed. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was forty (40%) percent.

Congratulations to all the following who upgraded:

Lori Dupuy, NSNTF - Extra
William Garrison, KB5LDM - Technician
Joseph Jurecka - Technician
Van Ward, WB5DXP - Technician

Many thanks to all the Team Members and Assistants who volunteer their valuable time and effort each month.

All of us at B-VARC again thank Vincent, WA5ETS, and everyone at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

THERE IS PLENTY OF SPACE

IN THIS AREA FOR YOUR

ARTICLE TO BE PUBLISHED

IN OUR NEWSLETTER. I

WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

NOTES SUCH AS ITEMS

FOR SALE OR SWAP.

TECHNICAL HELP OR IDEAS.

CONGRADULATIONS OR HAPPY

BIRTHDAYS, ETC. ETC. ETC.

SUMMARY OF B-VARC PUBLIC SERVICE ACTIVITIES FOR 1989
Prepared by Allen Mattis NSAFV

I. PUBLIC SERVICE ACTIVITY COMMITTEE

The B-VARC Public Service Activity Committee for 1989 consisted of Ray Dillard, W5FJ; Suzanne Borg, KB5BAY; and Allen Mattis, NSAFV. The committee held no meetings during the year; all necessary communications between committee members were carried out by mail, telephone, radio, or in person at B-VARC general membership or board of director meetings.

Despite this rather loosely organized committee procedure, only one serious problem arose during the year. Three activities, the GAAC 20K, the Alamo Challenge Bike Trek, and the Moonlight Ramble were inadvertently scheduled for the week end of October 14-15th. The B-VARC membership responded with a high level of participation, and each event on that week end was worked by 11 members. This tremendous response reflects very well on our club's membership, and its commitment to public service.

II. PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS FOR 1989

A total of 28 public service events were worked by B-VARC during 1989, compared with 23 for 1988. This total set a record for the highest number of public service events worked by B-VARC in any year of its 12 year history.

The traditional Mothers Day Event held by B-VARC at Sharpstown Mall in past years was cancelled this year by mall management. The event had provided an opportunity to demonstrate amateur radio to the public, and to collect Mothers Day greeting messages from the public for transmission via amateur radio traffic nets.

The 28 public service events in which B-VARC participated during 1989 are listed in an attached table. Most of these events (24 or 85.7%) consisted of various runs, walks or rides. The other events included the Hull Air Show, and a used clothing drive called Shareable Wearables. Only 2 events, ARRL Field Day and the Houston Ham Com-Venture VE Session, were directly related to amateur radio.

III. EVENT CHAIRPERSONS

A total of 14 persons chaired the 28 public service events. These chairpersons are listed in an attached table.

One person, Ray Dillard, W5FJ, chaired 10 events. Five persons chaired 2 events each. A number of the events, such as the Houston Tennesco Marathon and the Moonlight Ramble, were chaired by non-B-VARC members.

IV. EVENT PARTICIPANTS

A total of 59 club members worked the 1989 B-VARC public service events, compared with 55 members in 1988. These participants are listed in the attached B-VARC Public Service Honor Roll for 1989.

The number of participants in each event ranged from as few as 2 to as many as 30 (ARRL Field Day), with an average of 11 members participating in each event. The average club member participating in these events worked 5 events during the year. One member, Ray Dillard, W5FJ, worked 22 events in 1989.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1) The ambitious schedule of public service events in which B-VARC participated during 1989 has left its mark on the club. It is my opinion that B-VARC is suffering from public service event "burn out." B-VARC members worked an average of 2.33 events per month during 1989. Both the event chairpersons and the participants are showing signs of burn out. A larger number of both event chairpersons and participants will be needed if a similar public service event schedule is to be maintained during 1990. B-VARC may wish to consider cutting back on the number of public service events in which it participates, concentrating on quality rather than quantity.

2) The lack of participation in public service activities by approximately 50 percent of the club membership may indicate the need for a change in the nature of these activities. The vast majority (85.7%) of the 1989 public service activities consisted of various runs, walks and rides. Perhaps other activities should comprise a larger percentage of the events. Possible alternate activities recently discussed by members have included amateur radio activities, such as participation in a contest or a special event station. After the program at our December, 1989 general membership meeting, other members expressed an interest in participating in the amateur radio station at M. D. Anderson Hospital. It is my opinion that B-VARC's public service activities should be more diversified than they were in 1989.

3) In 1985, when I first became a member of B-VARC, I remember a number of times when public service events were discussed at general membership meetings. It was stressed that B-VARC members who were working public service events were to only provide communications. Somewhere along the way, things have changed. At some of the recent fun runs, B-VARC has provided sag wagons, sweep vehicles, and other transport vehicles. Our members and their families have provided significant manpower at water stations, and even directed traffic. It may be time to re-examine what B-VARC should do at public service events. Perhaps guidelines should be re-established that emphasize the use of our radio communications skills and equipment to provide worthwhile service to the public.

BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
1989 PUBLIC SERVICE HONOR ROLL
Compiled by Allen Mattis NSAFV

ACTIVITY	DATE	CHAIRPERSON	PARTICIPANTS
A. HOUSTON TENNECO MARATHON	JAN 15	WBSHU	14
B. CHALLENGER CUP 5K	JAN 21	WBSYLB	3
C. FINE ARTS 5K	JAN 28	AA56A	15
D. MOTHER HUBBARD 5K	FEB 12	KBSBAY	7
E. CONOCO RODEO RUN 10K	FEB 18	AA56A	15
F. WOMEN'S HOSPITAL 5K	MAR 05	WASF	9
G. HULL AIR SHOW	MAR 11	KBSBAY	6
H. ALA CLEAN AIR BIKE RIDE	APR 1-2	WBLTIS	18
I. NS-150 BIKE TOUR	APR 8-9	WASF	22
J. MAGIC CIRCLE 10K	APR 16	WASF	5
K. ALA CLEAN AIR BIKE RIDE	APR 23	WASF	4
L. DAD'S DASH 5K	JUN 11	WASF	6
M. ARRL FIELD DAY	JUN 24-25	W562M	30
N. USTS HOUSTON TRIATHLON	JUL 23	WASF	7
O. SHARABLE WEARABLES	JUL 28-29	KSCBU	4
P. GOLD WINGER'S RIDE	AUG 26	WASF	2
Q. ZOO RUN 8K	SEP 16	KBSDMT	10
R. 6RAC 20K	SEP 30	WNSA	15
S. ALAMO CHALLENGE BIKE TREK	OCT 14	WBSYLB	11
T. MOONLIGHT RARBLE	OCT 14-15	NSJKD/KBSDMT/WASF	11
U. JUVENILE DIABETES WALK	OCT 29	WBSBMM	2
V. NS-100 BIKE TOUR	NOV 4	WASF	3
W. HOUSTON CON-VENTION VE SESSION	NOV 5	WNSF	7
X. 6RAC 25K	NOV 11	W56FV	21
Y. CITY RACE VI	NOV 18	WASF	4
Z. JINGLE BELLS 5 MILE RUN	DEC 9	W56FV	28
AA. 6RAC 30K	DEC 17	KBS1CO	15

† Does not include non-B-VARC participating amateur operators

ACTIVITY	DATE	CHAIRPERSON	PARTICIPANTS
A. HOUSTON TENNECO MARATHON	JAN 15	WBSHU	14
B. CHALLENGER CUP 5K	JAN 21	WBSYLB	3
C. FINE ARTS 5K	JAN 28	AA56A	15
D. MOTHER HUBBARD 5K	FEB 12	KBSBAY	7
E. CONOCO RODEO RUN 10K	FEB 18	AA56A	15
F. WOMEN'S HOSPITAL 5K	MAR 05	WASF	9
G. HULL AIR SHOW	MAR 11	KBSBAY	6
H. ALA CLEAN AIR BIKE RIDE	APR 1-2	WBLTIS	18
I. NS-150 BIKE TOUR	APR 8-9	WASF	22
J. MAGIC CIRCLE 10K	APR 16	WASF	5
K. ALA CLEAN AIR BIKE RIDE	APR 23	WASF	4
L. DAD'S DASH 5K	JUN 11	WASF	6
M. ARRL FIELD DAY	JUN 24-25	W562M	30
N. USTS HOUSTON TRIATHLON	JUL 23	WASF	7
O. SHARABLE WEARABLES	JUL 28-29	KSCBU	4
P. GOLD WINGER'S RIDE	AUG 26	WASF	2
Q. ZOO RUN 8K	SEP 16	KBSDMT	10
R. 6RAC 20K	SEP 30	WNSA	15
S. ALAMO CHALLENGE BIKE TREK	OCT 14	WBSYLB	11
T. MOONLIGHT RARBLE	OCT 14-15	NSJKD/KBSDMT/WASF	11
U. JUVENILE DIABETES WALK	OCT 29	WBSBMM	2
V. NS-100 BIKE TOUR	NOV 4	WASF	3
W. HOUSTON CON-VENTION VE SESSION	NOV 5	WNSF	7
X. 6RAC 25K	NOV 11	W56FV	21
Y. CITY RACE VI	NOV 18	WASF	4
Z. JINGLE BELLS 5 MILE RUN	DEC 9	W56FV	28
AA. 6RAC 30K	DEC 17	KBS1CO	15

PLEASE REPORT CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO NSAFV

Catching Rabbits With Your Wits

by: Robert K. Ricketts, N5JKD

B-VARC used to sponsor transmitter (or rabbit) hunts monthly. This was a number of years ago - before I got involved with B-VARC or even amateur radio.

Now I'm trying get people interested in rabbit hunts once again. I organized the first of what I hope to become a quarterly rabbit hunt in B-VARC. The first, scheduled for 20 Jan 90 Sat, was at 11:00 am right after Frosty's sidewalk sale. We even had a prize for the winner - a 1990 International call book valued at \$30 which was graciously donated by Charles Frost, owner of Mission Communications. I have to admit I was a bit disappointed in the turn out. There were only four fox teams to hunt three rabbits. Bad ratio. To give the game more favorable ratio, I changed my role from rabbit to fox - making it five foxes to two rabbits.

When I try to recruit people for our game I'm frequently asked the same thing. "I don't have any direction finding equipment. How can I play the game? Or even stand a chance of winning if I do play?" I've participated in three transmitter hunts during the past year. I was a rabbit in one of them and a fox in the other two. I won both games in which I was a fox. (All the hunts I've been in involved multiple rabbits). I have absolutely no direction finding equipment. Just an Icom HT with a rubber duckie and a Kenwood mobile rig with a 1/4 wave vertical - the kind of equipment we all have. I've won against people using all kinds of RDF gear from home-brew DF antennas to sophisticated commercial equipment. I'm not tooting my horn for self gratification here - just making the point that fancy equipment, albeit useful, is not necessary to play and win. Just some common sense and simple technique. I'll share some of that in this article.

First of all... Having *two* people on your team helps ALOT. One person to drive and the other to monkey with the radios. Although one radio is plenty it's useful to have an HT and mobile rig - both with S meters. When you first begin your pursuit of a given rabbit, use your mobile rig and S meter to track signal strengths. The S meter is VITAL. It'll detect minute changes in signal strength that are not audible. Have the non-driver pay close attention to the S meter (with occasional glances by driver) and navigate accordingly. Stick to North/South and East/West roads - makes tracking easier. Small (or even wild) fluctuations in signal strength mean little. Most S meters are peak reading. You'll need to mentally convert the readings into a moving average. IE: Ignore the peaks and dips - concentrate and place credence in the midrange of the S readings.

Once you reach a sustained full scale reading on your mobile rig, it's time to use the HT. With the duckie installed, use the HT as you did the mobile rig. Logically navigate the area noting high signal readings on the HT S meter. As the signal strength peaks on the HT, reorient the HT horizontally and/or lower the HT to knee level in the car. The car's interior will help null the HT. Another trick is to remove the HT antenna and place a small nail in the BNC center conductor. When you think you are really close, remove the antenna (or nail if using one) and observe the S meter and audio signal. If you see any S meter activity or hear any signal whatsoever then you are within a hundred yards or so of your quarry. An HT with nothing on the BNC is incredibly deaf. So when it hears in this condition - you are getting CLOSE.

Basically what we're doing here is starting with the most sensitive reception we can - the mobile rig. As you peak the meter then move to your next less sensitive operating mode. Once you peak there, move again to a lesser sensitive mode - and so on down to the antenna-less HT. This and a little experience will do you well. I've won both hunts I've entered (as a fox) using just this method. I'm certainly not disputing or undermining the value of DF equipment. It can give the fox a great advantage. BUT, common sense and skill will take you further.

B-VARC is planning to hold these transmitter hunts quarterly on the same day as Frosty's sidewalk sale. The next one will be 21 Apr 90 Sat at about 11:00 am. The time will be firmed up later. If enough people attend (at least twenty) then we'll have three rabbits. You must find all three to win. That makes the challenge greater. The games usually lasts two to three hours and covers about a five to eight mile radius. Please plan to attend the next hunt. I can attest that the adrenaline rush you feel when you're about to win is a thrill! It's a good time and we need players!

B-VARC

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