



B-VARC BULLETIN

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

Editor in Chief: Kelley Hughes N5ULZ (713) 499-9806 FAX: (713) 499-0279 Compuserve ID: 72603,623

The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC) was originally organized in 1978, primarily as an emergency communications group available to assist the communities of Missouri City and Stafford when required. Since that time, BVARC has grown and expanded its activities to become the most active Ham radio club in the southwest Houston area.

Today, BVARC is truly a general-interest club, with an impressive record of Public Service. This commitment to service has been recognized by the Amateur Radio Relay League with the coveted status of Special Service Club. We are proud of our members, who represent the finest in Amateur Radio. Membership is not limited to licensed operators, but is open to anyone with an interest in Amateur Radio. Meetings are held at 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month at the Sugar Land Community Center. Talk-in assistance is available on the 145.47 and 444.55 MHz repeaters.

To obtain information about the club and its various activities, as well as information about joining the club, contact Betty Wilcox, KA0TEN, at (713) 859-6512.

Volume: 17 Issue: 10

October 1994

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

From: Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
P. O. Box 1630
Missouri City, Texas 77459



Don't forget! BVARC picnic is Saturday, October 29th!

B-VARC MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, Nov. 3 7:30 pm	Board of Directors Meeting Sugar Land Community Center
Thursday, Nov. 10 7:30 pm	General BVARC Membership Meeting - Sugar Land Community Center

Allen Mattis N5AFV
5314 Wigton Drive
Houston, TX 77096



November 1994

B-VARC Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	7 7:30 PM 34-94 Swap Net 146.94 8:00 PM Fort Bend County Emergency Net 145.49 9:00 PM BVARC Net 145.47 & Linked Repeaters	1 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	2 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 Khz)	3 7:30 PM B-VARC Board Meeting: Sugar Land Community Center	4	5 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
13 1:30 PM Texas State RACES Net 7.248 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	14 7:30 PM 34-94 Swap Net 146.94 8:00 PM Fort Bend County Emergency Net 145.49 9:00 PM BVARC Net 145.47 & Linked Repeaters	8 6:00 PM Amateur Exam Session 8:00 PM Strake Jesuit College Prep. 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	9 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 Khz)	10 7:30 PM Membership Meeting Sugar Land Commu- nity Center	11	12 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
20 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	21 7:30 PM 34-94 Swap Net 146.94 8:00 PM Fort Bend County Emergency Net 145.49 9:00 PM BVARC Net 145.47 & Linked Repeaters	15 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	16 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 Khz)	17	18	19 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
27 1:30 PM Texas State RACES Net 7.248 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	28 7:30 PM 34-94 Swap Net 146.94 8:00 PM Fort Bend County Emergency Net 145.49 9:00 PM BVARC Net 145.47 & Linked Repeaters	22 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	23 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 Khz)	24	25	26 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
		29 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	30 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 Khz)			

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Notes From the President

by Doug Holley, KE5SR

The annual BVARC picnic is October 29 and will be catered by Schultz Barbecue. If you would like to donate a dessert, it would be appreciated by all. People will start gathering at noon to sit and visit; the food will be served at 3:00, so arrive when you can. This year we will be joined by the Stephen F. Austin Radio Club group. We are looking forward to meeting new friends. Like the campout, bring your lawn chairs and drinks (tea will be served with the meal). This year we need some extra tables; if you can fit one in your trunk, it would be much appreciated. There will be good food and good times for all, so plan to attend.

Marie and I took a two-week vacation in September/October and traveled to New England to see the leaves turn. The season was early, so we did not see the full beauty until we reached Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. The view made the trip all worthwhile. The weather was rainy and cool, so we did not get to camp out but two nights, once in New York and once in North Carolina.

Along the way we made many ham friends on the radio. Hams helped us when we got lost or informed us of the things to see that we did not know about—they were most helpful. Just having call plates and an antenna on the car brought us many calls from passing hams on 146.52. I ran across one ham which was located temporarily on Mt. Greylock in Massachusetts at an elevation of 3400 feet with a nine element beam. I was in New York state, 300 miles away, and I worked simplex. My contact was no match for the Canadian stations he was able to work. The radio made our long trip a little more enjoyable and the miles go by a little faster.

The first planning session for our future Gulf Coast Hamvention has been scheduled for October 15, so I will have more to say in the November newsletter.

73 de KE5SR

BVARC RAG CHEW CHECK-INS

3.960 MHz 8:00pm Wednesdays

Compiled by Mel Thatcher, KB5ION

September 7, 1994

KE5SR (Net Control), W5EFB, N5UOG, KG5KV, WA5SCE, WN5A, W5IHY, WD5CJL, N5CPA, N5YKR, W5AFV, W5GLD, WB5VYR, AB5OK

September 14, 1994

KE5SR (Net Control), W5EFB, WN5A, N5CPA, K15SC, KB5PAJ, W5GLD, WD5CJL, KG5KV, WA5SCE, WB5VYR, N5UOG, KD5GM, W5GHK, KB5ZRV

September 21, 1994

N5CPA (Net Control), N5UOG, KG5KV, W5GHK, WA9YNJ, N5OAC, W5GLD, KB5ZRV, KF5NU, WD5CJL, W5EFB, WA5SCE, WB5NES

September 28, 1994

N5CPA (Net Control), WD5CJL, N5AFV, N5OAC, WJ5B, N5UOG, N5YKR, AB5OK, KG5KV, WA5SCE, W5IHY, WB5VYR, K15SC, KB5PAJ, WN5A, KB5LFU, W5GHK, KD5GM

Don Hadley Becomes a Silent Key

by Doug Holley, KE5SR

On September 24, 1994, Don Hadley, N5VRR, passed away after a lengthy illness. Don had a stroke and lapsed into a coma earlier this year and never regained consciousness.

Don worked as a Safety Engineer and was a reserve Harris County Sheriff's Deputy. Both Don and his wife Reeda, KC5CCS, have been long term members of BVARC. Don was well respected and liked within the BVARC membership. Whenever a need came up within our group, Don was always there to lend a helping hand. Don will be missed by BVARC and friends. We all wish Reeda well and good things in her future.

1994 BVARC Officers and Directors

President.....	Doug Holley, KE5SR	342-8028
Vice-President.....	Melvin Thatcher, KB5ION.....	499-2179
Treasurer.....	Sam Wilson, N5CPA	723-9952
Recording Secretary.....	Bud King, N5UOG	494-3741
Corresponding Secretary.....	Vincent Orlando, WA5ETS	774-7651
3-Year Director.....	Claude Sessions, K5HFY	242-6069
2-Year Director.....	Vic Richard, N5NAS	461-3331
1-Year Director.....	Bill Dessens, N5KXU	721-1844
Past President.....	Betty Wilcox, KA0TEN	859-6512

Board of Directors Meeting

by Bud King, N5UOG

A quorum of the B-VARC Board of Directors met at the Sugar Land Community Center on October 6, 1994. This was the tenth meeting of the Board for the 1994 calendar year.

The following Board members were in attendance: Doug Holley, KE5SR; Betty Wilcox, KA0TEN; Sam Wilson, N5CPA; Victor Richard, N5NAS; Bud King, N5UOG; Claude Sessions, K5HFY; and Bill Dessens, N5KXU.

President Holley, KE5SR, opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Bud King, N5UOG, submitted the minutes of the September Board meeting, and they were approved unanimously.

Sam Wilson, N5CPA, the Club Treasurer, reported a balance of \$3,247.67 in the treasury as of September 30, 1994. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously. Sam Wilson also reported that the Club membership was up to 239.

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, in his report to the Board, stressed the need for additional member participation in the events sponsored by B-VARC. Mike indicated a need for a "Work Shop" devoted to the training of new HAMS to be effective volunteer communicators for future events. Mike introduced Steve Leslie of Troop 1631, Sugar Land who explained the Boy Scouts "JAMBOREE ON THE AIR" event to the Board, and was enlisting the help of any of our members who cared to participate. Mr. Leslie indicated that a sponsorship of Troop 1631 by B-VARC would be welcomed.

The Rag Chew Net continues to be alive and well, as reported by Doug Holley. Check-in's continue to range in the 14 to 18 number, per session.

Al Zermeno, KK5W, reported that he and Kenny Manchester, NZ5I, had arranged a meeting of individuals from 15 separate HAM Clubs on October 15 for the purpose of discussing the formation of an organization that would address the problems of promoting a HAM CONVENTION for the Gulf Coast Area.

A motion was passed unanimously to purchase a Gin Pole.

The Board was reminded of the "B-VARC CAMP OUT" which is set for October 22nd.

Randy Pollard, AK5G, presented to the Board information

concerning a project that B-VARC may want to explore for future action. The project concerns the re-transmission of the Space Shuttle Audio. Randy will present the information to the General Membership at the October 13th regular meeting for the purpose of obtaining membership feed-back.

Bill Dessens, N5KXU, mentioned the need for a uniform method of recognizing the deceased XYL's of B-VARC members in the "Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club" pamphlet. After much discussion it was decided that the subject should be studied further before a firm decision would be made by the Board.

President Holley adjourned the meeting at 9:40 PM.

REVIEW OF THE NEW ICOM IC-T21A

by R.L. Caron, KK8GP

INITIAL IMPRESSION

Measuring about 4.5H x 2W x 1.5D, the T21A is among the smallest of the current crop of miniature radios on the market. Design is definitely contemporary, but without that sculpted pseudo-cell-phone-in-pastel-grey look of other recent offerings from ICOM. This is a radio men who do not carry bags should like. The radio has a quality feel about it: the battery fits tightly in its compartment and the backlit buttons are solid in operation. The audio is remarkably robust for such a small unit, proving that feeble audio is not a price one has to pay for compactness. The T21 fits naturally into either hand, and should be very comfortable to use.

THE NEW CONNECTOR

The antenna itself is smaller than usual at about 3.5 inches and is quite slim, very much in proportion to the overall design. And the familiar BNC connector is gone. ICOM claims the much smaller SMA connector is more reliable and offers better efficiency for VHF and UHF. As many of us have experienced problems with BNC's under portable conditions, it's hard to argue the dependability angle, but it remains to be seen if this change will become widespread enough to warrant easily-available antennas and adapters. Motorola has used this connector for some time in their commercial gear.

COVERAGE

This is a 1 1/2-bander, meaning full transmit/receive on either 2 meters (T21A) or 440 (T41A), with receive-only capability on the other. Out of the box or after reset, it's strictly ham band on both sides. Once expanded with a simple keyboard mod, it blossoms to what appears to be DC to daylight coverage, even with 30khz spacing in certain forbidden zones! But alas, the little radio is deaf under 10C and over 500 megs, regardless of what that dial says! While

that super-wide coverage would have made this into a near perfect take-everywhere radio, it still is quite a package for something you could lose in a large coat pocket. On the VHF side, you get full capability on 2 meters and respectable reception from the airband (automatic or manual selection of AM) through the VHF public service band, tapering off to scratchy at the NOAA weather frequencies. On the "bonus" band, you should get excellent reception from the 70cm ham band through 470, using the supplied miniature ducky. When adapters or other antennas become available, perhaps even better performance will be seen in the air band and the upper reaches of the VHF range. Signals in the UHF T-band were not available to test exactly where the deafness begins, but higher up the dial, in the 800 range, not a whisper was heard, even directly under a cell site tower.

FEATURES

Even the most inexpensive of today's HTs boast of dozens of features, with some so arcane that the people who write the manuals seem puzzled. So we won't deal with the 'musical wake-up by crossband frequency skip programmed scan with priority sampling to the call channel'...although I think that's possible! Programming the memory channels is fairly intuitive, and requires only a quick read of the included pocket card to become familiar with the procedure. Once learned, most of the other commands necessary to get full use of the radio will stay with you, and reference to printed material should not be necessary after the first few days. With more use of CTCSS or PL in both ham and public service installations, this feature has become a necessity in hand held radios and ICOM includes full encode and decode with their American versions. The T21A also has tone decode on the receive-only band, useful for fighting the pager RFI in urban areas. Some of the newer radios now offer tone search capability, but ICOM does them all one better with the 21's automatic tone store! Very useful, especially when venturing into new territory.

MEMORY

With 100 base memories, six band-edge search memories for each side, and a call channel on the primary band, the T-21A ranks among the best of the HT's currently on the market. One interesting and useful feature of this new radio is Select Memory. You can create a sub-set of your 100 memories, with as few as 1 or as many as 30, from either band, for quicker scanning or recall. You can also skip or mask any of the 100 in base memory. Birdies, data channels and dead carriers can be programmed out of the search ranges, so you have lots of options for scanning.

BATTERIES

Standard-equipment is a 6-volt 800 milliampere battery which fits completely into the body of the radio. Other options include a longer-life 1100 mil unit that extends the length of the radio by a half an inch or so, a high-power 600 mil battery that really sticks out there, and a case for 4 AA alkalines that everybody should buy even if for use only in emergencies. There is a battery life indicator on the main

display that the book says is only accurate with the dry cells, but I found it useful to alert me to near exhaustion of my rechargeable pack. Battery life should be excellent with four selectable save cycles and a 15 milliwatt (that's about 1/65th of a watt) power output setting. I got over 35 hours of listening time out of the supplied battery, which included a five-minute QSO at the super-low output. The repeater was several miles away, generating amazed disbelief from the other end along with compliments on the quality of the audio.

OTHER USEFUL FEATURES

The T21A has a number of other features which can be toggled on or off in the SET mode. One of these most will find useful is the automatic repeater function. This will automatically select a plus or minus offset when you choose a repeater output frequency (based on the ARRL band plan in effect across most of the country.) You can also let it set a tone encode automatically if you live in an area where repeater trustees have decided on a common area PL. The main display includes a 24-hour clock which can turn the radio on or off at pre-set times, or shut the radio off after a pre-determined amount of time for those who tend to be forgetful. The on/off switch is on top and requires a deliberate and extended push, so accidental activation is next to impossible. For very specialized use, ICOM includes pager, code squelch, pocket beep and Whisper mode, although most will probably only try these once or twice if at all. But those capabilities are there if needed, and certainly do not get in the way of straightforward operation.

CONCLUSION

This new offering from ICOM looks, feels, and sounds like a winner. It has a number of features that are truly useful and not just some marketing gimmick. It's not the ultimate radio we have all been looking for, as some will want full 70cm capability and even wider out-of band coverage. But it looks like we are not too far away from the day when a full dual-band radio with tight DC to daylight (with cellular blocked, of course) receive will be stuffed into a package the size of the IC T21A. I personally applaud ICOM's return to a design which looks more like a radio than a phone. My cell phone is a business and convenience tool. But when I have the choice, I leave the flippy behind and take the T21A. Check this one out. You may find it irresistible!



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Lou Kronberg
Chairman of the Board
WSIH

The World of Ten Ten

International

by Al Mattis N5AFV

The Chapter Coordinator for Ten Ten International, Dave Prichard, KA5OVO, has announced his resignation. Any Ten Ten member interested in being considered for the position should contact Linda Barnes, KJ4FM. Ten Ten International has announced that official membership badges will now be available to members. The badges, made by NV5A, The Sign Man of Baton Rouge, will range from \$8.50 to \$13.25 in cost depending on the style. Details will be in the next issue of the Ten Ten International News.

The special certificates issued by the Houston SHOT chapter to commemorate the 25th anniversary of man's first landing on the moon have been printed and mailed. Approximately 175 amateur operators sent SASE's to the chapter after qualifying for the certificate. The SHOT chapter wishes to thank Bruce Paige, KB5ZRV, for his help during the design and printing of the certificates. Anyone who sent an SASE to the chapter, but did not receive a certificate, should contact the chapter head, Mike Davidson, KC5CP.

The SHOT chapter is pleased to welcome its newest local member, Donn Washburn, N5XWB. It's nice to see the continued local support of the chapter, even when band conditions are poor. The major purpose of Ten Ten International is to encourage the use of the ten meter band. If we don't use it, we may lose it.

In order to encourage activity on the ten meter band, the Houston SHOT chapter has announced a special upgrade program for November. This program will give SHOT members an opportunity to upgrade their SHOT point value. During the month of November, members will collect Voyager numbers for 1 point each and Discovery numbers for 2 points each. Voyager and Discovery are SHOT chapter upgrades that have been previously issued. A SHOT member's point value will be increased by one fifth of the points they collect during the November special. It is possible for a SHOT member holding all upgrades to double their point value during this special.

Ten Ten paper chasers continue to be active on 28.345 MHz. Chapters with specials for paper chasers this month include Ocean State (RI), Steel City (IL), and Branding Iron (TX). The appointment of new certificate managers has been announced for the Crazy Eights (PA), Branding Iron II (TX), City of Lights (IL) and Old Dominion (VA) chapters. The 51st State (MI) chapter has gone QRT. A new chapter,

Omaha Zero Net (NE) has been formed. The certificate manager for the Peach State (GA) chapter has moved to Texas, but will continue to administer the Peach State chapter upgrade program.

Propagation on the ten meter band has not been very good the last few weeks. The summer E-layer openings have become few and far between, and when they occur, they only last a short time. Band openings as brief as ten or fifteen minutes in length, but with very strong signals, have recently been reported. The number of DX contacts, particularly with Latin Americans, has been increasing. F-layer winter propagation should appear within the next few weeks, bringing openings to both coasts and an improvement in DX conditions.


Remember, the Houston S.H.O.T. (Space Houston On Ten) net meets every Tuesday evening at 8 pm local time on 28.488 MHz. All amateurs are welcome to check in, even if they do not have a Ten Ten number. If you are not a member of Ten Ten International and wish to join the organization, please check into the net. There are a lot of exciting activities in Ten Ten, and many friendly people can be found on the ten meter band.

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KJ5BG
x-WA5NRH

Results of the October 11th

Amateur Exams

by Harold Parker, ND5F

B-VARC again sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examinations that were held on Tuesday evening, September 13, 1994, at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston.

V.E. TEAM:

Henry Morrison, W5RIY
Steve Moynihan, AA5LF
Harold Parker, ND5F

Assistants:

Craig Culver, AB5OK
Cass Germany, KG5IT
Irene Gordon, N5AYX
Don Schexnaider, AB5IV

A total of 32 exams were administered during the evening to 20 applicants. Four (4) unlicensed candidates received their Codeless Technician licenses. Three (3) other applicants upgraded with a total of 16 elements passed. The overall pass rate* for the evening was 50%.

Congratulations to the following who upgraded and/or passes exams.

Lance Bailey - Technician
Roger Clayden - Technician
Harold Cunningham - Technician
John Gilmore, Pending - Element 3B
Louis House, KD5GM - Extra
Pierre Lugosch, KC5ICC - Advanced
Jo McFarland - Technician
Pete Norris, KJ5SS - Element 4B
John Porter, Pending - Element 4B
Paul Roeder, KC5IWI - Advanced
Jerry Thomas, KC5IWO - Element 4A
Raymond Wilkins - Element 2
Michael Williams - Element 2

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.

73 de ND5F

I Speak -

Randy Pollard, AK5G
Certified Public Accountant
(713) 467-6123

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PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS UPDATE

by Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

This is just a quick reminder of all the events scheduled this fall. There are still plenty of positions open for all the events. Come on out and have fun. There will be tee-shirts for the events and all the radio operators get one. If anyone has any questions about working anything, please give me a call (home: 771-4625 or work: 443-8636).

Well, the busiest month of the year is just about over, and so far there the events have been successful. Let me wrap up everything that went on in the first three weeks of October. The MS Enduro Skate went very well and had no major problems. The event coordinator, Randy Pollard, AK5G, told me the event was fun and would be a good training ground next year for new hams who are interested in working public service events. The MS Society was very pleased with the hams' performance and will ask for us next year. Eight hams worked the event.

The 5K #1 Challenge Run went as well as it could during a rainstorm. The race started five minutes late due to the rain and had about 100 runners. This was a small event, and it was the first time that it was done in Houston. It was duplicated in several cities across the U.S on the same day to benefit the fight against crime. One interesting note was that the oldest participant was an eighty-two-year old man who walked the course in around an hour and a half with no problems. Carl Hacker, event coordinator, said the eight hams did an excellent job.

The Alamo Challenge Bike Ride to San Antonio, October 15 and 16, had only a few glitches and was basically very uneventful. There was rain on Saturday morning, which probably convinced about 100 riders not to show up, but there were still 350 who did. Sunday morning there was rain as well, but it stopped after about two hours. There was only one rider transported for an accident, and after he was checked out, he continued riding to San Antonio. About 45 hams were used in the event, with the bulk coming from the Houston area. New to the ride this year were hams from the Stephen F. Austin ARC, Rock Island ARC, Gonzales ARC, and the San Antonio Repeater Organization. Also new was the repeater in Gonzales (147.260 plus). This repeater is located at the high school and had about a 30 mile radius. As usual, the repeater had been down for maintenance but was put back on the air just in time. I thank all the repeater trustees for the use of the repeaters used on the ride.

The Gonzales ARC in a very new and very young club with many members still in high school. I have invited several members to Houston to help with the Marathon because

they were very impressed with the coordination of a large event.

The American Lung Association was pleased with the hams' organization and impressed with how well all the groups worked together.

Carl Hacker and Claudia Kozinetz, who were Net Control for the Gallery Furniture 20K run, said it went very smoothly and there was only one medical emergency. Doug Holley, KE5SR, was the first to spot it and first to broadcast the information. The run was wet due to a downpour that started just as the race got under way. I haven't found out how many runners there were, but about 2,200 had signed up by the Thursday before the race. Eighteen hams from BVARC worked the event.

Events of the 15th and 16th; The airshow was all but rained out, and I know that several BVARC hams worked the event. The Moonlight Bicycle Ramble, which was coordinated by ECHO, was held on Sunday morning with about 1600 participants. There were several minor medical incidents caused by road conditions and the weather, but nothing major. I also heard that the ham spotters on the course were the first ones to call in the incidents. Nineteen hams were used in the event.

October 30 is the Texas Coastal bike ride. If anyone is interested on working the event, please call Bret Prichard, N5VOY, at h/w 645-5400. There will be about 2,000 riders on the event, and it is a fun event to work.

I have decided to continue as Public Service Coordinator for BVARC for next year. I feel that this year has been training for me, and next year should be breeze. If anyone is interested in being an event coordinator for next year, please let me know. There will be about twelve events for next year, not counting the Marathon. Most of the events use twenty hams or less and are a good base to build coordinating skills.

The Public Service Honor Roll is being updated and will be in the December newsletter. I lost some information needed for the update, but finally found it. With the increase in articles submitted to the newsletter, it has been very difficult to find space for it since it takes up a full page.

Remember that on Saturday, November 5, 1994, at noon, a public service training class to inform new hams about the finer points of working public service events is scheduled. The class will be held at the Greenbriar Annex of the Southwest College of the Houston Community College System, 13645 Murphy, Suite 227, Room 113. This is

located on Murphy Road between Cash Road and Highway 90A, behind Wendy's. This training class should help ease some of your concerns and prepare you for what goes on during an event. Attendance at the class is not required before working an event, but it will definitely help. For more information, contact Carl Hacker, Mike Hardwick, or Bret Prichard (calls and phone numbers below).

UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

DATE: Sunday, October 30, 1994
Event: Texas Coastal Bike Ride
Volunteers needed: 35-45
HAM Contact: Bret Prichard, HAMS, N5VOY, w/645-5400

DATE: Saturday, November 5, 1994
Event: Public Service Training Class
Location: 13845 Murphy Road, Suite 227, Room 113
Contact: Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, h/771-4625, w/443-8636

DATE: Sunday, November 13, 1994
Event: 25K Marathon Warm-up
Volunteers needed: 30-35
HAM Contact: Allen Mattis, N5AFV, h/721-3637 w/752-5752

DATE: Saturday, December 10, 1994
Event: 30K Marathon Warm-up
Volunteers needed: 30 - 35
HAM Contact: Don Wade, WB5IBT, h/242-6706 w/867-3262

DATE: January 15, 1995
Event: Houston Tenneco Marathon
Volunteers needed: 120 - 140
HAM Contact: Carl Hacker, KB5LDY, w/792-4359
h/977-9754

Special Thanks to

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39

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MEDFER ACTIVITY PICKS UP

by Al Mattis N5AFV

The winter season is nearly here, and with the cooler weather comes lower levels in atmospheric noise and QRN. One frequency segment that sees an increase in activity as the atmospheric noise drops is the range from 1630 to 1700 kHz. A group of medium frequency experimental radio enthusiasts, or MedFERs, operate in this range.

FCC Part 15 low power rules permit the operation of unlicensed stations in this range with a maximum input power limit of 100 mw and a maximum antenna length of ten feet. The antennas used are usually verticals, with some type of capacitance top hat. Transmitted signals are usually CW in a beacon format. Many of the MedFERs who are amateur radio operators use the suffix of their call sign as their MedFER identification.

Last winter I was able to consistently log MedFER station Y in New Orleans on a frequency of 1646.5 kHz. Loggings of MedFER stations 1500 to 2000 miles away are reported each winter. Over two dozen MedFERs are known to be currently active in the United States. Besides Y in New Orleans, Houston area listeners should be able to copy RLR in Corpus Christi on 1673.5 kHz.

This is the last winter season that MedFER reception will be relatively easy. By the end of 1995, the FCC is expected to assign frequencies to AM broadcast stations in an expanded broadcast band from 1640 to 1700 kHz. The major interference to MedFERs at the present time comes from the CW transmissions of drift net buoys. Any amateur radio operator who can tune 160 meters can also tune the MedFER band. Consider tuning the MedFER band some evening this winter, and you may log a MedFER or even some of the controversial drift net buoys.

ISIRIAY IRF

Dear IRS:

I have not been able to sleep at night because I cheated on last year's income tax return. Enclosed please find my check for \$1000.

PS: If I still can't sleep, I will send you the rest.

-contributed by Bill Dessens, N5KXU

3rd BVARC Technician QSO Party

November, 12 1994

Exchange: Call & Class & Location in City

Example: KB5ZRV, Advanced, Galeria; or
N5XWB, Technician, Stafford

Repeaters: MERA 145.47 and 444.550, KARS 147.20,
JSCARC 146.64 and CLARC 442.750 and 444.275

Saturday, Nov 12 from 6am-9pm we are going to have our 3rd Technician Contest. This time, we will be using repeaters of MERA, CLARC, JSCARC and KARS. Both 2 meter and 70 cm. This will give wider coverage of the Houston/Harris County area and involve more amateurs than just BVARC members as we will be using the Clear Lake Amateur Radio Club 70 cm repeaters, the Katy Amateur Radio Society 2 meter repeater, the Memorial Emergency Radio Association (BVARC) 2 meter and 70 cm repeaters and the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club (JSCARC) 2 meter repeater.

The purpose is to get technicians used to field day operations. Technicians need to make contacts with as many other stations during this time and exchange their call sign and class along with the part of the city they are operating from. All stations that submit logs will receive a certificate and I will announce the top 5 stations on 2 meters and top 5 stations on 70 cm on the KARS, CLARC and BVARC nets.

Remember you can only use the 145.47, 146.64, 147.20, 442.750, 444.275 and 444.550 repeaters and no others. Please record your scores separately for 2 meter and 70cm.

For scoring, count each contact with another technician as 1 point, general as 2 points, an advanced 3 points and extra 4 points. In addition, for each different part of the city worked, score 1 multiplier, such as Alief, Sharpstown, Meyerland, League City, or Aldine. All general, advanced and extras are encouraged to participate to give the technicians some experience.

I will be on most of the day to help with any questions or explain what is going on for those that might stumble across our contest.

You can only work a station once unless that station is mobile using a different location or on a different band. Hence, you can work KB5ZRV on 70 cm and on 2 meter. If he were mobile and operating KB5ZRV, Alief then KB5ZRV, Galeria, then KB5ZRV, Downtown you would have 3 contacts (or possibly 6 if on both bands).

The correct transfer will be KB5ZRV, Advanced, Alief. The other station would then say N5XWB, Technician, Stafford. After you have scored all the class of licenses, then count the number of different locations in the city worked and multiply the total by that number. Keep the scores for each band separate. Repeat the process for 70cm. This is the same way it's done in real contests.

Remember, if any emergency traffic arises, it has priority on any repeater.

Have fun and if you have any questions, give me a call.

Send copies of your logs to me:

Bruce Paige, KB5ZRV
BVARC Contest Manager
POB 310
Alief, TX 77411

Bulletin Deadline

Please remember: The deadline for articles to be considered for publication in the Bulletin is the 10th of the month of issue. The last couple of issues have been slightly delayed pending receipt of articles. Contingent upon my "real job" schedule, I would like to have the Bulletin ready for printing by the 15th, and cannot meet this if I do not have all articles in hand by the 10th. As always, the preferred method for receiving bulletin articles is via some type of electronic medium. You can Email articles via Compuserve to Compuserve ID 72603,623 or via Internet to address 72603.623@compuserve.com. If you would prefer, you can mail me a 3.5-inch floppy disk with your article. The disk will be returned. The files can be in either ASCII or some type of word processor format. If you have any questions regarding how to submit a file, please call me at 499-9806. If you do not have access to a computer, you can FAX me your information at 499-0279, or simply mail it to me.

73 de N5ULZ
Kelley Hughes, Editor, BVARC Bulletin