



# 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: 11

November 1994

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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



### B-VARC MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, Dec. 1 7:30 pm	Board of Directors Meeting Sugar Land Community Center
Thursday, Dec. 8 7:30 pm	General BVARC Membership Meeting - Sugar Land Community Center

Sam Wilson N5CPA  
5931 Fontenelle  
Houston, TX 77035-5319



# December 1994

## B-VARC Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>4</b> 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	<b>5</b> 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	<b>6</b> 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	<b>7</b> 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 KHz)	<b>8</b> 7:30 PM Membership Meeting Sugar Land Commu- nity Center	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 7:00 AM 30-K Marathon Warm-up 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
<b>11</b> 1:30 PM Texas State RACES Net 7.248 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	<b>12</b> 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	<b>13</b> 6:00 PM Amateur Exam Session Strake Jesuit College Prep. 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	<b>14</b> 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 KHz)	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
<b>18</b> 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	<b>19</b> 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	<b>20</b> 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	<b>21</b> 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 KHz)	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)
<b>25</b> 1:30 PM Texas State RACES Net 7.248 7:30 PM A.R.E.S. Net 147.30	<b>26</b> 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	<b>27</b> 8:00 PM 10-10 SHOT Net 28.488 10:00 PM AMSAT 147.10	<b>28</b> 8:00 PM B-VARC Rag Chew 3.960 (Busy? +3 KHz)	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7:30 AM B-VARC Breakfast 9:00 AM Hou. Emer- gency Management NET 146.84 (9:30 on 3.905)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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			

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	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				

## Notes From the President

by Doug Holley, KE5SR

I hope this November has been a good month for everyone. The 1994 year is winding down quickly. With the elections of our 1995 officers completed, it is time to think of the future and how we can improve on our club in the coming year. New officers and new ideas will lead to increased membership and positive things for the club.

Each year with our dues, we contribute items to the club that we can use in the coming years. A couple of the major items that we have purchased this year are a gin pole and a BVARC banner. We are proud to have the banner and thank Lou (W5IHY) for the fabrication. The gin poles that we have used in the past were borrowed from persons outside our organization. Thanks to Bill Dessens (N5KXU), we were able to do this--but as a group we would have felt badly if this equipment had been damaged.

Speaking of responsibility, the new gin pole is available for any member of our club who needs to use it. If you damage the pole, you are responsible for the repair. Climbing towers and using gin poles requires knowledge and skill of what you are doing. You need to know your limits and know about climbing before you start or arrange for someone else that is qualified. Damage to yourself, equipment, or others is the last thing we want.

The picnic in October turned out to be the best ever. The weather was great. We had the HF and two meter radios on the air. The food could have not been better. Thanks to all that contributed desserts. Just one week earlier, the raging Brazos was four feet from the top of the hill where our house is, and yet this Saturday left hardly a sign that the river had ever been there. The turnout was very good. Our yearly picnic typically draws the largest gathering of any of our group activities.

On October 15, 1994, Al (KK5W) and I hosted troop 1631 at the M.D. Anderson ham station. This was all part of Scout Jamboree on the air for 1994. Each of the scouts made a ham contact, mostly with other scouts. Attending were Luke Walker, Bruce Moats, Joshua Johnson and Scoutmasters Steve Leslie and Robert Merkle. On October 16, Al hosted twenty additional scouts, both girl scouts and boy scouts. They were Jennifer LeBlanc, Michel LeBlanc, Eric Brown, Kevin Collins, Roger Harper, Sean Guins, Saced Bnagas, Jason LeBlanc, Dour Brown, Theresa Harper, Pat Collins, Ryan Collins, Josh Vinson, Jeff Taylor, Johnathan Grant, Avoy Taylor, Richard Fudge, Debbie Bryant and Sue Venson. Congratulations to all the scouts and we look forward to the 1995 Scout Jamboree on the air.

On October 15, 1994, a group of hams assembled at the Houston Public Library on Westheimer to initiate plans to form a new Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Convention Association. There were 18 members in attendance. Dr. Al Zermeno and Kenney Manchester have taken the leadership role in forming the new association. Attending from BVARC with Al was Doug Holley, Harold Parker, Bruce Paige and Allen Mattis. Planning had been underway

**BVARC RAG CHEW CHECK-INS**  
3.960 MHz 8:00pm Wednesdays  
Compiled by Mel Thatcher, KB5ION

*October 5, 1994*

KE5SR (Net Control), KG5KV, N5CPA, WA5SCE,  
WD5CJL, K15SC, KB5PAJ, W5GHIK, N5UOG,  
W5IHY, KB5ZRV, WN5A, WA5TWL,  
W5NP2MCW

*October 12, 1994*

KE5SR (Net Control), WD5CJL, N5AOC, N5CPA,  
N5KXU, N5AFV, N5UOG, W5GLD, WN5A,  
K15SC, KB5PAJ

*October 19, 1994*

KE5SR (Net Control), KB5ION, WN5A, N5OAC,  
N5AFV, K15SC, W5IHY, AB5OK, KB5PAJ,  
W5GLD, KC5GCP, N5CPA, KG5KV, KF5NU,  
N5UOG

*October 26, 1994*

KB5ION (Net Control), WD5CJL, KE5SR, N5AFV,  
K15SC, KB5PAJ, W5GLD, N5UOG, KG5KV,  
W5IHY, KC5GCP, N5CPA, N5ECP, W5GHIK,  
KB5PBZ, AB5OK, WN5A

previously. Four of the most successful ham clubs had been contacted and polled to evaluate why they were successful and establish problems and mistakes they had made before becoming the more successful clubs.

Although at the October 15 meeting no firm plans were adopted, listed are some of the suggestions and philosophy that we agreed to.

1. Form a core group of 7 to 9 people to be responsible for all final operating decisions.
2. Clubs and organizations will form steering committees to assist the board.
3. The association would be managed and run as a profit organization.
4. Location for the first site should accommodate 2500 attendees with facilities to expand to 5000+.
5. The convention date would likely be changed from November to early October.
6. Several people have volunteered to be part of the first core group. The remainder will be picked at our November 12 meeting.

We made a lot of progress for a first meeting with the majority of the remaining decisions to be completed at our next meeting. Work will begin on all aspects of the hamvention immediately afterwards. With the talent and enthusiasm we have assembled, the future is indeed bright and the Houston area can look forward to having a major successful Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Convention.

73 de KE5SR  
Doug Holley

## 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 November 3, 1994. This was the eleventh 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; Mel Thatcher, KB5ION; and Bill Dessens, N5KXU.

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

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

Sam Wilson, N5CPA, the Club Treasurer, reported a balance of \$2,627.41 in the treasury as of October 31, 1994. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously. Sam Wilson also reported that the Club membership was up to 245. Sam stated that 72 persons paid for their dinner at the B-VARC picnic which was held at Doug Holley's residence on November 29.

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, reporting on Public Service Events, advised the Board that there were three events remaining on 1994 schedule: The Public Service Training Class; The 25 K Marathon Warm-up; and The 30 K Marathon Warm-up, Mike stated that he had approximately 11 events scheduled for 1995. Allen Mattis, N5AFV, Net Control for the 25 K Marathon Warm-up, explained that due to a conflicting event on November 13 he had resorted to getting volunteer radio communicators from several local clubs, which in his opinion was great to have the various clubs working together on Public Service Events.

Mel Thatcher KB5ION, as Net Manager of the B-VARC Rag Chew Net, reported the increase of QRM being experienced was due, in part, to the change in time and the up-coming winter season. Mel requested that he be relieved of his Net Manager duties effective in 1995. Sam Wilson, N5CPA, volunteered to take over the responsibility of Net Manager of the B-VARC Rag Chew Net for 1995.

Dwayne Jones, KB5YTA, reminded the Board that the B-VARC Camp-out has been scheduled for November 19 and 20, with November 16 as the Go - No Go decision date.

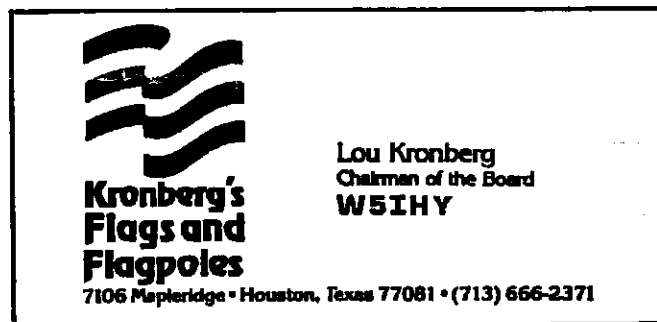
The following information was submitted to the Board and approved unanimously:

The Annual B-VARC Banquet will be held on January 19, 1995, in the Garden Room of the H.E.S.S. Building, 3121 Buffalo Speedway, Houston, Texas. A Cash Bar will be available from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. The menu will be a choice of a 10 OZ. Ribeye or West Coast Snapper or Chicken Oscar with Artichokes & Shrimp. A Tossed Green Salad, Green Beans, Au Gratin Potatoes, and Pecan Pie. Coffee, Iced Tea, Bread and Butter. The Price is \$17.00 per person.

Doug Holley, KE5SR, advised the Board that the Gin Pole had been obtained, and was available for use by members of B-VARC.

Discussions concerning B-VARC awards; election of officers for 1995; and attendance of meetings lists were held, with out definite action taken.

President Holley adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.



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### Ron Clark Shorthouse (N5PHL) Has Become a Silent Key by Doug Holley (KE5SR)

Ron was a member of BVARC in 1990 and 1991. He was a resident of Katy, Texas. Survivors include his wife, Lindy, son and daughter-in-law.

Memorial gifts can be made to the First Baptist Church of Katy. Ron will be missed by BVARC and we wish his family well.

# The World of Ten Ten International

by Al Mattis N5AFV

The dates for the next Ten Ten International convention have been set for June 17 - 18, 1995, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Ten Ten members were saddened last month to learn of the death of Hiram Wolf, W4NWP, who was the VP Certificate Manager for Ten Ten International. John Ellison, WOERZ, will serve as temporary VP Certificate Manager until a replacement is appointed. A hard copy of the 1995 Ten Ten International roster will be available in January, 1995, and anyone wishing a copy should mail a check for \$11 to Ten Ten International, 643 North 98th Street #142, Omaha, NE, 68114-2332.

The SHOT chapter thanks all amateurs who participated with the chapter in the 1994 Fall CW QSO Party, held October 29-30, 1994. Propagation was poor and most contacts were with other local members in the Houston area.

The Houston SHOT chapter's November special has been underway for several weeks. This special gives SHOT members an opportunity to upgrade their SHOT point value outside of the regular upgrade program. During the special, members are collecting Voyager numbers for one point each and Discovery numbers for two 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 month.

Despite the poor propagation, Ten Ten paper chasers continue to be active on 28.345 MHz. Chapters with special for paper chasers this month include Ocean State (RI), Houston SHOT (TX), and Steel City (IL). The poor propagation has greatly reduced the paper chaser activity.

Propagation on the ten meter band has not been very good the past month. Band openings have become few

and far between, and when they occur, they only last a short time. The number of DX contacts has been increasing, but as of yet, there has not been any significant amount of domestic F-layer winter propagation.


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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# Results of the Novemeber 8th Amateur Exams

by Harold Parker, ND5F

B-VARC again sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examinations that were held on Tuesday evening, November 8, 1994, at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston.

### V.E. TEAM:

Carl ALbrecht, AA5JW  
Don Schexnailder, AB5IV  
Harold Parker, ND5F

### Assistants:

Cass Germany, KG5IT

A total of 18 exams were administered during the evening to 12 applicants. Six (6) unlicensed candidates received their licenses: 1 Novice, and 5 "codeless" Technicians. Two (2) other applicants upgraded with a total of 13 elements passed. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 72%.

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

Milton Dobsky, KB5ZMO - Advanced  
Angela DuPree - Novice  
John Freese - Technician  
Wesley Scott - Technician  
Irv Smith, KB5EXM - Element 3B  
Steve Spaniol, KC5GXT - Advanced  
Raymond Wilkins - Technician  
Michael Williams - Technician  
Raymond Wyatt - 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.

I Speak - - -

**Randy Pollard, AK5G**  
*Certified Public Accountant*  
(713) 667-5123

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## **RAMSEY'S AM-1 TRANSMITTER KIT**

by Al Mattis N5AFV

Last month my column discussed the MedFER activity in the 1630 to 1700 kHz range allowed by current FCC Part 15 rules. As a result of my interest in MedFER activity, I decided to build Ramsey's AM Broadcast Transmitter Kit (AM-1), which sells for \$29.95. I had recently read a review of the AM-1 kit by Christopher Cuomo in the July 18, 1994 edition of the National Radio Club's DX News.

This kit is a modern version of the Part 15 broadcast band transmitter kits that were very popular in the mid-1960's. During my first year in college in 1965, I remember using such a kit to broadcast programming from my dormitory to the adjacent women's dormitory. The three of us involved in that episode were all interested in radio, and eventually ended up with commercial licenses and part time jobs at broadcast stations.

A trip to the local Electronic Part Outlet (EPO) allowed me to purchase the kit, and I was ready to begin. A quick examination indicated that the kit is well designed, and has clear and easy to understand instructions. It took me about two hours to follow the 35 steps in the instructions and assemble the kit. My eleven year old son enjoyed helping, and his sharp eye sight was useful to read the numbers on some of the smaller capacitors. I decided to also purchase the optional plastic case for the AM-1 at an additional cost of \$14.95, however, a number of metal enclosures available at Radio Shack could also have been used.

The circuit in the AM-1 uses six 2N3904 transistors, and is designed to be powered by any 12 volt DC source. The transmitter frequency is set by a tuned circuit consisting of two to three capacitors in parallel with a variable inductor or "tuning slug". The capacitors determine the frequency range that the transmitter will cover, while the "tuning slug" is used to set the specific frequency. A table in the instruction booklet lists the capacitor values that correspond to various

frequency ranges. Since I had thought about modifying the AM-1 for use as a MedFER transmitter, I selected the range of capacitors that would allow the transmitter to cover 1500 to 1750 kHz.

I was excited when the kit was completed and it was time to test the transmitter. Smoke did not rise from the kit when I turned on the power, but I could not find a signal between 1500 and 1750 kHz. The mystery was soon solved when I found an AM carrier down on 1254 kHz. A trip to Radio Shack for a few capacitors, and three tries at different capacitor combinations brought the AM-1 up to the desired frequency range. I felt a sense of accomplishment when the kit operated as desired, and I would recommend the AM-1 kit to anyone who has an interest in building an FCC Part 15 AM broadcast transmitter.

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## **THE PASSING OF ANOTHER SILENT KEY**

by Doug Holley (KE5SR)

Henry Bell (N5ILI) passed away September 15, 1994. Henry was a past member of BVARC and was active in numerous areas of our ham hobby.

Henry Bell was an official leadership member of the A.R.R.L. National Traffic System for many years. Henry was active on packet radio and Amtor. Henry had been a licensed amateur since 1955 and had remained very active.

Henry will be missed by his friends and family and there will be a void in our ham community, as we miss Henry also.

## **BVARC Awards**

by Doug Holley, KE5SR

It is the time of year for us to begin thinking about nominations for the various BVARC awards which are presented.

### **The Order of the Ket Award**

The order of the Key is the highest honor that can be conferred by BVARC. With this award, we recognize the BVARC member who has made outstanding contributions to the progress of the club. These contributions might take the form of a long-term, consistent commitment to service, or might represent an extremely high level of service for a shorter time. In any case, the award represents exceptional service and commitment to the goals of BVARC.

Nominations for the Order of the Key may be made by any BVARC member. The nominations must be made in writing, and should include a description of the nominee's contributions to the club. Nominations must be submitted to any BVARC officer or Board member no later than the December regular membership meeting. The President will then poll the Board of Directors secretly to allow them to vote on the nominations. Although any member may enter a nomination, voting is done only by the Board of Directors. If in any year no candidate receives unanimous approval of the Board, then no award shall be made that year. The vote by the Board of Directors must be unanimous for the award to be conferred.

### **The Dr. Bill Award**

In 1988 BVARC initiated the presentation of the Dr. Bill Award, which was originated by Keith and Eva Huge (KA5F and KA5CYZ) in honor of Dr. Bill Ossenfort, NG5C, now a silent key, who was very active in the Volunteer Examiner Program in the Houston area.

This award may be presented each year to the BVARC member recognized as the outstanding

participant in the BVARC Volunteer Examiner Program.

There shall be no more than one award presented each year, unless in any given year the Board of Directors elects unanimously to award more than one award. It is not mandatory that an award be made each year, if in the board's majority opinion, no nominee is selected. Under normal circumstances, other than the condition stated in the first sentence of this paragraph, the yearly recipient of the award, should there be one, must receive majority approval of the BVARC Board of Directors.

Nominations for the Dr. Bill Award may be made by any member of the club. Nominations must be made in writing, and must be submitted to any BVARC officer or Board member not later than the December regular membership meeting.

### **The Loop and Zepp Award**

In 1989, the Loop and Zepp Award was originated to recognize BVARC members for their efforts to promote operation on the high frequency (HF) bands. These efforts may take the form of dedicated participation in any form or forms of HF activities, the promotion of HF activities or the assistance in furthering HF activities.

There shall be no more than one award presented each year, unless in any one given year the Board of Directors elects unanimously to award more than one award. It is not mandatory that the award be made each year, in the board's majority opinion, no nominee is selected. Under normal circumstances, other than the condition stated in the first sentence of this paragraph, the yearly recipient of the award, should there be one, must receive majority approval of the BVARC Board of Directors.

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