

THE B-VARC BULLETIN

Volume 20, issue 8

August, 1997



<http://www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc>

BVARC Member Survives South American Earthquake! Finds Elvis!

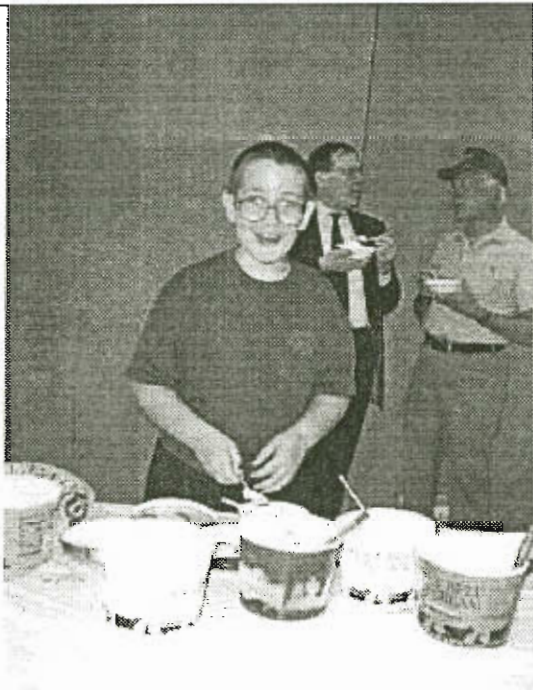
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What's in this issue?

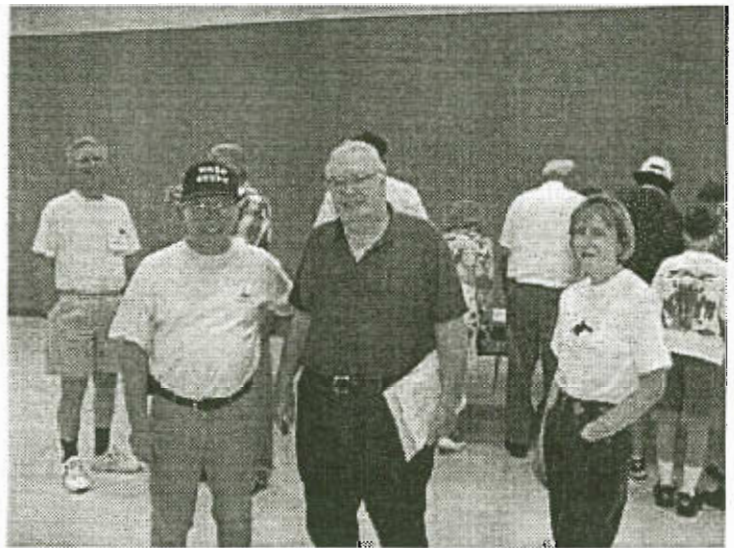
- President's Message - P.3
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"If you pick up a dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man." -Mark Twain

A Special Thanks to the First Colony Church of Christ for the use of their facilities which make this newsletter possible.



1997 B-VARC Ice Cream Social is a "Sweet" success!



THE B-VARC BULLETIN

President:

Gailen Marshall - N4SKR

Vice-President:

Rick Hiller - W5RH

Recording Secretary:

Terri VanSlyke - W5BKK

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John Dryton - KM5HP

Treasurer:

Nizar Mullani - K0NM

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Jackie Burton - KC5OHJ
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Terry McCoy - W5TEM
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1-Year Board Member:

Bud King - N5UOG
(713)-494-3741

Past President:

Ron Grimes - WA5SCE
(713) 341-7137

PSN Check-ins for June 1997

By Jackie, KC5OHJ

Here are the PSN check-ins for July 1997:

7/7 - 42

7/14 - 27

7/21 - 27

7/28 - 29

73 de KC5OHJ

IP Address: 44.76.4.118

kc5ohj.ampr.org



Every Meeting a Hamfest

Don't forget!

The monthly meetings are a perfect time to bring your junk box to trade with other hams who bring their Junk Box! Remember, one ham's junk is another ham's Junk!

- 7th 7:30 p.m. - B-VARC Board Meeting
- 12th 6:00 p.m. - VE Testing
- 14th 7:30 p.m. - B-VARC Regular Meeting
- 15th 6:30 p.m. - Friday Night Dinner - TBA
- 31st - Last Sunday Luncheon - TBA

Public Service Events!

- Alamo warm-up ride on **Saturday, Sept. 13**
- Alamo Challenge on **Oct 18 & 19, Sat & Sun**. This is a two-day event, 40+ hams needed!

MARATHON WARMUP SERIES

- **Oct 19, 1997** Gables Residential 20K Championship - Contact Steve Dunkelberger 713-781-6703 or Dunk@ix.netcom.com
- **Nov 16, 1997** HMSA Classical 25K Contact Allen Mattis
- **Dec 7, 1997** All-Tel SLT First Colony 30K
- Possible 5K race in September to benefit Main Street Theater - probably held in West

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University Place if it comes off. More details coming soon.

Technical Corner

- The technical corner for August will be Vertical Antenna Construction by W5RH Rick Hiller

Program

Program for August is:

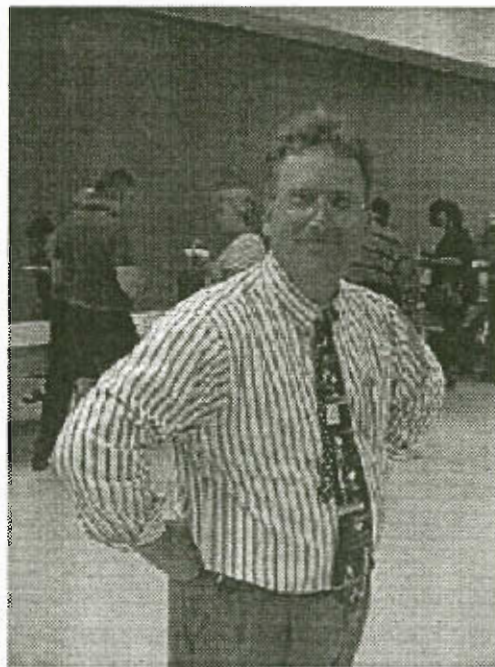
RTTY (Radio TeleTYpe) Operation by W5BSA Joe Ross.

Joe will show us the latest software and hardware in the world of RTTY. If you have never tried this great digital HF mode, then now is your chance. It couldn't be easier (or cheaper) to get onto RTTY than it is right now with your PC doing most of the work.

**B-VARC RAG CHEW NET CHECK-INS
3.960MHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays at 8:00PM
by Sam
Wilson, N5CPA**

Just WHAT IS the Rag-Chew Net? Well, it's a chance for you to get on the low bands and hang out with other B-VARC members, as well as hams from around the south central US! What?? Don't have voice privileges? Got a short-wave receiver? Dial in and listen, then check in using our Rag Chew Hotline announced at the beginning of each net.
73 de N5CPA, Sam

President's Message for July 1997



QRZ! QRZ! QRZ! It has been a long, HOT summer, ham buddies. It looks like we are in for a bit more hot weather than we originally bargained for. That may mean better operating conditions for the fall as well as warm weather for public service. The fall season at BVARC promises to be full of good food, fellowship and fun. We have planned programs on digital HF, 10M operating tips and even a surprise or two on QRP and satellite information. I think it will be well worth your while to plan for the BVARC meetings, second Thursdays at 7:30PM at the Sugar land Community Center.

It is not too early to begin thinking about next year's club leadership. The nominations committee will soon be meeting to begin the process of presenting a slate of candidates for the 1998 BVARC Board. If you are interested in serving, let one of the officers know of your interest and we will pass your name along to the Nominations committee.

Finally, due to several factors, we will plan to have a face-to-face meeting at the Sugar land

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Community center on August 7 at 6:30PM for the Board of Director's meeting. There are several issues for discussion. If you have anything to present or consider, please let me know as soon as possible.

Hope everyone is ready for school to start. Watch out for school zones!

73

Gailen N4SKR

HOUSTON SHOT NEWS

by Al Mattis - N5AFV

The next Ten Ten International operating event is the Summer Phone QSO party, scheduled for August 2-3, 1997. Many members of the Houston SHOT chapter will be participating. The chapter will have nets at 8 PM local time on 28.488 MHz both Friday and Saturday evenings. Any Houston area stations are invited to check in to the net. Even if you are not a member of Ten Ten International or the Houston SHOT chapter, you can give the chapter points by working participating stations. The multiplier for contest scoring consists of the number of different amateur radio call sign prefixes worked in the QSO party. You may have just the call sign to give participating chapter members a big boost in their score.

The Houston SHOT chapter is pleased to welcome K5HOU, club station for the Clear Lake Amateur Radio Club, as the chapter's newest local member. A recent check of chapter records indicates that the SHOT chapter now has 373 local members and 1273 out-of-town members, for a total membership of 1646.

Visit the Houston SHOT chapter home page at <http://www.clarc.org/shot/> when you get on the Internet. The site contains information about the chapter, past editions of the Houston SHOT

News, and the Ten Ten DX column written Mike Davidson - N5MT, the SHOT chapter head. The chapter thanks Bruce Paige - KK5DO, for constructing and maintaining the page, and the Clear Lake Amateur Radio Club (CLARC) for providing space on their server for the page.

Two new sites on the Internet may be of interest to Ten Ten members. John Thomason, K5VG, has set up a web page where you can access a database of call signs and Ten Ten numbers. The page is located at:

<http://www.ensco.com/~thomason/10-10.html>.

Jon Goering, N0HJQ, has a very comprehensive list of E-mail addresses of Ten Ten members at his web site located at:

<http://www.pionet.net/~goering/hamradio.html>.

The annual Ten Ten Paper Chasers Bash will be held August 13-17, 1997 at the Circus Circus Casino and Hotel in Reno, NV. Attendees should ask for a room on the second floor of the Main Tower when they make reservations. Tom Frazee, A45ZO, from the Sultanate of Oman, has announced plans to attend this year's Reno Bash. Tom, whose US call sign is WA7QED, is one of the DX members of the Houston SHOT chapter.

There has been a great deal of discussion about setting up a CW calling frequency for Ten Ten members to use. The most recommended frequency so far is 28.170 MHz, and a number of Ten Ten CW enthusiasts have begun to monitor that frequency.

Paper chasers continue to be active on 28.345 MHz and 28.375 MHz during band openings. The occurrence of summer E-layer propagation has brought more activity to the band. The Twin Cities (MN), Route 66 (IN), and Pirates of the Mississippi (IL) chapters have announced monthly specials for paper chasers to promote activity when the band is open. Ten Ten members were delighted to learn that Dennis Reeder, N7YBX, has been released from hospital, and is

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now home. Reeder is the Certificate manager of the Portland 500 (OR) chapter. Sad news for Ten Ten members this month was the death of Jack Miller, W9WYN. Miller was a director of Ten Ten International, and a very active member of the Steel City (IL) chapter.

Remember, the Houston SHOT (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 in to the net. There are a lot of exciting activities in Ten Ten, and many friendly people can be found on the ten meter band.

JOTA

The Scout/Ham Radio Jamboree On The Air will take place this year on October 18th and 19th. (Yes, it conflicts with the Houston Ham Convention). I am looking for hams that would like to participate either at their homes by inviting Scout troops to visit or at a remote site by volunteering their time.

I will be publishing a listing of stations in Houston that will be on the air in the next newsletter. B-VARC hams will then be able to pass out this information when asked by a local Girl/Boy/Cub Scout group how they can participate.

Call me if you need further information or you would like to get on the list.

Boy Scout Merit Badge Fair

The Sam Houston Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America is holding a merit badge fair on Saturday, October 25th. I am looking for a few volunteers to assist me in setting up a station early that morning. The station would be in operation later that day for completion of the merit badge requirements.

Give me a call if you can help.

Rick. W5RH. (713) 774-5102 or
nexus15@flash.net

Amateur Radio NOVICE/TECH THEORY CLASS

June 9, 1997 through AUGUST 4, 1997 at
The First Colony Church of Christ
3119 Sweetwater
Sugar Land, Texas

Monday evenings, 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.
Classes will prepare the student to PASS the
Novice and Technician Theory test. If interested,
please contact Pete Norris, KJ5SS, (281) 342-
9089

BVARC Member Survives South American Earthquake! Finds Elvis!

The earthquake was real, but I just made up the bit about Elvis. The epicenter was offshore in the Caribbean, near the small town of Cumana, many miles east of Caracas (my QTH).

When the quake happened, news began to come in about the physical damage and loss of life (close to 100, possibly more). Regular communications were knocked out, as a result of the physical damage. Television coverage was not available until about 8 hours later, and then only sparse coverage, because it was dark and there were no remaining electrical circuits in the

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area. The quake happened at about 3:30PM on a weekday afternoon, the last day of school for many ... and, tragically, their last day period, when the multi-story school building collapsed like a stack of pancakes.

No one has mentioned anything about probable victims who were offshore, fishing or enjoying an outing in the sea. Cumana has many small offshore islands that are popular tourist and vacation areas. To get there, people rent a small motor launch and its operator. On any day, there are dozens of these motor launches going to and from the islands at all hours of the day. I suspect that some of them may have become victims of the quake. No records are kept, so who would know if or how many launches went down, along with their passengers and operators.

I listened for news of the quake, checking all bands and modes. If there were any emergency communications nets being operated in Venezuela, I missed them. I did not hear anything on amateur frequencies, nor on other frequencies accessible to my FT-890M. Perhaps you guys heard them up north.

73's
KG5PP
Norman F. Carnahan,

Scanner Jack's Corner

By Jack, KB5TMY

Jack's Corner is back! (Actually, it was never gone, but the editor-in-chief misplaced the Fax)

This month, since it is most certainly hurricane season from June 1st through November 30th, Jack points out some excellent frequencies to tune into -

- Hurricane hunter planes on 304.80, 303.70, 308.40, 304.70, and 307.40 Mhz (AM Mode)
- HF hurricane net on 13.2670, 13.2660, 6.6730, 6.6720, 13.3540, 10.0150, 10.0140, 8.8760, 8.8750, and 6.97750 Mhz (USB)
- Pilot Metro Service on 239.80, 342.50, 344.60, and 375.20 Mhz (AM)
- Ham Frequencies on 14.3250, 14.320, 14.2750, 3.9350, 3.940, 7.2680, 7.2480, and 14.3030 Mhz (USB)
- Coast Guard on 156.800, 157.050, 157.100, 157.150, 157.075, 157.125, 157.1750 Mhz (FM Mode)
- Coast Guard HF on 4.4280, 6.5010, 8.7640, 13.0890, and 17.3140 Mhz (USB)

Public Service Corner

By Scott Pederson, ki5dr

Howdy folks! This month I want to keep my article short to make space for some wonderful photos taken at the Ice Cream Social last month, courtesy of Joe, W5BSA (Thanks Joe!)

Also, things have been busy here personally as I'm trying to build a house in Katy. Yes, I am a Geek. I am pre-wiring my house for the Internet, but I am also running some good coax in the wall so I can install antennas and operate from my study without drilling holes. The effort up front is involved but the result is worth it!

Get ready for the fall Public service season. I've already started collecting information on the B-VARC events coming up through the end of 1997, and it's as busy as last year!

Of course, this is also hurricane season. Now is the PERFECT time to give all your ham equipment a good checkup to make sure it's ready for emergencies. Make sure all your radios work, check the coax and connections on your

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antennas, and check your antennas for SWR as well.

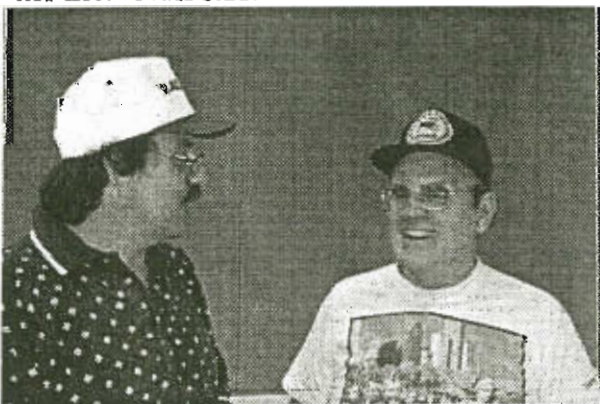
Now is also a good time to think about backup power. Keep your HT charged and spare batteries ready, and maybe even stock up on AA alkalines too. Several B-VARC members have gotten hold of some Gel-Cel batteries. A good idea for technical corner would be a simple charging circuit for these batteries. Anyone have a good article I can publish?

Another good idea is to have a push-up mast or some type of portable base station VHF antenna. During emergencies, often the first thing that goes away is the use of repeaters. Are you prepared to set up a "SOLID" simplex station? Remember, height makes might.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to mention something about our "Squirrel". I've noticed a few people trying to talk to him, either to egg him on or whatever. This is usually not a good idea for two reasons:

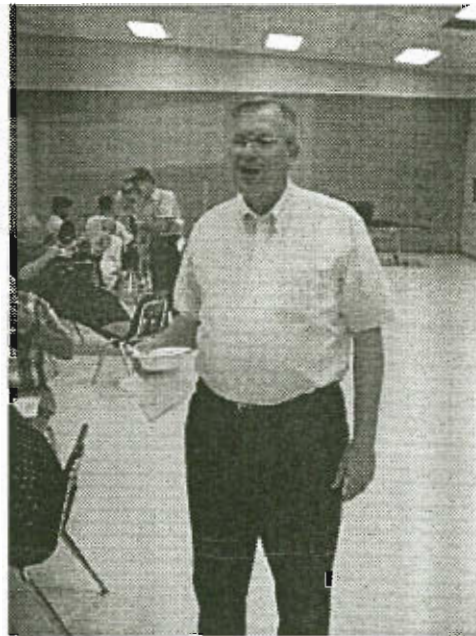
- It's against FCC rules to communicate with Non-Hams on amateur frequencies
- It's counter-productive. If someone is out trying to track them down and you are transmitting with the "Squirrel", you might have Transmitter Hunters show up on your doorstep!

The bottom line is, ignore ignore ignore. The only reason he stays is that he gets a reaction from club members. If we stop reacting to him / her, there's a greater chance he'll / she'll get bored and do something productive with his / her life. Nuff said.

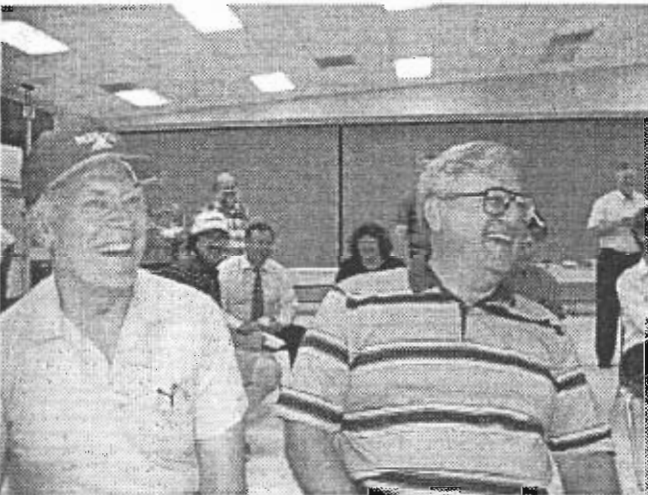
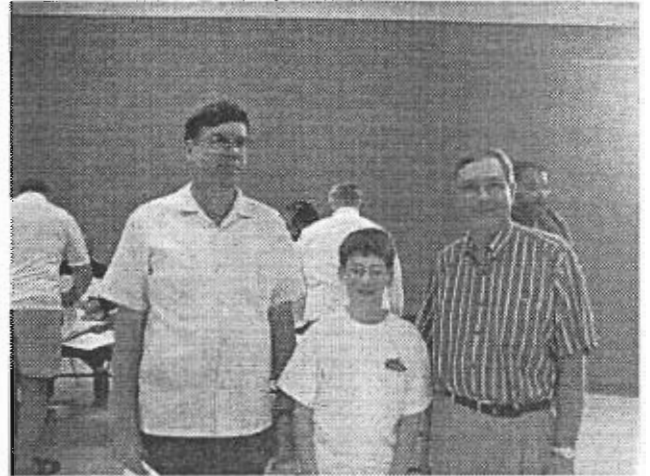


Here are some more photos from the July meeting - See you next month!

73, Scott



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B-VARC's Website: <http://www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc>

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The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (B-VARC) 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, B-VARC has grown and expanded its activities to become the most active HAM radio club in the Southwest Houston area.

Today, B-VARC is truly a general-interest club with an impressive record of Public Service. The Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) has recognized the Commitment to service 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 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at the Sugar Land Community Center. Talk-in assistance is available in the 145.470, and 444.550 MHz repeaters.

To obtain information about the club, its activities, or about joining B-VARC, contact Scott Pederson, KI5DR, at (713) 460-5852.

B-VARC Meeting Schedule

Thursday, August 7th Board of Dir. Meeting BMOTA
7:30 p.m. MERA Repeater 145.470
Open to all B-VARC Members

Thursday, August 14th B-VARC Meeting
7:30 p.m. Sugarland Community Center

B-VARC Eating Schedule

Saturdays-7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Location: New York Coffee Shop, 9720 Hillcroft @ S. Braeswood

3rd Friday dinners - 6:30 p.m. SHARP! Location TBA

Last Sunday Lunches - 2:30 p.m. Location TBA

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BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO
CLUB
P.O. BOX 1630
MISSOURI CITY TX 77459-1630
address correction requested

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

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