



# BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

OCTOBER 2003

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 10



BVARC members chatting outside the Community Center

## No BVARC Meeting in September

Bad weather and a scheduling glitch put a kink in BVARC meeting plans for September; however, if you thought you missed Rick Hiller's presentation on QRP, read on.

## QRP Update

By Rick Hiller, W5RH

With less transmitter output power than it takes to illuminate the night light in your bathroom, hams are taking to the airways in contests and other events with gear of their own building.

The QRP arena in Ham Radio continues to grow steadily and activity abounds on all QRP fronts. More hams are

participating in assorted QRP oriented activities such as kit building, QRP oriented operating, QRP contesting, etc. Supporting this flurry of activity are clubs, web sites, e-mail list reflectors, kit manufacturers and parts suppliers.

### Clubs

Two new club additions are worth mentioning: one national - one local. **The American QRP Club or AMQRP** is a combination of the Norcal and NJQRP groups. See their web site at [www.amqrp.org](http://www.amqrp.org). Norcal and NJQRP were the cream in regional QRP clubs. Both had magazines, kit offerings and supported contests, etc. Now they have combined into one giant QRP machine. Their quarterly magazine, "**Homebrewer**" recently published its premier issue, and what an issue it was. Chock full of great technical and operational articles. Reminds me of the legacy magazine "Ham Radio"

AMQRP and their members are also very instrumental in putting on the "cons" (**Atlanticon, Pacificon and Arkie-con**), which are QRP gatherings. Another great QRP gathering is **FDIM - "Four Days in May"**. It ties in with the famous 3 day Dayton Hamvention. The first day of FDIM is the day before Dayton starts.....so you can extend your QRP and ham radio pleasure to a full four days.

The second club to talk about is a local one -- **The Houston QRP Group**. This has been a loosely organized group for the past few years but some locals have decided that it was time to take it to the next level. Mike Goins, K5WMG, and Mark Janzer, K5MGJ are the driving forces. This group meets at 9 AM, on the second Saturday of every month, at the Denny's at Westheimer and Dairy Ashford. Inter-club e-mail chat, meeting notices, pictures and gear for sale, etc. can be found at <http://groups.yahoo.com/> Search for HGRP. Just sign up on Yahoo and join the group. Once signed up, you will have access to all of the e-mail, e-mail archives, files, pictures, etc. One of the current topics is to come up with a name and logo..there seems to be leaning toward the "SETex MosQRPitos" with the appropriate insect on the logo. If you have (Continued on page 3)

### Calling All Cooks

If you can supply chili, beans, or corn chips, etc for the BVARC Annual Chili Supper, contact Kevin Foto at 281-277-5886 or by email at [kd5o@texas.net](mailto:kd5o@texas.net).

## 2003 Club Officers:

President:  
Mike Hardwick, N5VCX  
n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

Vice President:  
Allen Brier, N5XZ  
abrier@hotmail.com

Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:  
Mack Arp, W5EET  
w5eet@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary:  
Joe Morgan, K5JWM  
k5jwm@att.net

One Year Board Member:  
Dave Scott, WD8RZA  
wd8rza@aol.com

Two Year Board Member:  
Ross Lawler, W5HFF  
w5hff@juno.com

Past President:  
Kevin Foto, KD5O  
foto@texas.net

## Club Happenings:

### General Meeting

Second Thursday each month, 7:30 p.m.  
Sugar Land Community Center,  
224 Matlage Way, Sugar Land

### Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month, 7:30 p.m.  
Sugar Land Community Center,  
224 Matlage Way, Sugar Land

### Volunteer Examiner Program

BVARC administers Amateur License Exams on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the HCC Scarcella Technology Campus, 101 41 Cash Rd. in Stafford.  
Contact John Moore, KK5NU

### Dinner Schedule

Third Friday Dinner at 6:30 p.m.  
See calendar for location.

### Saturday morning breakfasts

New York Coffee Shop  
9720 Hillcroft, Houston 7:00 a.m.  
Viking Den  
2939 S. Main, Stafford 7:30 a.m.

### Rag Chew Net

Wednesday night on 3910 KHz +/-3KHz  
at 7:00 p.m.

### Public Service Net

Monday night on 145.47 (123 PL) at 9:00 p.m.

## Minutes of Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Board of Directors Meeting

Sept 04, 2003

**Attendees:** President; Mike Hardwick-N5VCX, 2 -Year Director/Club Elmer Ross Lawler-W5HFF, Corresponding Secretary/ Treasurer, Mack C Arp- W5EET, Vice President Allen Brier N5XZ, 1-Year, Past President Kevin Foto-KD5O, Past Secretary of Treasurer Camron-K5CAM. Recording Secretary, Joe W Morgan - K5JWM. Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by President Mike Hardwick.

**Comments:** Ross reports that in the storeroom we have plastic cups and other utensils for the chili supper or some other event that the club might have.

**Emergency Business:** Elections coming up; positions open will be President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and 1-year director.

**Old Business:** Mike said he would have by-laws next week at the Board meeting.; prepare calendar for the year for new board of directors meeting. Program schedule for the rest of the year will be: September-Emergency Amateur Communications, October-QRP update & Jota, November-Chili Supper and Elections, December- Home brew night, January-Banquet.

**New Business:** Mack handed out Treasurer report for approval was read and approved by the board; reading & approval of the August minutes .Mack handed out membership status report and said that the club is down a little in membership.

**Announcements:** Antenna Seminar by Rick Hiller: System Theory, and Design, Modeling and Building, October 4, 2003 Field day will be at the Fire Training Center same place as last year.

Bike to the Lake-September 20<sup>th</sup> & 21.

**Membership count:** 129

**Adjourn:** 9:05

*Submitted by Recording Secretary Joe W Morgan-K5JWM*

## Silent Key

Henry Joseph Morrison, Jr., W5RIY, was born Aug. 25, 1924 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He died Aug. 30, 2003 at age 79 in Franklin, Tennessee, and was buried in Fort Snelling Cemetery in St. Paul, MN. He became a Ham at age 9. He served in the Army Combat Engineers in France during World War 2. He worked with the Boy Scouts in the Houston area for many years. He was a member of B-VARC and Echo amateur radio clubs for many years. He served with the B-VARC VE's giving exams and with the Hams working public service events in the Houston area. Henry was the voice of Santa Clause via ham radio operating from a hospital building in Houston some years ago. He was predeceased by his father, mother, and sister. He is survived by two nieces and a nephew and their children, and many friends.

The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Board of Directors would like to thank Lockard & White Telecommunications Engineers for the printing of this newsletter

any questions feel free to e-mail Mike, K5WMG at [mgoins@usa.net](mailto:mgoins@usa.net).

### Kit Building

AMQRP, Norcal and the NJQRP continue to bring new kits to the table. In fact, orders for the NJQRP **Antenna Analyzer II** <http://www.njqrp.org/antanal/> will be taken starting at Pacificon this month. The **BLT Tuner** <http://www.amqrp.org/kits/blt/> (\$41.00 shipped) is another popular kit. Visit their web sites for other kits and offerings.

Elecraft, <http://www.elecraft.com/>, the modern day Heathkit (*imho*) and the makers of the K1 and K2 HF transceivers and associated accessories, recently announced the KX-1. This \$279 KX-1 kit is described as an 'ultra-portable CW Transceiver' with leanings more toward the portable QRP operator.

### Operation modes

This brings me to another QRP hot spot - Portable operation. Over the past 2 years there has been an increase in the number of hams interested in portable and backpacking based operation. **HFpack** <http://www.hfpack.com/> and <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HFpack/> is a group that is specifically formed to address this newly rekindled mode of operation. Small rigs, easy up portable and pedestrian based antennas are the name of the game. Names like St. Louis Vertical, MP-1, Buddy Pole, PAC-12, are ones to do a Google search on.

However, you don't have to do a 'hundred miler' on the Appalachian Trail to take advantage of this gear. A fiberglass push-up pole, some wire, your rig and a gel cell out at your local park and you can have a fun afternoon of portable operating.

### On the Air Activity

The QRP community has put together a corral full of QRP oriented contests and sprints and hunts. For the portable folks there are the **QRP-TTF** (to the field) or **QRP-FYBO** (freeze your butt off), which are held once a year, but QRP TTF is rumored to be moving toward a once a month Saturday morning sprint.

If you can't get out on Saturday morning but you have free time on the week day evenings, then the **QRP-L "Fox Hunts"** might be right up your alley. <http://www.cqc.org/fox> every week there are 2 Foxes (pre-designated stations), typically in two different states, that come up at a certain time and frequency looking for 'hounds'. Over the many weeks that this event takes place, all states are represented, so it would seem fairly straight forward to Work All Sates..... but with the changing early evening propagation on the 40 and 20 meter frequencies you better be prepared to put on the cans, take off your boots, and dig out a few of them. Being quick on the key is in order too, when the propagation is tilted briefly in your direction. All in all, the Fox Hunts are a good fun evening QRP activity that doesn't take up a lot of time. Plus the results are posted on the QRP-L e-mail reflector, so instant gratification is at hand.

### Information

Not surprisingly, the Internet is the glue that is keeping all of this activity together. E-mail lists, Yahoo groups, club and group web sites, manufacturers web sites with e-mail lists specific to their rigs, are all of the back channels to the on the air QRP activity.

My take on all of this is that there is so much activity and information flowing that you would have to give up your job and at least one meal a day to fit it all in. You certainly have to be selective in your e-mail monitoring or QRP Web surfing cause it can be very addictive and you'll end up spending all of your time on the computer rather than on the ham bands. So, in order to give you a bit of a head start, I have provided a page of URL links where you can get information on any aspect of the above-mentioned QRP activity.

### Summary

QRP is fun, and is taking interested hams on a tremendous ride into the world of building radios, antennas and other equipment, and then using it on the air to talk to other folks with the same areas of interest. Give QRP a try.....You will never look at that night light in your bathroom the same way again.

## QRP Information on the Web

*Compiled by W5RH - November 2003 B-VARC Newsletter - QRP Update*

### Search engines and info pages

<http://www.google.com/> Basic Search Engine.  
<http://www.ac6v.com/qrp.htm> General QRP Link Page. All subjects.  
<http://www.arrl.org/tis/tismenu.html> ARRL Technical Information Pages - Members Only  
<http://qrp.lehigh.edu/lists/qrp-l/join.html> QRP-L e-mail list server

<http://www.zerobeat.net/qrp/> QRP Web Ring Home Page

### QRP Clubs

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HQRP/> Houston QRP Yahoo Group  
<http://www.norcalqrp.com/> North California QRP Group kits too  
<http://www.njqrp.org/> New Jersey QRP Club kits too

<http://www.qsl.net/kq5rp/index.html> Austin QRP Club  
<http://www.qrparci.org/> Amateur Radio Club International -- National QRP Group  
<http://www.qrparci.org/links.html> ARCI Links Page -- Multitude of QRP links  
<http://www.werdau.net/dl-qrp-ag/> QRP is not just USA... check this out  
**Articles**  
<http://www.njqrp.org/whyqrp/2.htm> "Why QRP?" Presentation on-line  
<http://www.zerobeat.net/qrp/authors/builder.html> So You Want To Be A Builder  
<http://www.njqrp.org/data/sierra.html> Mods for the Sierra XCVR

<http://www.amqrp.org/reference/reference.html> QRP Technical Reference Material  
**QRP Kits**  
<http://ac6v.com/kits.htm> Listing of manufacturers  
<http://www.smallwonderlabs.com/> Small Wonder Labs - RockMite Xcvr  
<http://www.fix.net/~jparker/wilderness/sierra.htm> Wilderness Radio -- Sierra Xcvr  
<http://www.njqrp.org/tuna/tuna.html> Tuna Tin 2 Transmitter  
<http://www.ohr.com/> Oak Hills Research -- rigs, power meters, etc.  
<http://www.elecraft.com/> Elecraft K1, K2 KX-1 Xcvr's and accessories

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## Elections at November Membership Meeting

Elections are coming up in November and it is time for members to step up and volunteer. This December will mark the end of the 2 year term of BVARC President, Mike Hardwick.

Recording secretary and one at large position will also be vacated at this time. These positions must be filled for club functions to continue. The Presidency must be filled by a club member with a General class

license or higher. Elections will be held in conjunction with the Chili Supper during the November General Membership Meeting. If you can provide a small amount of your time and want to help the club to continue into the future please contact me by phone at 281-277-5886 or by email at [kd5o@texas.net](mailto:kd5o@texas.net). BVARC's future depends on membership participation.

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## Rag Chew Net

*By Joe Morgan, K5JWM*

3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays at 7:00 pm

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 BVARC members, as well as hams from around the south central US! If you don't have voice privileges but you have a short-wave receiver? Listen for the phone number announced at the beginning of the net to call and check in.

09/03/03 K5JWM, N5CPA, K5VRJ, AB5BA, KB5F, KD5O NM5K, K5HFY, AB5RJ check-ins(9)  
09/10/03 K5JWM, N5CPA, K5CEK, KG5RQ, WB5VYR K5VRJ, AB5BA, K5LJ, KE5SR, KA5JKI, KD5O, K5LBU check-ins(12)  
9/17/03 K5JWM, K5CEK, KE5SR, KB5F, N5CPA, W5HFF K5LJ, K5VRJ, AB5BA, KG5RQ, KA5JKI, K5LBU, WB5VYR check-ins(13)  
09/24/03 K5JWM, W5HFF, KE5SR, K5CEK, KC5SYM K5VRJ, AB5BA, KG5RQ, N5CPA, KB9WVG, KA5JKI, K5LJ WA5VRB, W5DDD, K5HFY, NM5K, K5LBU, N5NIR WA9YNJ, NT5SM check-ins (20)

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## President's Corner

Elections are coming up at the next meeting in November. If you would like to help the club in it's day to day functions, contact Kevin Foto, KD5O at [kd5o@texas.net](mailto:kd5o@texas.net) and let him know that you are interested.

The BVARC Mix and Match Swap Meet is schedule for February 28, 2004 at the Sugar Land Community Center. Setup will start at 7:30 a.m. and the doors will open at 8:30 a.m. Amateur radio testing will begin at 8:00 a.m. and Rick Hiller's Antenna 101 seminar will begin at 10:30 a.m. There will be drinks and snacks available as well as an outdoor tailgate area. Volunteers will be needed for everything from setup to talk-in to security to clean-up. If you would like to help, contact any of the board of directors and let them know.

