



# BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

OCTOBER 2005

VOLUME 29 ISSUE 10

## ***OCTOBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING***

The featured speaker will be BVARC member Rick Hiller, W5RH. His presentation will discuss designing, building and deploying an 75M antenna. See related article in this newsletter. The meeting takes place at the Sugar Land Community Center (address on Page 7) at 7:30 on Thursday, October 13.

## **BVARC PICNIC & CAMPOUT**

November 12

The BVARC Picnic and Campout is back. It will be at Couthatte Recreation Ranch between Sealy and Bellville. It will be held on the "Circle" which is to your left after you cross the dam by the lake. It occurs in conjunction with the Amateur Radio Campers November campout. 146.52 is the normal talk in frequency.

Those wishing to camp in their RV's can come Friday and spend two nights if they want to. The camping fee with a group is around \$14 per night. The little red building just south of the Circle has been reserved for our use. Contact John Whiteman, K5LKJ @ [jw@heatingtapes.com](mailto:jw@heatingtapes.com) for more information.

## **September General Membership Meeting**

The September featured presentation was given by BVARC member Allen Mattis, N5AFV. We were all enlightened about amateur radio equipment and licensing requirements while on a cruise ship and in and out of various ports of call.



## President's Corner

Mike is still traveling so there will not be a President's Corner this month..

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# THE BVARC Rag Chew Net

*By Joe Morgan, K5JWM*

Aug 2005 check-ins

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

Joe Morgan, K5JWM, Net Coordinator

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! WHAT?? Don't have voice privileges? Got a short-wave receiver? Dial in and listen, then check in using the telephone number announced at the beginning of each net.

08/03/05\_\_N5CPA, KE5SR, KE5CUT, W5RH, WA5VRB, WO5O, KZ5I, WB5VYR, K5VRJ, AB5BA, NM5K.  
Check-ins(11)

08/10/05\_\_ K5JWM. Check-ins(1)

08/17/05\_\_K5JWM, KB5SIT, N5CPA, K5CEK, KE5SR, W5UHZ, K1HK, K5LJ, KE5CFF, KE5CDE, WA5VRB, K5VRJ, AB5BA, NM5K. Check-ins(14)

08/24/05\_\_N5CPA, K5CEK, KE5SR, K5KEN, KK5UO, KE5CUT, WA5VRB, KB5SIT, W5RH, WO5O, KZ5I. Check-ins(11)

08/31/05\_\_K5JWM, N5CPA, KK5UO, KE5CUT, W5RH, K5CEK, KB5SIT, K5IZO. Check-ins(8)

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## BVARC License Classes

**Ross Lawler, W5HFF, and John Chauvin, K5IZO, will be holding license classes this fall starting in late October. Check the BVARC website or contact Ross or John if you are interested. Classes will be given for Technician, General and Extra Class license including a separate Morse Code class. Contact Ross at [W5HFF@yahoo.com](mailto:W5HFF@yahoo.com) or John at [K5IZO@yahoo.com](mailto:K5IZO@yahoo.com) by e-mail or see one of them at the general membership meeting to discuss options.**

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## Houston Amateur Radio Supply

181 Cypresswood Drive

Houston, Texas 77388-6038

800-471-7373 281-355-7373 281-355-8007/FAX

Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM to 3 PM

Repair most brands of radios, amps, and other gear  
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30 Day Warranty on used equipment

<http://texasparadise.com/hars/> George DiLetto KD0RW

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## BVARC EATING SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFASTS:

NEW YORK COFFEE SHOP, 7:30a.m., 9720 Hillcroft, in Houston.

VIKING DEN, 7:30a.m., 2939 S. Main (US90A), in Stafford.

### THIRD FRIDAY DINNERS:

October 21, 7:30p.m., TIO PEPE'S SPANISH RESTAURANT  
5213 Cedar in Bellaire.

November 18, 7:30p.m., THE HICKORY BARN BARBECUE  
11534 Wilcrest in Houston.

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## UPCOMING FEATURED PRESENTATIONS

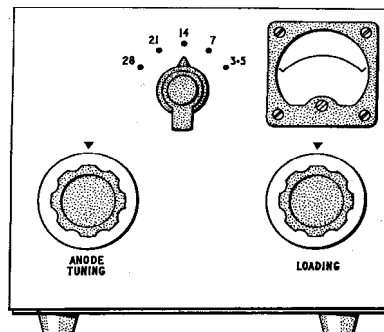
October – “Design, Build and Deploy a 75 meter antenna for the BVARC Rag Chew Net”

November - the chili supper and elections.

December - home brew night.

January – Annual Banquet

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## Upcoming Hamfests

Hamfest info for the next few months. More information at: <http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html#listing>

### 2005 BRENHAM SWAPMEET

WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS  
BRENHAM, TEXAS

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2005, RAIN OR SHINE**

INSIDE ALL WEATHER FOOD CENTER AREA  
GATES OPEN AT 7 AM

SWAPMEET RUNS UP UNTIL 2 PM  
COVERED AREA FOR TAILGATING

COMMERCIAL DEALERS AND VENDORS WELCOME  
LARGE TABLES AVAILABLE TO INDIVIDUALS FOR \$10  
DEALER AND VENDOR TABLES FOR FREE

COFFEE AND DONUTS AT CONCESSION STAND

TALK-IN FREQUENCY WILL BE  
145.390 MHz (-600) TONE 103.5 Hz

[NOTE: RV HOOKUPS AVAILABLE THRU WASHINGTON CO.  
FAIRGROUNDS ASSN. AT 979-836-4112]  
YOU MAY CALL 979-251-8024 FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.alpha1.net/~w5aum>

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Austin Radio Roundup

The Third Annual Austin Radio Roundup swapfest will be held on Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup> with a special social gathering and banquet on Friday night the 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Location:** VFW Post 8787 500 VFW Drive in Austin Texas  
IH35 North of Braker Lane - [Directions](#)

Large Main Hall #3 (80'x66'), well ventilated. Main hall will be smoke free during banquet.

**TCARES - Talk in on the 146.940 Repeater**

**Entrance fee** is \$1 admission which includes 1 raffle ticket. Additional raffle tickets can be purchased for 6 for \$5

**Tables-** \$10 w/o Electricity and \$15 w/electricity  
Along the Wall commercial vendor spaces w/electricity available

**Hours** - Vendor Setup from 5-7 PM on Friday  
Setup from 7 to 8 am on Saturday  
Swapfest opens at 8 and runs until noon

**Door Prizes** every 30 mins  
**Saturday Grand Prize-** Kenwood TM-V708a Dual Band Mobile -12noon- need not be present to win Grand Prize!

**Saturday** - Breakfast tacos, tamales, fruit, soft drinks served

<http://www.austinhams.org/radioroundup.htm>

### ARLB023 Amateur Radio antenna "CC&R Bill" reintroduced in Congress

New York Congressman Steve Israel has reintroduced legislation that could make it easier for radio amateurs living in communities with deed covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs) to erect suitable antennas. Arkansas Congressman Mike Ross, WD5DVR, signed aboard as an original cosponsor of the 'Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act' (HR 3876).

ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, has encouraged League members to write their elected representative and ask that they cosponsor and support the bill, especially given two hurricane emergencies in short order.

The one-sentence measure is identical to the text of the CC&R bill that has been introduced in the last two sessions of Congress. It would put private land-use regulations, such as homeowners' association rules, on the same legal plane as state or local zoning regulations under the FCC's PRB-1 limited federal preemption. PRB-1 now applies only to states and municipalities.

HR 3876 has been assigned to the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Information about the bill and a sample letter to use when contacting your representative are available on the ARRL Web site, [www.arrl.org/govrelations/hr3876/](http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/hr3876/)

**We are encouraging members to contact their congressmen to show support for this bill!**

## Design, Build and Deploy an 75 meter antenna for the BVARC Rag Chew Net

By  
Rick Hiller W5RH

*This article is an introduction to the technical presentation to be given at the October BVARC meeting. The presentation will be showing you, not only the why's, but the how's of building an 75 meter antenna.*

BVARC is a club for everyone. Members are involved with HF, VHF, UHF CW, SSB, digital modes, TV, satellites, ARES, etc. The monthly meeting technical presentations and other meeting activities extend from eating ice cream and chili to QRP, ARES, Satellites, DX-peditioning and commercial RF systems, etc. BVARC members volunteer for communications for bike rides, walks, charity events, Boy Scout demonstrations and merit badge classes. So in short, if it's a ham radio activity, you can be assured a few BVARC members are involved to some extent.

### “The Net”

HF operation is a core capability of the typical amateur radio station. Anything from 160 meters to 10 meters is involved. BVARC promotes HF operation with activities centered around ARRL Field Day, Special Events stations, JOTA and the weekly BVARC “Rag Chew Net”. This net is called the “Rag Chew Net”, as it is simply a general net where BVARC announcements are passed on and each station that has checked in is allowed some ‘on air’ time to ‘chew the rag’. Stations just say hi, or, typically, tell of their most recent ham radio activity or project.

So, every Wednesday evening at 7PM, on 3910 KHz (75 meters) Lower Side Band, BVARC members, with additional hams from around the regional area and adjoining states, meet for 30 to 45 minutes. It is a chance to get on HF and utilize those privileges. For those operators without HF privileges or for non-licensed SWL's, a telephone number is provided at the beginning of each net so that all can ‘check in’.

### Antennas

One of the main drawbacks of 75 meters is the size of the antenna versus the size of a Ham's property. A dipole, cut to resonance for the Rag Chew Net, is 120 feet long. Deploying a 120 foot long antenna wire is not an easy task for most Ham's, but take heart in that you can use loaded (shortened) antennas and that you do not have to deploy a resonant antenna. Many Net ‘checkins’ use end fed, long wires that are fed against ground and are non-resonant. Also, for net operation, the height of the antennas above ground is not critical. In fact, lower antennas perform better, due to the fact that they are producing NVIS (Near Vertical Incidence Skywave) signals that go straight up and straight back down, thus covering the surrounding regional area quite well. Much more on antennas will be discussed within the presentation.

### Propagation

One of the underlying benefits of checking into the net over a longer term is that you get to observe the changing propagation conditions from season to season. 75 meters, considered a ‘low band’, has propagation characteristics that vary quite slowly as the year passes, as opposed to 10 meters with propagation that is pretty much ‘binary’ in nature, meaning it is either there or not.

As the net is held at 7PM local time, the Sun's position varies from high in the sky in July to ‘been set for a couple of hours’, in January. This means that the band conditions for the net will vary from being very local in July to being very long (skip conditions) in January. Another very noticeable difference will be the level of atmospheric noise that is present throughout the year -- very quiet in Winter and full of QRN in the Summer. So the net is a good teaching tool in the ways of low band propagation for the Ham Radio neophyte or the seasoned HF op moving into the low bands during the solar cycle trough.

### EOC /ARES Net Benefits

The recent flurry of activity during the aftermath of Hurricane's Katrina and Rita showed a significant amount of operation on 75 meters. A few EOC / ARES nets meet on 75 meters, such as the Louisiana Traffic Net which meets on 3910 KHz just before the BVARC Rag Chew Net. By setting up your station for 75 meter capability to participate in the Rag Chew Net, you have, by default, created a station that has local emergency HF capability (a welcome addition to the VHF capability which most BVARC members have). With a better antenna, not only will you be able to monitor these 75 meter nets more effectively, but you should be able to take an active roll now that you have both efficient receive and transmit capability.

### Summary

This article is a tickler to peak your interest in 75 meter operation and in the October meeting technical presentation. Please come to the meeting and see the whole 75 Meter story on operation, propagation and antennas. We promise to keep it very

practical, so that you can learn what is required, how to design an antenna and then go home and build an antenna for 75 meters to be able to participate in the fun on the Wednesday evening BVARC Rag Chew Net.

Also, if you have any experience with 75 meter antennas, please come participate in the discussion.

The Place: The October 13th BVARC meeting

The Time: 7:30 PM

The Presentation: Design, Build and Deploy an 75 meter antenna for the BVARC Rag Chew Net

See you there – Rick – W5RH

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## BVARC Activities for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

BVARC members answered the call for volunteers for Katrina relief work by the Harris County ARES organization. While it is not known if any served out of state in the stricken areas, several spent time at the Harris County ARES operations center, the Reliant Center complex, and the George R. Brown. Operations were through the 146.96 repeater and HT units. A temporary George R. Brown convention center repeater and another temporary Galveston repeater were connected to the 146.96 repeater through an IRLP link, extending the network coverage.

BVARC members also supported the activities of the Fort Bend Office of Emergency Management (OEM). In advance of Hurricane Rita, one group went to Pierce Texas to verify that VHF repeater communications were possible between the Texas Department of Public Safety in Pierce and Fort Bend OEM in Richmond. Later, as Rita made land-fall, others erected and staffed VHF stations in Sugar Land, Stafford, Missouri City, Richmond, and Fort Bend County OEMs.

## Special Event Station at George Observatory Astronomy Day Update:

Because of conditions beyond the control of BVARC members, the plans to create a BVARC Field Station for Astronomy Day has been abandoned for 2005. It is hoped that 2006 will see a BVARC Field Station at the George Observatory on Astronomy Day.

Submitted by Pete Sauermilch, KD5QPX

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## Monday Night NET Updates

Don't forget the Monday Night Public Service Net starts at **8 pm**. 146.88 Mhz, PL 103.5 (backup – 145.45, PL –none). The order of check-ins start with mobile units first then fixed stations. If you have something for the net, make sure you let Net Control know about it when you check in. We are looking for Net Control Operators. Contact any officer of BVARC if you are interested. Here are recent check-ins with control-ops:

4/18 - 22 - Joe, k5jwm	6/6 - 23 - Cam, k5cam	8/8 - 20 - Sid, n5zkd
4/25 - 18 - Doug, kc5vyz	6/13 - 28 - Mike, n5vcx	8/15 - 11 - Joe, n5jwm
5/2 - 18 - Cam, k5cam	6/20 - 13 - Mike, n5vcx	8/22 - 25 - Sid, n5zkd
5/9 - 18 - Mike, n5vcx	6/27 - 18 - Cam, k5cam	9/5 - 15 - Cam, k5cam
5/16 - 8 - Joe, k5jwm	7/18 - 19 - John, k5lkj	9/12 - 17 - Doug, kc5vyz and Sid, n5zkd
5/23 - 23 - Doug, kc5vyz	7/25 - 18 - Larry, k5lj	9/19 - 23 - Joe, k5jwm
5/30 - 13 - Sid, n5zkd	8/1 - 26 - Cam, k5cam	9/26 - 25 - Sid, n5zkd

**2005 Club Officers:**

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

Vice President:  
Allen Brier, N5XZ  
n5xz@arrl.net

Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:  
Ross Lawler, W5HFF  
w5hff@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary:  
Joe Morgan, K5JWM  
K5jwm@earthlink.net

One Year Board Member:  
Robert Polanski, KD5YVQ  
polanski@swbell.net

Two Year Board Member:  
Sid Sherwood, N5ZKD  
n5zkd@arrl.net

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

**Club Happenings:**

General Meeting

Second Thursday each month,  
Sugar Land Community Center,  
226 Matlage Way

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month,  
Sugar Land Community Center,  
226 Matlage Way

Volunteer Examiner Program

BVARC administers Amateur License Exams  
on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the HCC  
Scarcella Technology Campus,

10141 Cash Rd. in Stafford.  
Contact John Moore, KK5NU

Eating Schedule

Third Friday Dinner at 7:30 p.m.  
Location announced in text or the calendar.

Saturday morning breakfasts –

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

Rag Chew Net

3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays  
at 7:00 p.m.

Public Service Net

Monday night on 146.88 (103.5 PL) at 8:00 PM

## Minutes of Brazos Valley BVARC Board of Directors Meeting

The BVARC Board of Directors has not had a quorum of members for several months. Attempts are being made to assure that there will be a quorum at the October meeting, October 6. Those minutes will appear here in next month's issue of the newsletter.

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**Remember that the BVARC Newsletter is available on-line at the BVARC website usually several days before you receive it in the mail. Also, the web version is in color.**

**Note: For economic reasons, we are not publishing the event calendar. It is on the BVARC website.**

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### VE EXAMS (Amateur Radio License Testing)

On Tuesday, October 11th at 1830 hours (CDT), BVARC (Brazos Valley ARC) will sponsor their 'Second Tuesday' test session --

Houston Community College  
Scarcella Technology Center  
10141 Cash Road  
Stafford, TX 77477

Inquire at the front desk for our room assignment

Parking in the rear lot --

Contact: John Moore, KK5NU  
(713) 313-5320

73 es tnx -- John, KK5NU  
VE Team Liaison - Brazos Valley ARC

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### UPCOMING ELECTIONS.

If you wish to serve on the board of directors or as an officer, please contact one of the officers as listed above.



Monthly Publication of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club.  
Serving Amateur Radio for Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County  
Club Call sign – KK5W  
BVARC Website: <http://www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc>  
Editor: John Chauvin, K5IZO, [k5izo@yahoo.com](mailto:k5izo@yahoo.com)  
Production Team: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, [k5cam@arrl.net](mailto:k5cam@arrl.net)  
Claude Sessions, K5HFY, [k5hfy@arrl.net](mailto:k5hfy@arrl.net)

**Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC)** was 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 amateur radio club in the Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County.

Today **BVARC** is truly a general interest amateur radio club along with an impressive record of public service. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has recognized the club's commitment of service with the coveted status of Special Services Club. We are proud of our members who represent the some of the finest in amateur radio. Membership is not limited to licensed operators, but is open to anyone with an interest in amateur radio. Club meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Sugar Land Community Center, 226 Matlege Way. Talk-in assistance for the club meeting is available on the 146.880 repeater (minus offset, 103.5 tone). General membership dues are \$20.00 per year, with student dues \$10.00 per year, addition family members \$2.00 per member per year and life membership \$160.00.

**BVARC** also administers amateur radio license exams on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Houston Community College's Scarcella campus in Stafford. A Public Service Net is held each Monday at 8:00 p.m. on the 146.880 (minus offset with a 103.5 tone) repeater and a rag chew net is held each Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. on 3910 KHz +/- 3 KHz.

To obtain information about joining **BVARC** or its activities contact the club's "Elmer", Ross Lawler, W5HFF at 281-342-3340 or [w5hff@yahoo.com](mailto:w5hff@yahoo.com) or the BVARC website at [www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc](http://www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc).

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**VOLUME 29, ISSUE 10**

**October 2005**

**BRAZOS VALLEY  
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
P.O. BOX 1630  
MISSOURI CITY TX 77459-1630  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**FIRST CLASS POSTAGE**

**General Membership Meeting, October 13, 7:30 PM.**

*If your mailing label is  
highlighted in color its time  
to renew your membership!*