



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

DECEMBER 2015

VOLUME 39 ISSUE 12

BVARC DECEMBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7:30 PM, Thursday, December 10th, 2015

421 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478, Sugar Land Masonic Lodge

Special Election

Due to a mistake made by the club's acting president (you know who it is), there will be a special election at the December general BVARC meeting. The special election will be held for club treasurer to complete the term of Bob Tomlinson, N5JSL. Please make sure you attend to help with the important club function.

The Gateway to D-STAR

It has been around for a few years and according to the last unofficial survey approximately 10% of BVARC members are equipped to use this mode. It is a merge of computer networking and amateur radio that gives ham radio abilities that were unheard of just a few years ago. The D-STAR digital voice and data format is one of the digital formats that is being used throughout the US. Come out and learn about the many possibilities that D-STAR has on the VHF and UHF bands.



In Case You Missed It Last Month - Chili and Club Elections

The chili was good....It was really good! If you didn't make it to the meeting last month, that's ok. By you missing last month, everybody was able to have more than enough Chili. We had several entries as well as several types of cornbread. The Sugar Land Skeeters judged the entries and awarded prizes for the best chili and cornbread.

Elections were held for the BVARC board of directors. The winners were:

1 Year At Large – Jon Noxon – KF5TFJ

2 Year At Large – Jo Keener – KE7NSB

Recording Secretary – Michael Monsour – AC0TX

President – Mike Hardwick – N5VCX



Upcoming Meetings

December 10th D-Star

Alan Isaachsen, KB2WF

January 15th, 2016 BVARC Annual Banquet

Ron Litt, K5HM

February 11th, 2016 Emergency Communications – Go Kit Info

Kerry Mallory, AE5JY

March 10th, 2016 Homebrew Contest

Jon Noxon, KF5TFJ

Your suggestions are needed for club meetings. Let someone know on the board if there is something you would to know more about or would like a club program on.



The Vice Prez Says

As the year comes to a close everyone at BVARC can think back to the events of the year. We have had a lot of successes this year and this is what makes the club continue. From a Hamfest that had over a 1000 participants to being the fifth highest scoring club in the US for Field Day, the club has had a lot of success.

With the successes we still have to look toward the future. The club still needs to bring in younger members to make the club survive. Without younger members, the club can end up where it was 15 years ago with only about 20 active members (the club had 85 members at that time but there were only 20 active ones). So reach out in your neighborhoods, schools, churches and see who might be interested in becoming a ham. You might be surprised.

As I mentioned last month BVARC had several members become Silent Keys. Please don't forget them as they helped the club there trying times and made several of us learn how to "deal with it".

President, William "Bill" Stone, WS5H

Past President, Charles F. "Frosty Frost, K5LBU

Life Member, Les Jones, W5WRN

G. David Waddell, N5GDW

I want to thank Rick Hiller, W5RH, for overseeing the elections. The results of the BVARC elections are:

1 Year At Large – Jon Noxon – KF5TFJ
Recording Secretary – Michael Monsour – AC0TX

2 Year At Large – Jo Keener – KE7NSB
President – Mike Hardwick – N5VCX

I want to thank those that volunteered to run for these offices. They will start their terms in office on January 1st. And due to me being the current Vice-President and will be taking over the President's position in January, the Board of Directors will appoint someone for that position at the next meeting.

The BVARC banquet is gearing up fast for Friday January 15th, 2016. Ron Litt, K5HM is the coordinator for the banquet. Check for more information in the newsletter on the banquet.

Also don't forget the ARRL 10 meter contest December 12th and 13th. And if you are really ready for a challenge, the Russian 160 meter contest is on December 18th.

And last but not least, Museum Ships Weekend will happen again this year. However there will be a change – the stations will be set up on the USS Stewart again. I do not have all the details yet but it has been approved for MSWE to operate from the radio room on the destroyer as we have in the past. I will keep everyone informed as I find out more information. If anyone is interested in chairing MSEWE, let me know.

73,
N5VCX



Photos Needed For Banquet

We are looking for photos from this year's club activities. We'll be putting together a slideshow for the January banquet. If you have any pictures from 2015 BVARC activities or personal ham radio activities, please send them in jpg format to me at my email address or to Rick Hiller.

73,
Ron, K5HM





Minutes of the November 7th, 2015 Board of Directors meeting of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Mike Hardwick called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to at 10:08am on November 7th, 2015, at Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston 77074. Attending were: Mike Hardwick N5VCX (V.P.), Donovan Balli KD5BDZ (Treas.), Michael Monsour ACØTX (Rec.Sec./Quart.), Stephanie Vessey K5SFV (Cor. Sec, QSL Manager), Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2yr At-Large Dir), Jerry Muller K9GEM (2yr At-Large Dir.), Eddie Runner NU5K Webmaster, Cameron Mitchell K5CAM, Rick Hiller W5RH, Ron Litt K5HM (Radio Sport), Pete Sauermilch KD5QPX, Nathan Vessey N5NYV, Jon Noxon KF5TFJ

Reports:

- 1.1 A motion was made and passed to accept the second version of the Minutes as it appears on page 10 of the Newsletter.
- 1.2 A motion was made and passed to accept the Treasurer's Report as sent out in the E mail.
- 1.3 Hamfest: Two things needed are from the Hamfest Committee are the basic organization chart and basic schedule of events and happenings. There is a great problem with getting volunteers to work at the Hamfest. A volunteer needs incentives to show up. There is a need to pay for full use of the Fairgrounds on Friday and a reduction for non-use of the kitchen.

General Meetings:

- 2.1 This Thursday will be Chili Cook Off and Elections. There was a request to know the names on the ballot, Rick W5RH replied that the nominations are not closed and will stay up to voting time. However Rick will put the ballot up on the reflector on Thursday.
- 2.2 December 10th will be D-Star.
- 2.3 January 15th will be the Banquet, it will like last year except it will be in a larger room. The speaker will Joey Clements from Harris County.
- 2.4 February 11th is Emergency Communications
- 2.5 March 10th is Home Brew contest

Formation of Committees:

- 3.1 Formation of Committees are being tabled

Old Business:

- 4.1 Nathan requested \$53 to pay for Makers Faire. A motion was made and passed to pay this. Other than the club flags there is no permanent club display. Research into the ARRL display will be made.
- 4.2 A problem occurs when people get interested in Ham radio and there are no classes that people can be directed to. A flyer needs to be created listing the testing times/dates and site information and the next meeting. A motion was made and passed to authorize spending up to \$200 for the Makers Faire – this replacing the earlier motion for \$53. This year, the BVARC booth is in a prime location and probably will show a video of a balloon launch and other ideas were discussed.
- 4.3 There are three most important things to have flyers on: classes, tests and clubs.

New Business:

- 5.1 The Skeeters are setting up a Holiday Light Festival Nov 27 to Jan 3 at Constellation Field and if BVARC sets up a link, anybody purchasing a ticket through the link would get \$2 off and \$1 would come back to BVARC.
- 5.2 There is hope with having MSWE on board the Stewart at Sea Wolf Park.
- 5.3 The Hamfest Web site has taken a new look and needs tweaking. Hamfest table on line purchase should happen sometime in December.
- 5.4 Ron K5HM will research the cost in obtaining ARRL display materials.
- 5.5 Field Day result: First in 8A and 5th in the USA.

Meeting adjourned at 11:14 AM

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Michael Monsour ACØTX



2016 BVARC ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET – JANUARY 15, 2016

By popular demand! We are returning to Maggiano's Little Italy for our annual banquet. Our banquet was so successful last year, we have reserved a larger room for 2016. So don't be shy.

The Annual Awards Banquet will be held on January 15th, 2016 at Maggiano's Little Italy, 2010 Post Oak Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77056. Cocktails and drinks will begin at 6 PM in the Trentino Room on the second floor of the restaurant. An elevator is available. There will be a cash bar.

Banquet tickets are \$25 per person. Advance reservations only. Sorry; we have to provide the restaurant with a firm headcount in advance. **All payments must be received no later than January 8th**. Checks or payments received after that date will be returned.

You may purchase your tickets by PayPal at <http://www.bvarc.org/index.php?page=banquet> or by check payable to BVARC. Mail checks to:

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 2997
Sugar Land, Texas 77487-2997

A three course meal with an Italian flair will be served. Guests will have a choice of appetizers and entrees. All courses are served family style.

Appetizers:

Mozzarella Marinara
Spinach and Artichoke al Forno

First course:

Choice of
Caesar Salad or Italian Tossed Salad

Second Course:

Mom's Meat Lasagna with Meat Sauce
Fettuccini Alfredo
Salmon, Lemon and Herb Sauce
Chicken Parmesan

Third Course

NY Style Cheesecake
Chocolate Zuccotto Cake

Served with fresh Ciabatta Rolls, Coffee, Iced Tea and Soft Drinks

Cash Bar for adult beverages.

The balance of the program, including guest speaker will be announced as we get closer to the banquet date.

You can email me if you have questions. Get your reservation in early. Don't miss it.

73, Ron, K5HM



**Results of the November 10th BVARC Amateur
License Examination Session by:
John Moore, KK5NU**

B-VARC sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examination session that was held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at HCC's Scarcella Science & Technology Building here in Stafford, TX.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Richard Goldy, K5GOL
Larry Jacobson, K5LJ
John Moore, KK5NU
Randy Pollard, AK5G

One examination element was administered during the evening to one applicant. One upgrade to Amateur Extra class license was attained, with the total number of elements passed being 1. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 100%.

Congratulations to the following who attained a license and/or passed an exam:

Kathy F. Keith - KG5FNG - Amateur Extra

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 everyone at HCC Scarcella Science & Technology Building for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

..... 73



Hamfests

(within 200 miles of Houston)

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

01/09/2016 | San Antonio Radio Club Fiesta

Location: Schertz, TX
Type: ARRL Hamfest
Sponsor: San Antonio Radio Club
Website: <http://w5sc.org>

03/12/2016 | WCARC Swapfest and License Testing

Location: Georgetown, TX
Type: ARRL Hamfest
Sponsor: Williamson County ARC
Website: <http://wcarc.com>

03/18 & 03/19, 2016 | South Texas Section Convention (Greater Houston Hamfest)

Location: Rosenberg, TX
Type: ARRL Convention
Sponsor: Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club
Website: <http://www.houstonhamfest.org/>



Radiosport Items of Note for December 2015

For a complete list of contests click the link below
<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

State QSO Parties – An easy way to try a contest for the first time. If you happen to need these states for WAS, they are a great way to work states to work states you can't easily find on the bands otherwise.

State QSO Parties

- No State QSO Parties in December

Mixed Mode Contests

- ARRL 10 Meter Contest Dec 12-13
- RAC Winter Contest Dec 19
- World-Wide Iron Ham Contest Dec 26-27

SSB Contests

- UK/EI DX Content, SSB Dec 5-6
- WAE DX Contest SSB, Sept 12-13

CW Contests

- ARRL 160 Meter Contest Dec 4-6^t
- ARRL Rookie Roundup, CW Dec 20
- Stew Perry Top Band Contest Dec 26-27

Digital Contests

- Ten Meter RTTY Contest Dec 6

Selected Special Event Activities

- Pearl Harbor Commemoration – Various Dec 3-12
- Christmas, Various Dec 5-26
- 74th Anniversary of the Civil Air Patrol Dec 5th – NOC
- 72 Rag Chew New Years Special Event –Dec 31- Jan 2 – K1R, 7.272 KHz

And The Ever Popular . . .

- Discovery of Pluto – The planet, not the dog - Dec 5-13, W7P

For details on every Special Event in December, go to <http://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>





If I could write the License Exam . .
by
Ron Litt, K5HM

This month's exam question are courtesy of Bill Garfield, WB9FOP

Question 1: What is a battery?

- A. A tree where bats live
- B. A park in New York City
- C. A tactical unit of military artillery
- D. A device for storing electrical energy

Question 2: How many syllables are in the word "LINEAR"?

- A: 3
- B: 2
- C: 1
- D: All of the above

Question 3: What is the correct pronunciation of the word "LINEAR"?

- A. Lin-ee-er
- B. Leen-yur
- C. Lain-yur
- D. None of the above

Question 4: What is an AL-811?

- A. The driver stage for a pair of 4-1000's
- B. A type of semi-automatic assault rifle
- C. A special antenna designed for 11 meter operation
- D. A 600-watt linear amplifier that you can overdrive and change transformer taps on to achieve close to 1000w output for several seconds

Help improve the FCC exam pool by submitting your own questions to K5HM@arrl.net

Reporting from the Dark Side,
 Ron Litt, K5HM



BVARC Monday Night NET Updates

Don't forget the BVARC Monday Night Net starts at **8 pm** on 146.94 (167.9). The order of check-ins starts 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 Mark, mark@mcgrath-co.com, if you are interested. Here are recent check-ins with control-ops:

8/17 - 35 - Ron, k5hm	9/21 - 26 - Cam, k5cam	10/26 - 18 - Pete, kd5qpx
8/24 - 27 - Pete, kd5qpx	9/28 - 23 - Cam, k5cam	11/2 - 16 - Ron, k5hm
8/31 - 31 - Terry, k5pgf	10/5 - 22 - David, n5ekw	11/7 - 30 - Pete, kd5qpx
9/7 - 16 - David, n5ekw	10/12 - 20 - Steve, kf5yyy	11/14 - 22 - Ron, k5hm
9/14 - 28 - Rick, w5rh	10/19 - 26 - Ron, k5hm	11/21 - 18 - Clint, kf5hdf





BVARC Historical Vignettes – BVARC and the Houston SHOT Chapter of 10-10 International

Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian

For several decades there has been a close relationship between BVARC and the Houston SHOT chapter of Ten Ten International. The SHOT chapter was formed in September 1975 two years prior to the founding of BVARC.

It seemed natural that BVARC members would join the Houston SHOT chapter. The BVARC Rag Chew Net originally started on 10 meters (The Rag Chew Net moved to 75 meters in January 1985) and many BVARC members already had 10 meter antennas and experience operating on that band. Perhaps the strongest tie between the SHOT chapter and BVARC was Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG (SK). Stu was editor of the BVARC Bulletin and also the Certificate Manager (CM) for Houston SHOT.

The most popular Ten-Ten activity for Houston SHOT members is participation in the winter and summer phone QSO parties. The QSO parties are a laid back, easy pace contest where chapters compete with other chapters. For many years the Houston SHOT chapter was unbeatable in the Ten-Ten QSO parties. At one point, the SHOT chapter had the high score for eight consecutive phone QSO parties. The SHOT chapter also managed to get the high score in a number of the CW QSO parties during that same time period. The participation of BVARC members in the Ten Ten International QSO Parties has played a significant role in the Houston SHOT Chapter's continued success in the Ten Ten International QSO parties.



BVARC Rag Chew Net

10/28/15, K5LKJ (NCS), WB9FOP (Katy), K5IZO/5 (Jasper), KA5CYP (Hockley), W5TOM, W5HFF, K5LJ, KE5OBY, W5TKZ, AA0ST (Dickinson), K0NM, W5RH, AF5XL, AA5OA, KF5OXF (Needville), KG5BMS, KC5JAR (Katy). (17 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 113, SN = 78, A = 4, K = 0

11/04/15, W5TKZ (NCS), WB9FOP (Katy), W5HFF, KF5TFJ, W5TOM, W5RH, K5LJ, AF5T, KC5JAR (Katy), N5EKW (Katy), K5LKJ/5 (RCS), AA0ST (Dickinson). (17 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 113, SN = 95, A = 40, K = 3

11/11/15, K5LKJ (NCS), W5HFF, W5TKZ, AA5OA, KF5TFJ, W5TOM, K5IZO, K5LJ, W5RH, AF5XL, K0NM, AF5T, AA0ST (Dickinson), WN5A. (14 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 106, SN = 65, A = 38, K = 5

11/18/15, K5LKJ (NCS), W5HFF, W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, AA0ST (Dickinson), W5TOM, K5IZO, K5LJ, AF5T, KG5DJS. (10 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 107, SN = 99, A = 8, K = 2

(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (RCS) = remote controlled station (T) = telephone check-in

Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening. Regards. John K5LKJ



The Radio Hotel - Analyzing with Antenna Analyzers

by Rick Hiller -- W5RH

The Radio Hotel series over the past 2 years has talked about the Antenna and the Transmission Line “system” and the many characteristics and attributes that exist within the system. Most of this information has come from books, web sites and Ham to Ham discussion, but how do we know these attributes exist and how do you measure them, empirically, to build or troubleshoot an antenna?

These days, empirical antenna system measurements are easier than ever. Maybe “easier” is not the correct word; so how about “more convenient”. One smallish hand-held device puts many measurements, literally, in the palm of your hand. The generic term for these devices is “antenna analyzer”, but they do so much more. Simple tasks, such as SWR measurements or resonance/impedance measurements (giving you both R and j) are probably the two measurements that handle 90% of the Ham’s need when working with antennas.

For that remaining 10% of a Ham’s need, these antenna analyzers can also give you RL-return loss, S-plots, Xl and L, Xc and C, provide a Time Domain Reflectometer for locating a cable breakage point, etc. As you learn and understand more about antenna “systems” you will see what these other measurement are and what benefit they provide. Also, as you improve your antenna and transmission line knowledge, ensure that you know how these attributes are measured with that fairly expensive “analyzer” sitting in your closet.

Some analyzers provide an analog meter indication, some give you the actual measured values (so you better know what you are looking at) and others give a graph of frequency versus quantity, etc. Very nice indeed. But don’t use the graphics as a crutch; know what is happening within the system, etc. This way you will use the data (numerical or graphical) provided as part of your knowledgeable troubleshooting procedure.

What analyzers are available today? Looking at the just published December 2016 QST, I found the following units advertised:

Comet CAA-500 Mk II -- Page 3

AIM 4300 Array Solutions Ad -- Page 18

MFJ-226 Product Review -- Page 39 and 137

MFJ analyzer assortment -- Page 139

Rig Expert -- Page 107 and 157

SARK-110 Page 132

Of course, there are others, like the Telepost LP-100A watt meter and associate software, which is actually a VNA based operating impedance bridge that will work in an environment of high RF, as the signal source is your 100 watt transceiver. (Ref: “Blame it on IZO” BVARC Tech articles web page)

Finally, let me give you some links to use or Google search:

--“SARK-110 and Rig Expert AA-600 Comparison” -- <http://www.gofrc.org/frctest/node/133>

Then go to the August 2016 Newsletter--Frankford Radio Club

--QST September 2006, Technical Correspondence – “On Tuning, Matching and Measuring Antenna System Impedance using a Hand Held SWR Analyzer” – Dr. John Belrose – VE2CV

--“Understanding Your Antenna Analyzer” – Joel Hallas, W1ZR - ARRL Books

Recommendations: Talk to your Elmer about your requirements and your budget. Which one will give you the best informational graphics or numbers? What are the limitations, etc? Between you and your Elmer you should be able to pick the analyzer that is just right for now and in the future.

GL ES 73 DE W5RH Enjoy your hobby.

Next time.... Hooking Up with RF Connectors

*The purpose of **The Radio Hotel** is to give you a practical kickstart into exploring the workings of antenna systems. It is a series, so go back and read the previous columns to get the whole picture, as one month relies on the previous month's information. Google the buzz words and find out what they mean. Read up on antenna system theory to see how it all works together. You will be glad you did.*



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

This newsletter is a monthly publication of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club. For a full listing of officers and information about BVARC, please go to www.bvarc.org. Detailed information will be published in the newsletter every 3 or 4 months. Similarly, the "Eating Schedule" will be published every 3 or 4 months unless there is a change.

General membership dues are \$25.00 per year, with student dues \$10.00 per year, additional family members \$5.00 per member per year.

Club meetings are normally held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Sugar Land Masonic Lodge, 421 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478. Check the above website for any possible changes.

BVARC also administers amateur radio license exams on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Houston Community College's Scarcella campus in Stafford.

A Public Service Net is held each Monday at 8 p.m. on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 tone) repeater.

A rag chew net is held each Wednesday at 7 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 281-701-7602 or see the BVARC website: www.bvarc.org

Other contacts include:

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

Newsletter Editor, John Chauvin, K5IZO, k5izo@yahoo.com

A complete listing will be put in the January Newsletter, with the new Officers and Directors.


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DECEMBER 2015

**BRAZOS VALLEY
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 2997
SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

December General Membership Meeting – December 10



If your mailing label is highlighted in color, it's time to renew your membership!