

B-VARC

BULLETIN

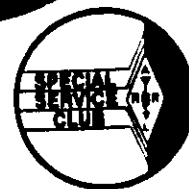
The Monthly Publication of the
BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

Fort Bend and Harris Counties, Texas

Editor-in-Chief: Production Editor:

Brenson Abbott - N5FSS

**PUBLICATION DEADLINE:
THE THIRD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH**



VOLUME 9 ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 1986

YOUR PRESIDENT SAYS

It is hard to believe that we are already entering the last quarter of 1986. There are a lot of things to plan for in the final quarter of the year. Plans are being made to hold the 1987 BVARC banquet at the River Bend Country Club in Sugar Land. It will be on Thursday January 8th at 7:30 PM. This is the only 'formal' event of the year for the club. We have a nice meal, some time to visit with each other and then we install the new officers for the coming year. It was a lot of fun last year and it is a good chance to bring the XYL with you. Please plan to attend. We are going to bring the price down so those with a tight budget will feel good about attending, too.

I noticed in the newsletter from the San Antonio Radio Club that Ray Wangler W5EDZ is starting a road trip to visit the special service clubs in the West Gulf Division. I would like to find out if we are on his list, so we could get an update on the A.R.R.L. and what is going on close to home. I want to thank Doug and Marie Holley for inviting us to hold our picnic at their home again this fall. We enjoy it and we appreciate it. Thanks is also directed to Tom Sellers K5CNU for the nice holder. We thought it would be perfect to hold the flyers we distribute about the club. I also want to thank Ray WA5F for all the work he has done with our VE program. If you would like to help out at the Juvenile Diabetes Walk this year, Ray would like to hear about it. See you at the meeting and the picnic.

BVARC MEETINGS

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

DATE: Second Thursday
TIME: 7:00 PM Eyeball
7:30 PM Meeting & Program
PLACE: Missouri City Courthouse,
located one mile south of
US 90-A on FM 2234

BOARD MEETINGS

DATE: First Thursday
TIME: 7:30 PM
PLACE: Corporate
Drive
VE Exam
location

BVARC NETS

Public Service Net

DATE: Mondays
TIME: 9:00 PM Local
PLACE: 145.47/144.87

Ft. Bend Cty. Emer. Net

DATE: Mondays
TIME: 8:00 PM Local
PLACE: 145.25/144.65

Slow Speed CW Net

DATE: Wednesdays
TIME: 7:45 PM Local
PLACE: 3.740 MHz

Ragchew Net

DATE: Wednesdays
TIME: 8:30 PM Local
PLACE: 3.960 MHz

BVARC OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT Steve Schuster, WA5G
VICE PRESIDENT Joe Ross, KA5GTU
SECRETARY Herb Nance, N5FLQ
TREASURER George Jolly, ND5E
DIRECTOR - 3 year Clint Gilliland, N5FNA
DIRECTOR - 2 year Jim Arnold, W5RNK
DIRECTOR - 1 year Carter Beghtol, KD5XX
DIRECTOR - Past President Harold Parker, ND5F

Treasurer's Report as of September 21, 1986
Submitted by George W. Jolly, ND5E

Balance as of August 23, 1986 1,255.32

Receipts:

Sale of one patch 2.50
September Meeting 50-50 drawing 9.00

Total Receipts: 11.50

Expenses:

September Bulletin printing and mailing 137.28

Total Expenses: 137.28

Balance as of August 23, 1986 1,129.54

The September Door Prize winner was Norman Wheatley, KF5QI.
Madison Electronic Supply donated the prize, a two meter
antenna.

The October Door Prize will again be a two meter antenna
donated by Madison Electronic Supply. Hope to see you all
at the meeting!

Don't forget our fall picnic on Saturday, October 18! If
you can make it I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

We are considering opening a savings account for BVARC. If
anyone has any comments on the idea please tell a board
member.

73, ND5E

WE WERE THERE ON SEPTEMBER 11th:

WA5G	WB5ZPE	KA5DUU	KA5SGM	KA5WFB	N5IZF	WB5IGG
N5FSS	ND5F	WA5F	KC5GR	KB5AEU	WN5G	KA5WGJ
KA5QLQ	WA5HZM	KA5ZAU	WA5OEN	KA5TJS	N5AFV	WB5B
KA5GYG	WA4PSO	KA5ZAN	N5GHK	N5FNA	WB5SRN	K5LTW
N5JKD	WN5A	KA5VSH	KA5YSL	KF5QI	N5GZW	KB5AKS
ND5E	KA5WHK					

Louis Cullick

BVARC PUBLIC SERVICE HONOR ROLL

- A. BVARC Field Day at Brazos Bend State Park -- June 28th
- B. Mother's Day at Sharpstown Shopping Center-- May 3rd
- C. MS-150 Bike Ride from Houston to Austin -- April 19-20

Steve Schuster WA5G -A,B,C	Dick Hagerman WB5SRN -A,B
Joe Ross KA5GTU -A,B	Roger Messick KA5NTY -C
George Jolly ND5E -B,C	Herb Nance N5GZW -A,B
Ray Dillard WA5F -A,B,C	Ron Nance N5IZF -B
Jack VanDermark WN5A -A	Steve Yates KA5DUU -A
Rick Covert WD5L -A	Laura Yates KA5SGM -A
Kathy Jolly KA5WHK -B,C	Harold Parker ND5F -B
Steve Dunkelberger N5JBL -A	Ron Bolyard KA5GYG -A
Allen Mattis -B	

I am sure this list is incomplete. Please let me know of any omissions or corrections. Thanks. Steve WA5G

NET CONTROL SCHEDULE

2M - BVARC Public Service Net 144.87/5.47(ALT. 144.65/5.25)
9/1 - KA5TJS 9/8 - WA5OEN 9/15 - WN5A 9/22 - KA5DUU
9/27 - N5GZW

75M - BVARC Rag Chew 3.960 Mhz.
9/3 - WB5IGG 9/10 - WB5IGG 9/17 - WB5IGG 9/24 - WB5IGG

80M - BVARC Slow Speed CW 3.740 Mhz.
9/3 - Open 9/10 - Open 9/17 - Open 9/24 - Open

ROSTER CHANGES

ANY CORRECTIONS TO THE ROSTER INFORMATION SHOULD BE
GIVEN TO JACK WN5A AT HM# 495-1121 OR WK# 975-6300.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING September 4 1986

The BVARC Board of Directors met at the offices on Exchange Drive on Thursday September 4th, 1986. Those present were KA5GTU, ND5F, N5FNA, ND5E, N5GZW, WN5A, and N5FSS. WA5G was absent. His proxy vote was ND5E.

The board discussed the need for placing extra copies of the newsletter at Tex-Comm Center and at Madison Electronics. It was mentioned that Ray Wangler W5EDZ is up for re-election as the director of the A.R.R.L. West Gulf Division. It was decided that BVARC would oversee the flea market operation at Ham-Comm. The times for that will be from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturday October 4th and from 7:00 AM to 12 Noon on Sunday October 5th. Telephone call assignments were made to notify the membership of the coming membership meeting. A motion was made by Harold ND5F to form the nominating committee that will select nominees for the election of officers to be held at the November membership meeting. Joe seconded that motion and Harold will chair the committee. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Minutes taken by Herb N5GZW and submitted by Steve WA5G

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING September 11 1986

The Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club held its monthly meeting on Thursday September 11th at 7:30 PM in the City Council Chambers in Missouri City. The meeting was called to order by Steve WA5G at 7:35 PM. It opened with a standing roll call.

Susan KA5WEB gave the details about the fall picnic. It will be held at the home of Doug Holley KE5SR on Saturday October 18th at 1:00 PM. A sign up sheet was left for those wishing to bring things to eat. Susan also brought up the subject of a Christmas party for discussion. Suggestions led to the planning of a Texas Tumbleweed style outing in December.

Harold ND5F announced the election of the officers for 1987 that oc-

eurs at the November meeting. Ray WA5F gave a report on the Novice class at Tex-Comm. George ND5E announced the plan for the flea market at Ham-Comm. Ray WA5F announced that BVARC will have two exam sessions in October, one in conjunction with the class at Tex-Comm on October 21 at 8:00 PM and the regular one on October 25 at 9:00 AM. Ray also asked for helpers for the Juvenile Diabetes Walk on November 2nd.

The group discussed the proposed location for the 1987 BVARC Banquet. WB5IGG gave his endorsement for returning to the River Bend Country Club again next year. It was decided to do just that and to make the ticket price lower so more folks could attend. It was suggested that if we made any money on the flea market operation at Ham-Comm, that we use those funds to subsidize the banquet. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM and a program on 2400 baud modems and packet followed.

Minutes taken by Herb N5GZW and submitted by Steve WA5G

FCC ISSUES NEW RFI HANDBOOK From W5YI Report

The Field Operations Bureau, FCC, has just released a new "Interference Handbook". It is the best ever! Written by the staff of their Public Service Division, the manual identifies sources of interference to home entertainment equipment and recommends an appropriate solution.

Covered is interference involving two-way transmitters, television, computers, paging systems, VCR's, TV booster amplifiers, telephones, electronic organs, AM/FM radios, stereo/hi-fi equipment as well as electrical and power line RFI.

A chapter lists dozens of manufacturers of consumer electronics and what each will do to assist the public with RFI problems involving their equipment. Performance ratings of low-pass, high-pass, power line and other filters are also given.

Step-by-step transmitter (and television) modification instructions advise qualified technicians how to evict RF interference. An interference check list tells amateur operators what to do when they get a report of TVI.

The 64 page full color handbook will be available at all FCC field offices shortly. It is must reading for every ham operator!

WHAT HAS THE LEAGUE DONE FOR YOU?

What has the League done for me lately? Strange you should ask, for just today one of your lab technicians, Jon Bloom, saved me untold hours of laborious mathematical calculations in designing a new antenna.

I am among that vanishing breed of hams who don't own a computer, and my last exposure to a table of logarithms was 31 years ago when I graduated from college. But the story by KV5E on his LPDA's for 80 and 40 in August QST prompted me to try one for 30 and 20.

After struggling with the computations and finally throwing in the towel (not to mention my little pocket calculator), I phoned headquarters and asked for the Technical Department. Explaining my plight to Jon, he asked if I would consent to be put on hold a couple of minutes.

Thinking he was going to have to look up something, I was quite surprised when he came on the line in a moment with complete dimensions for a two-band LPDA! It was a quick and simple matter for the lab computer to run up the calculations.

Sure, the call cost a couple of bucks; but the effort it saved me in tedious (and probably error filled) work was worth the \$25 ARRL membership fee.

But I really shouldn't have been surprised at this service. About three years ago, a neighbor's ceiling fan speed control was creating so much hash it wiped out the entire 160 meter band on my receiver. Another call brought the same fast, sure results. I was given the brand name, supplier and even catalog number of a filter that cured the problem.

Sure, the League represents me in Washington, at WARC's, keeps my QSLs coming and going to DX, and all those other good things that we tend to take for granted. But when this antenna is finally up and radiating RF to points around the world, I can look out the window at it and say "That's what the League has done for me". - Drayton Cooper, N4LBJ, Bishopville, South Carolina - Re-printed from October QST.

ELECTIONS FOR 1987 B-VARC OFFICERS NEARS!

Mark your calendars --- November 13th is a very important date for B-VARC to elect its new Officers and Directors for 1987.

Election of Officers will be the first item of business on the agenda at the regular B-VARC membership meeting in November. Please make plans to attend and vote to register your support for these new Officers for 1987.

The elective positions to be voted on are for the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer for the upcoming year and the 3-year Director.

Our Bylaws provide for a Nominating Committee consisting of three B-VARC Past-Presidents. The Nominating Committee for 1987 will be composed of Harold, ND5F as the Chairman with Ron, KA5GYG and Steve, WA5OEN.

If you would like to be considered for one of these elective positions, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee immediately and volunteer your services.

If you would like to recommend another B-VARC member for one of these positions, please call the Committee immediately so they can also be considered.

If you are approached by either the Nominating Committee or another B-VARC member to fill a position on the 1987 slate of officers, consider it an honor and a privilege and please accept the invitation!

Harold, ND5F will preside over the election of officers at the November, 1986 general membership meeting on November 13th at the Missouri City Civic Center. Nominations will be accepted from the floor for each elective position BEFORE the nominating committee's selection is announced. A vote from the members present will then be conducted to determine the winner. Please determine in advance that the person you nominate will serve B-VARC diligently.

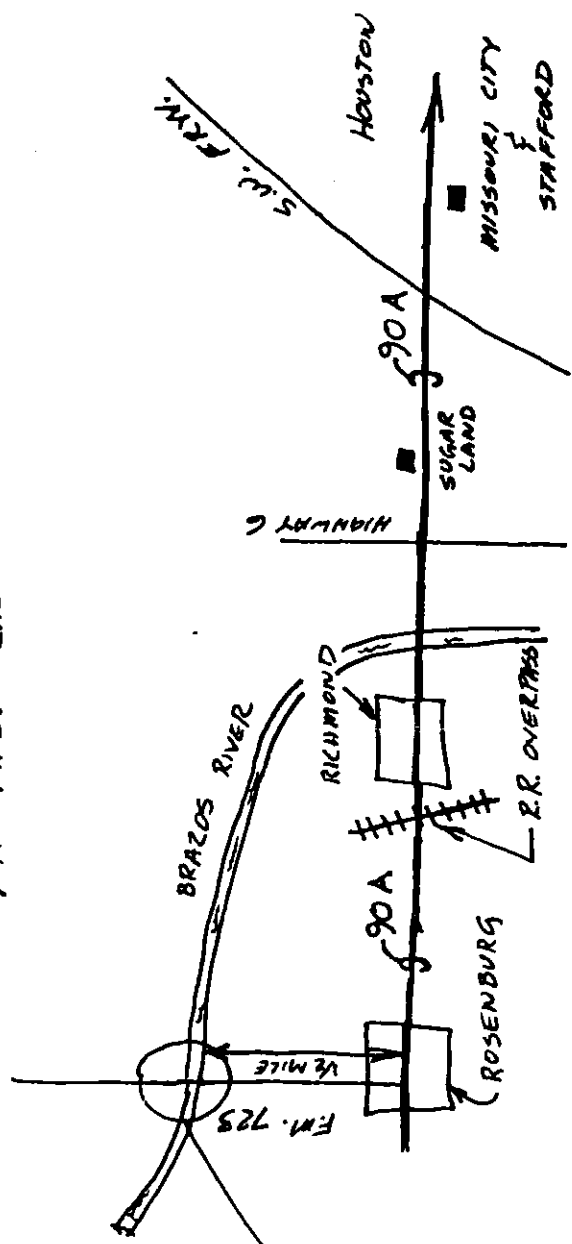
Please call Harold, ND5F at 464-9044 anytime to volunteer yourself for a position on our slate or to recommend one of our members for a position.

REMEMBER - NOVEMBER 13TH IS B-VARC ELECTION DAY !

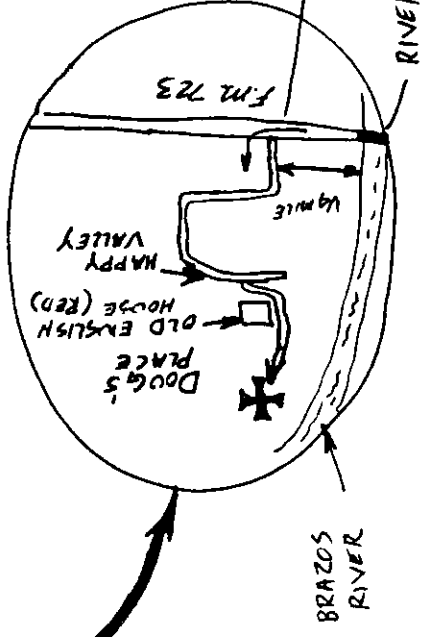
submitted by Harold, ND5F



FOR INFO. CALL



CALL FOR HELP
ON 145.52



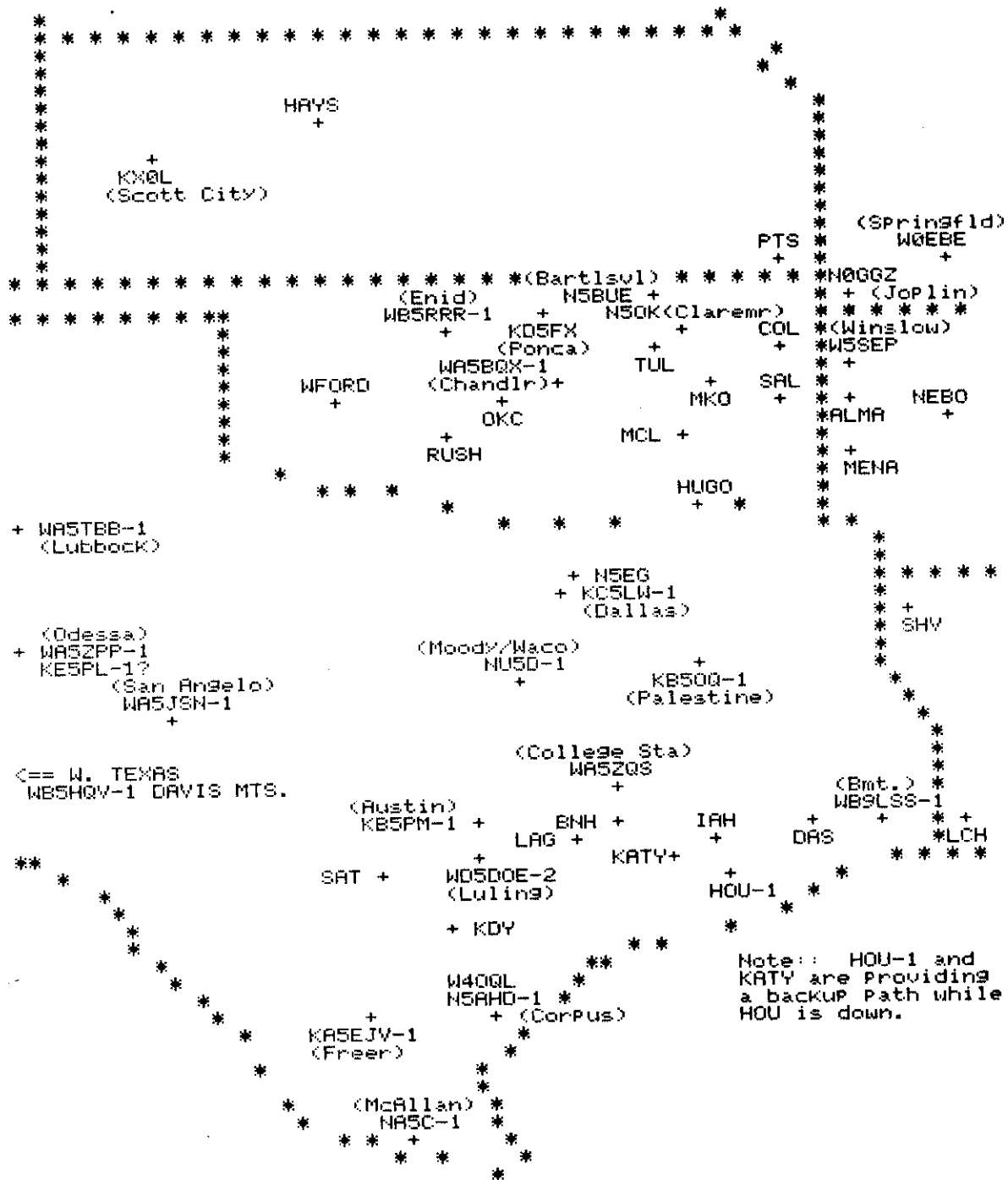
TAKE THE FIRST LEFT

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WED
			1
	S. TEXAS EMERGENCY:	10X HOUSTON SHOT:	BVARC
	8 PM 145.47/87	NET 8 PM 28.688	CW NET
	FT BEND CNT ARES:		7:45 PM
	8:30PM 145.25/65:	AMSAT NET 10 PM	BVARC
	BVARC PUBLIC SVC:	145.45/4.85 MHz	SSB NET
	9:00PM 145.47/87:		8:30PM
5 HAM-COMM	6	7	8
	S. TEXAS EMERGENCY:		BVARC
WEST HOUSTON	8 PM 145.47/87	10X HOUSTON SHOT:	CW NET
RACES NET	FT BEND CTY ARES:	NET 8 PM 28.688	7:45 PM
8:00 PM	8:30PM 145.25/65:		BVARC
146.06/66 MHz	BVARC PUBLIC SVC:	AMSAT NET 10 PM	SSB NET
	9:00PM 145.47/87:	145.45/4.85 MHz	8:30PM
12	13	14	15
	S. TEXAS EMERGENCY:		BVARC
WEST HOUSTON	8 PM 145.47/87	10X HOUSTON SHOT:	CW NET
RACES NET	FT BEND CTY ARES:	NET 8 PM 28.688	7:45 PM
8:00 PM	8:30PM 145.25/65:		BVARC
146.06/66 MHz	BVARC PUBLIC SVC:	AMSAT NET 10 PM	SSB NET
	9:00PM 145.47/87:	145.45/4.85 MHz	8:30PM
19	20	21	22
	S. TEXAS EMERGENCY:		BVARC
WEST HOUSTON	8 PM 145.47/87	10X HOUSTON SHOT:	CW NET
RACES NET	FT BEND CTY ARES:	NET 8 PM 28.688	7:45 PM
8:00 PM	8:30PM 145.25/65:		BVARC
146.06/66 MHz	BVARC PUBLIC SVC:	AMSAT NET 10 PM	SSB NET
	9:00PM 145.47/87:	145.45/4.85 MHz	8:30PM
26	27	28	29
	S. TEXAS EMERGENCY:		BVARC
WEST HOUSTON	8 PM 145.47/87	10X HOUSTON SHOT:	CW NET
RACES NET	FT BEND CTY ARES:	NET 8 PM 28.688	7:45 PM
8:00 PM	8:30PM 145.25/65:		BVARC
146.06/66 MHz	BVARC PUBLIC SVC:	AMSAT NET 10 PM	SSB NET
	9:00PM 145.47/87:	145.45/4.85 MHz	8:30PM

MBER

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
: 2	: 3	: 4	HAM-COMM
LOW SPEED: BVARC BOARD OF	:	:	:
3.740 MHz: DIRECTORS	:	:	BREAKFAST BUNCH
: MEETING	:	:	HOLIDAY INN
AG CHEW :	:	:	S.W. FREEWAY &
:	:	:	WEST BELFORT
3.960 MHz:	:	:	8:30 AM
:	:	:	:
: 9	: 10	: 11	:
LOW SPEED:	:	:	:
3.740 MHz: BVARC GENERAL	:	:	BREAKFAST BUNCH
: MEMBERSHIP	:	:	HOLIDAY INN
AG CHEW : FELLOWSHIP 7 PM	:	:	S.W. FREEWAY &
: MEETING	:	:	WEST BELFORT
3.960 MHz: -CALL TO ORDER-	:	:	8:30 AM
: 7:30 PM	:	:	:
: 16	: 17	: 18	:
LOW SPEED:	:	:	BREAKFAST BUNCH
3.740 MHz:	:	:	HOLIDAY INN
:	:	:	S.W. FREEWAY &
AG CHEW :	:	:	WEST BELFORT
:	:	:	** B-VARC **
3.960 MHz:	:	:	PICNIC AT DOUG
:	:	:	HOLLEY'S PLACE
: 23	: 24	: 25	:
LOW SPEED:	:	:	BREAKFAST BUNCH
3.740 MHz:	:	:	HOLIDAY INN
:	:	:	S.W. FREEWAY &
AG CHEW :	:	:	W. BELFORT 8:30A:
:	:	:	:
3.960 MHz:	:	:	VE EXAMS 9:00 AM:
:	:	:	:
: 30	: 31	:	:
LOW SPEED:	:	:	:
3.740 MHz:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:
AG CHEW :	:	:	:
:	:	:	:
3.960 MHz:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:

TEXAS/OKLAHOMA DIGI MAP
 25 JULY 1986
 de KE5FN
 (some OK/KS digi info from N50K map of 7/7/86)



THE HORIZONTAL "L" ANTENNA
by Allen F. Mattis N5AFV

During the past few months, several BVARC members have asked me about my low band HF antenna. The antenna I have used for the past 4 years on the low bands is a modified version of an end-fed wire, and resulted from my experimentation in trying to develop a low band HF antenna that would fit on a small urban lot, and unlike a sloper, would not need to be supported by an antenna tower. It has served me well at two different QTHs in Tulsa, and at my present location in Houston.

I originally put up the antenna to work 160 meters, but have used it on all bands from 160 through 10 meters. During 2 years of highly active operation in Tulsa, I worked and verified 49 states and 12 countries on 160 meters using a Kenwood TS-520S with approximately 100 watts output. In addition, in the same 2 years with only moderate operating activity, I worked 35 states and 4 countries on 80 meters, and 47 states and 6 countries on 40 meters. During the past year, I have used the same rig and a similar antenna here in Houston, and with only moderate operating activity, I have worked 41 states and 4 countries on 160 meters, 29 states and 2 countries on 80 meters, and 25 states and 4 countries (including ZS) on 40 meters. Here in Houston, I also use the horizontal "L" as my principal antenna on the higher HF bands. During the past year, with only light operating activity, I have worked 17 states and 11 countries on 20 meters, and 9 states and 20 countries on 15 meters. In addition, I am very active on 10 meters, and despite the current sunspot minimum, I have worked 39 states and 20 countries during the past year on that band.

Materials for the antenna are inexpensive and easily obtained at any Radio Shack store. The antenna itself consists of 22 gauge, plastic insulated, stranded hook-up wire. Porcelain or plastic insulators are also necessary. Light weight aluminum TV antenna masts are needed to support the antenna. In addition, heavy duty stranded copper wire and a ground rod are required for the ground system. Maximum cost for the antenna, if all items are purchased, should be no more than \$50. If materials from a "junk box" are available for use, and if an existing structure may be utilized to help support the antenna, the cost may be considerably less. I spent \$17 for the materials used in my antenna here in Houston.

The horizontal "L" antenna is an end-fed wire, and requires use of an antenna tuner. The wire antenna is 160 feet long, and is measured from the antenna connection at the antenna tuner. Because there is no feedline, it is important to run the wire out of the shack and up into the air in the shortest possible route. This minimizes the potential problem of RF feedback

to station equipment. I run my antenna wire out through the wall, and using TV lead standoff insulators, up the side of a 20 foot antenna mast which supports my 2 meter Ringo Ranger. The antenna wire should be run in a straight line as far as possible. Ideally, the total 160 foot wire should be run in a straight line, however, the size of most urban lots prevents this. Therefore, I run the wire in one direction as far as the dimensions of my property lot allow, and then bend the wire at approximately a right angle and run the remainder of the 160 foot wire in that direction. This creates an "L" shape. Antenna supports are necessary at the corner where the antenna bends and at the ends of the antenna. The antenna should be at least 20 feet in the air, and as is almost always the case, the higher the better. It is a good idea to use a pulley or similar arrangement that allows the end of the antenna wire to be lowered so that the length of the antenna can be easily adjusted.

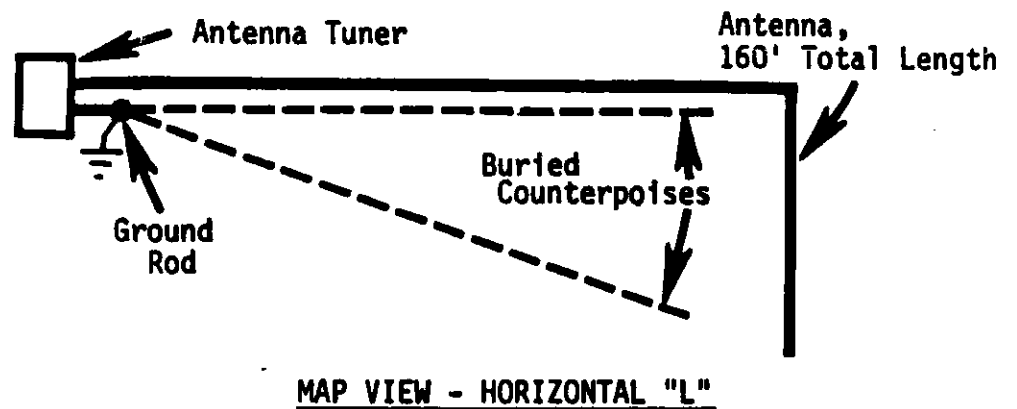
Like most end-fed wire antennas, the horizontal "L" requires use of a good ground system. I have a ground rod installed outside the wall of my shack, and connect my antenna tuner to this ground. In addition, buried counterpoises are part of my ground system. Heavy duty stranded copper wire, which is sold in 65 foot lengths by Radio Shack, works well for these buried counterpoises. I use two 65 foot counterpoises, and attach them to my ground rod. One counterpoise is positioned beneath the antenna wire along the long side of the "L". A second counterpoise extends from the ground rod toward the end of the wire antenna. Thus, the two counterpoises are positioned in a "V" configuration. I bury these counterpoises 3 to 6 inches beneath the surface of the ground. If, for any reason, it is not possible to position the counterpoises in this manner, they can be buried in other configurations, however, the performance of the antenna may not be as good. The quality of the ground system is a critical factor in performance of the antenna.

When first putting a horizontal "L" antenna on the air, it is necessary to adjust the antenna. The critical length is approximately 160 feet, but will vary slightly. Through the use of trial and error, the antenna wire will have to be trimmed to the exact length at which it will tune to an acceptable SWR on all standard HF bands from 160 through 10 meters. As little as 2 inches in length can make a significant difference on 80 meters. When trimming the antenna wire to its final length, be sure to use low power when adjusting the antenna tuner to check the SWR on each band. When an acceptable SWR can be tuned on each band, the antenna length is properly adjusted, and the antenna tuner settings for each band should be recorded to save time when changing bands during future station operation.

The configuration of the horizontal "L" antenna may be modified to suit

the specific needs of the operator or his location. For example, if the operator wishes to run high power, the antenna should be constructed of heavier wire, and the structures that support the antenna will have to be sturdy enough to support the additional weight. The shape and size of the operator's property lot may not permit installation of a standard 160 foot horizontal "L". Because of the small size of my property lot and the location of my house with respect to the lot boundaries, my antenna here in Houston is actually "U" shaped, and the counterpoises are buried around the perimeter of my house rather than directly beneath the antenna. As a result, the antenna does not perform as well on 160 and 80 meters as the standard horizontal "L" antenna. But, the performance on 10 meters is actually better, perhaps because the "U" shape is approaching a horizontal loop configuration for the higher HF bands.

End-fed wire antennas such as the horizontal "L" are easily modified and changed. If the performance of the antenna is not satisfactory, a change in the positioning of the antenna wire or counterpoises may produce the desired improvement. Helpful information regarding end-fed wire antennas may be found in almost any of the various published antenna books available to amateur radio operators. Sometimes, however, there is no substitute for personal experience and experimentation.



I encourage the rest of you to share your radio experiences with us, even if some of them have been bad experiences, the rest of us may avoid the same pit-falls by reading about them instead of learning the hard way after spending many hours of grief and frustration not to mention money.

Brenson Abbott - N5FSS

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF CALL SIGNS

Few things are more important in our hobby than our call signs. We proudly display our call on our license plates, in our shacks and on our shirts in the form of little plastic tags. We work hard to receive our licenses, so our call signs are highly valued. In the past nine years, US call signs have undergone some big changes.

Before we address the issue of call signs, we must first look at the licensing process. After all, without licenses there would be no call signs!

Your ham ticket is actually two separate licenses: the operator license and the station license. They are both contained on the same piece of paper, but they are entirely separate. The operator license gives the FCC's permission for an "individual" to be the control operator of an Amateur Radio station. The operator license also gives the operator the class of license.

The station license, on the other hand, allows an Amateur Radio station to transmit from anywhere the FCC regulates telecommunications. The call sign is part of the station license; call signs are issued to stations, not to operators! This is an important distinction. The holder of a station license also holds the operator license, except in the case of clubs, military recreation and RACES stations, which are only issued station licenses.

Now that we have differentiated the two types of licenses, let's look at some questions frequently asked by amateurs.

What is the present FCC call sign assignment system? - Calls are assigned sequentially by an automated system. The Commission does not deviate from this system. The system selects call signs from blocks or groups of calls that reflect the licensee's operator class and mailing address and call sign region. There are nearly 10.3 million call signs in four groups. Group A calls are issued only to stations licensed to Amateur Extra Class operators. Group A 2 x 1 calls, such as KR1R, are presently being issued. In the fourth call district, all 2028 Group A 2 x 1 calls have been issued. Amateur Extras are receiving Group A 2 x 2 calls, like AA4AT. Group B calls use the 2 x 2 format and are assigned to stations of Advanced operation. An example of a Group B 2 x 2 call is KB9NM. Group C calls are issued to General and Technician class. These are 1 x 3 calls with N, K or W prefixes, such as N4JJJ. Group D calls go to Novice class operators, and they are always 2 x 3 calls with prefixes beginning with K or W, such as KB4QQL.

How many calls are available for distribution? - There are approximately 99,000 unissued calls in Group A. In Group B there are 505,000, and in Group C 378,000 calls are left for distribution. Group D contains over 8.8 million unissued calls! This should last for a while! The system selects

only calls that have never been issued previously. The computer program used for the assignment does not have the capability to recover the call signs from those who become Silent Keys or who drop out. The system assigns from the next lower group after all calls from one group have been depleted. This is already happening in Alaska and Hawaii since Group A call signs ran out. Group B calls are being issued to Extra Class operators.

Is it possible to find approximately where the system is in issuing calls in a particular call district? - Yes, at the beginning of each month the Gettysburg office of the FCC issues a public notice of the last call sign issued in each group. Gettysburg consumer assistance also maintains a call sign hotline for obtaining this information. The consumer assistance phone number at the FCC is 717-337-1212. General inquiries regarding licensing may also be directed to this number. This same information is available from the Regulatory Information desk at ARRL HQ for an SASE. This information is also printed in "The ARRL Letter" and often in the Happenings column of QST.

When are stations eligible for new call signs? - An amateur station is eligible for a new call only when the licensee upgrades the operator license or when changing the mailing address to a new call sign region. A new call also may be obtained when you present call is not from the group for your present license class.

When I upgrade, can I keep my present station call? - Yes, you may keep your present call if you desire to do so. Calls are changed only when specifically requested and you are eligible.

UPDATE OF VEC'S MAINTAINING QUESTIONS

The FCC proposed on June 12, 1985 to allow VEC'S (Volunteer-Examiner Coordinators) to assume maintenance of Amateur operator examination question pools, a function currently performed by the FCC. At this point the FCC now determines the various questions for each of the four written Amateur operator examination elements, PIR Bulletins 1035 A, B, C and D.

The FCC has advised all VEC'S that new rules adopted August 4, 1986, allowing VEC's to compile and revise the questions for a particular examination element will give VEC's "even greater flexibility to work with other VEC's and with educators, publishers and radio experts."

"All you (VEC's) have to do is to give them (VE's) instructions on how to select the questions. They can even obtain question sets and telegraphy

messages from another supplier, so long as the supplier uses your VEC question pool and follows your instructions on how to select questions."

During early September, newly revised instructions were sent to all VEC's detailing the new procedures adopted in PR Docket 85-196 and at the 1986 Conference of VEC's held at the FCC/Washington DC last month.

Ordinarily they would have become effective as soon as the Office of Management and Budget reviews and clears the new procedure. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 requires that OMB approve all new "information collection activities."

At least three Petitions for Reconsideration have been filed, however, and it appears that it will be some time (probably "months") before VEC's maintain the question pools and VE's design tests. No new rules can go into effect until these petitions are disposed of.

Meeting in St. Louis two weeks ago, the ARRL's Executive Committee, voted to file a Petition for Reconsideration requesting that the FCC delay the order transferring the question pool maintenance responsibility to the VEC.

The most recent ARRL Letter said "This step would preserve the right of the ARRL to appeal to the US courts if the Board of Directors feel it necessary. The Committee strongly felt that the adopted rules were not specific regarding the difficulty of the respective written examination elements. This creates a likelihood that amateur exams will, over time, drift away from the standardization that the FCC itself acknowledges is essential to the examination program."

This statement is confusing in that VEC's at the 1986 Conference were in unanimous agreement that written examination questions should be standardized and took steps by forming a "Committee for Question Pool Maintenance" to insure this. The purpose of the Committee is to provide a vehicle whereby VEC's can collectively agree on written examination question pools.

The League has never told its membership about the standardization position taken by the VEC's at the conference and gives the impression that chaos will result by having a multitude of question pools with varying degrees of difficulty. The ARRL VEC manager agreed to serve on the committee "pending approval by the ARRL directors." It appears that the League has chosen not to support the concept. The final date that Petitions for Reconsideration can be filed is now over. A ruling is expected about month end.

VOLUNTEER EXAMINATION SESSION SCHEDULES

The following are the Amateur Radio license exams scheduled to be offered in this area in October and November. Info listed as:

A. SPONSORED BY

B. Session date

C. Session location

D. For information contact

1.A. BRAZOSPORT ARC
B. Nov. 1
C. Clute, Tx.
D. Steve Ray KA5KRI
409-274-7494

4.A. HOUSTON ECHO SOCIETY
B. Nov. 22
C. Houston, Tx.
D. Alan Cross WA5UZZ
713-847-9183

2.A. BRAZOS VALLEY ARC
B. (1) Oct. 21, 7PM
(2) Oct. 25, 9AM
C. (1) Houston, Tx.
(2) Stafford, Tx.
D. Stu Lankin WB5IGG
713-777-3345

5.A. HOUSTON HAM CONVENTION
B. Oct. 4
C. Houston, Tx.
D. Steve Ray KA5KRI
409-274-7494

3.A. GOLDEN TRIANGLE EXAM COMM.
B. Oct. 4
C. Beaumont, Tx.
D. Irene Thomas; Rt 4 Box 920
Orange Tx. 77630

6.A. SAM HOUSTON AR KLUB
B. Oct. 18
C. Cleveland, Tx.
D. San Neal N5AF
713-592-2257

A NEW NOVICE CLASS

We've just learned another Novice class is under way in the Houston area. This one is being put on by the Houston Echo Society and had its first meeting on October 13 with 8 class sessions scheduled, with exam night to be the ninth session. We also understand they will begin immediately thereafter a 15 week TECH/GEN course, including CW practice to bring the class up to 13 WPM. For more information call Karl Medcalf WK5M at 781-2151. As a matter of interest, the first class session had 28 students! How about that?

ABOUT THE BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Organized in 1977, the club has been growing steadily. It is a gathering place for ham radio operators in Southwest Harris and Ft. Bend Counties and surrounding communities. It is a general purpose type of ham club offering a variety of activities open to all interested persons. Membership is open, not only to licensed ham operators but also to anyone interested in the hobby. In addition to regularly scheduled monthly membership meetings, the club conducts classes leading to amateur radio licenses each year and sponsors a volunteer examiner team which offers examinations in all levels of ham licenses each month.

For more detailed information about the club and any of its activities, call Stu Lamkin WB5IGG at (713) 777-3345.

PICNIC SCHEDULE

Our fall picnic has been scheduled for Saturday, October 18, 1986 to be held at the Holley's house, a rain out date has been set at Saturday, October 25, 1986. Admission is \$3.00 per person and you are requested to bring a dish of food. Contact Susan at 232-2302 for details and coordination of the food dishes.

DIAMOND WALK

November 2, 1986, need some volunteers for the Diamond Walk on Sunday, Nov. 2. 9:00 AM at the north parking lot of the astrodome. Need mobile rigs, HT's & mag mounts. Call Ray WA5F 11-467-9245 W-462-03170

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Stu Lamkin, WB5IGG
7401 Heilig
Houston, Tx 77074



Amateur Radio News Service