



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

APRIL 2004

VOLUME 28 ISSUE 4

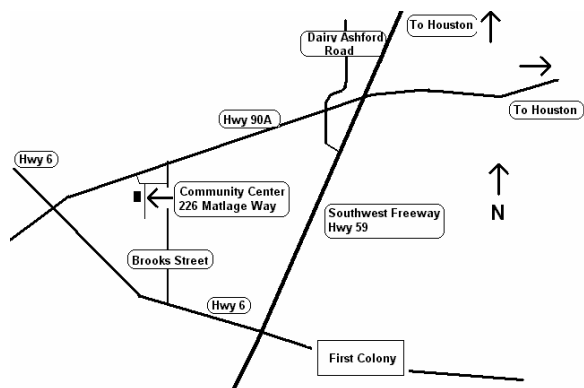
B-VARC General Meeting

Date: Thursday, May 13, 2004
Time: 7: 30 P.M.
Location: Sugar Land Community Center
Street: 226 Matlage Way

Speakers: Terry Myers, KQ5U, and Ron Eisenbrey, AB5WG

Subject: Radio Frequency Interference dealing with power-lines. Includes audio-visual.

Members are encouraged to attend the General Meeting to learn about the latest in amateur radio technology along with the camaraderie of your fellow hams. Non-members are always welcome to visit and learn more about the club.



CLUB HAPPENINGS

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday each month,
Sugar Land Community Center,
224 Matlage Way

General Meeting

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



Dave Scott, WD8RZA, demos his Doppler Receiving and Tracking equipment at the April Meeting

Volunteer Examiner Program

B-VARC 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 6:30 p.m.
Location announced in the calendar.

Saturday morning breakfasts –

7:00 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 145.47 (123 PL) at 8:00 PM

THE B-VARC Rag Chew Net

By Joe Morgan, K5JWM, Net Coordinator
3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays at 7:00PM

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

03/03/04 K5JWM, K5CEK, WB5SRN, WA5VRB, W5UHZ, K5LBU, W5HFF, K5IHV, K5LJ, WB5VYR, KB5F, K5VRJ, AB5BA, K5LKJ, KD5O, K5HFY, N5CPA.check-ins(17)

03/10/04 K5JWM, K5CEK, WB5SRN, K5IHV, N5CPA K5LKJ, W5UHZ, WB5VYR, K5LJ, K5VRJ, AB5BA WA5VRB.check-ins(12)

03/17/04 K5JWM, N5CPA, K5CEK, WB5SRN, K5LKJ K5IHV, W5UHZ, K5VRJ, AB5BA, K5IZO, WA5VRB, W5GHK WB5VYR.check-ins(14)

03/25/04 K5JWM, K5CEK, K5HFY, W5UHZ, WA5VRB K5VRJ, AB5BA, N5CPA, K5LJ, W5HFF, WB5VYR check-ins(11)

03/31/04 K5JWM, K5CEK, N5CPA, K5LJ, WB5VYR, W5UHZ K5VRJ, AB5BA, K5HFY, WA5VRB, WA5TWL check-ins(11)

License Testing Results

by John Moore, KK5NU

B-VARC administered the ARRL-VEC Amateur Radio Examination sessions on April 13, 2004 that were held at Houston Community College Scarcella Technology Campus, here in Stafford.

Eight examination elements were administered during the evening to six applicants. Three new Technician licenses were earned; one upgrade to General class, one Element 3; and one upgrade to Extra class were attained. The total number of elements passed was six (6). The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 75%.

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

William J. Haskett	Technician	John P. Hollingshead, III	KB5SXH - Extra
Robert L. Mathis, Sr.	KC5RSZ - General	Charles Nolan Perry	KD5UCM - Element 3
Eric L. Poe	Technician	Mark F. Sanderson	Technician

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 Technology Center for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

Monday Night NET Updates

Back on January 9, 2004 the Monday Night Public Service Net moved to **8 pm** instead of 9. So make sure you set your alarm to let you know when the NET is starting. Keep both 145.450 (minus offset no tone) and 145.470 (minus offset, 123.0 tone) frequencies programmed in your radio since the MERA repeater is being repaired.

Monday Night Public Service Net Check-ins

3/15 - 15 - Joe, K5JWM	3/22 - 21 - Cam, K5CAM	3/29 - 19 - Doug, KC5VYZ
4/5 - 19 - Cam, K5CAM	4/12 - 21 - Kevin, KD5O	4/26 - 24 - Doug, KC5VYZ

TO B-VARC OR NOT TO BVARC, THAT IS THE QUESTION

Editorial by John C Whiteman, K5LKJ

While attending the March Board of Directors it was revealed to me that during the February (check date) Board meeting the Board had voted to change the club acronym from B-VARC to BVARC. Club President Mike Hardwick said that it was his idea to make the change. He explained that he didn't want the club to just be known for a dash? He further explained that a dash is not a pronunciation symbol.

Now admittedly, I don't know the history about how the dash got there in the first place, but I do know that it's been there since I joined the club in 1995.

I was in trouble with Mike because no one had told me about the change, so I was using B-VARC in the newsletter. I got into more hot water when I told him that I didn't want to lose the dash and that maybe the membership might feel the same. Mike called for a quick show of hands of those attending the board meeting and it was split 50-50.

So, Mike suggested that I write an opinion piece and just see if anyone else other than myself and a few of the board members cared about this issue at all. If you want to see how our club acronym looks without a dash just check out the club web site where it has already been removed.

I did a Google web search on BVARC without a dash and got the following:

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club, Blackmore Vale Amateur Radio Club, Blackstone Valley Amateur Radio Club and Boyer Valley Amateur Radio Club.

So when it comes to identity it would appear that a dash does make a difference.

The history is that B-VARC didn't always have a dash. That was because the club was founded in the early days of computing when a dash was a control character in the early word processing programs and

so, could not be used in the early newsletters. As soon as that was not the case, however, the familiar B-VARC acronym was born.

So there you have it. I guess I represent those who like the past traditions of the club and think that we can grow the club without changing the B-VARC symbol. Mike has changed the symbol to BVARC as a way of marking a new beginning for the club. So, Mike and I want to know how you feel on the issue. Send me and Email (jw@heatingtapes.com) or a card or letter to: Symbol Vote, P. O. Box 1630, Missouri City, Texas 77459-1630, with a vote FOR keeping the B-VARC symbol or AGAINST, which means the new BVARC will prevail. It's your club, so it's up to you.

Public Service Events

By Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

Working public service events with amateur radio helps prepare us for one of the reasons amateur radio was formed. Come on out and show your support for amateur radio by coming out to help or by attending the events.

Shiner Bash Bike Ride

Saturday May 15, 2004

<http://www.shinerbash.com>

Bike ride leaving from Houston, San Antonio and Austin finishing in Shiner Texas. Needing thirty operators to cover the three different courses. This event is a good example of the different types of communications to cover the different courses.

If you would like to help, please contact me at 713-771-4625.

Silent Key

JOHN E. OTIS, N5BCK
Houston, Texas

John Otis, N5BCK died from unknown causes suddenly at his home over Easter weekend. Family arranged for a memorial service that was held on Thursday, April 15, 2004 at 3:00 PM at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 4411 Dallas St., Houston, TX 77023. An obituary was published in the Houston Chronicle.

John was an active volunteer with the Texas Seaport Museum (Elissa), UTMB, City of Pasadena emergency communications radio team, Pasadena Amateur Radio club and the Tidelands amateur radio club.

B-VARC Calendar - May 2004

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3 Net 8:00 pm 145.47 – K5CAM	4	5 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	6 BOD Meeting 7:30 pm	7	8
9	10 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 – KD5O	11 VE Session 6:30 pm	12 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	13 Club Meeting 7:30 pm RFI program	14	15 Shiner Bash Bike Ride
16	17 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 – K5JWM	18	19 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	20	21 3 rd Friday dinner 6:30	22 Belton Ham Fest
23	24 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 – KC5VYZ	25	26 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	27	28	29
30	31 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 – KC5VYZ					

B-VARC Calendar - June 2004

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	3 BOD Meeting 7:30 PM	4	5
6	7 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 K5CAM	8 VE Session 6:30 pm	9 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	10 Club Meeting 7:30 pm	11	12
13	14 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 KD5O	15	16 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	17	18 3 RD Friday Night Dinner	19
20	21 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 K5JWM	22	23 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz	24	25	26 Field Day Location – FB Fire Training Field
27 Field Day Location – FB Fire Training Field	28 Net 8:00 pm 145.470 KC5VYZ	29	30 HF Net 7:00 pm 3910 3KHz			

Saturday breakfasts: 7:00 am New York Coffee shop 9729 Hillcroft & 7:30 am Viking Den 2939 S. Main, Stafford

Upcoming Hamfests

Here is hamfest info for the next several months. If you have any information on other local hamfests, please send it to me. Or you can check out <http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html#listing>

Ongoing Swapmeets

Humble TEAC ARC
3rd Saturday in March, June, September, December
Humble TEAC ARC- Hugh W5FM@arrl.net
145.43(-)

Belton Ham EXPO

May 22, 2004 7:00 am

<http://www.tarc.org/hamradio/hamexpo/oct2002early.html>

Bell County Expo Center in Belton, Texas
From I-35 take Exit 292 to the Dome
\$1.00 entry fee VE Sessions at 1 p.m. Talk-in on
146.82 tone 123.0 and 444.700 123.0 tone

Ham Expo
P.O. Box 4511
Temple, TX 76505
Phone: 254-773-3590
Email: hamexpo@tarc.org

How To Quickly Locate And Fix Power Line Interference

by Gene Preston K5GP

I worked for a power company for 28 years as an engineer and helped my company track down radio noise complaints. Now I'm retired and help hams here in Austin, Texas track down their power line noise. The big problem for both you and the power company (working together) is to find the exact pole the noise is coming from. Helping the power company find the source of the noise will greatly speed things up for you. You can start looking for the noise source with a [loop antenna](#) and an HF (or AM broadcast band) receiver to find a likely pole. If loose hardware is the problem, the noise will cut in and out with a little motion of the pole and/or wires. If motion causes the noise to vary, ask the power company to tighten up all the hardware on the pole. This type of noise has the characteristic of going away when it rains. If your noise is present when it rains, proceed as described below.

If your noise is present when it is raining, the faulty component is probably a bad fuse, bad lightning

arrestor, or leaky insulator, but probably not a bad transformer, since oil-filled transformers tend to self-destruct with any internal arcing. These components will not change in noise intensity when shaking a pole.

To pinpoint the exact pole for bad components requires the use of a hand-held directional antenna with a VHF or UHF receiver used in AM or SSB mode. An S meter is not needed. I use a six-element 440 MHz yagi with a Yaesu VX-5R HT in the AM mode. A 2M quad or three-element 2M yagi will also work fine. FM mode will not work. You should be able to hear the noise up to about 100 feet from the source on 144 and 440 MHz. Once the pole is located, you are now ready to call the power company and schedule them to meet you at the site of that specific pole. Get them to schedule a specific date and time. Your knowledge of the specific source of noise helps in getting this meeting scheduled.

You should be present at the noise site with your receiver listening to the noise when the power company is working on the pole, so you can tell them if their work has fixed the problem.

My suggestion for the power company is to do the following: 1) use a hotstick to push on different wires to see if any wires are associated with the noise source, 2) tighten all the hardware, especially the hardware supporting the main conductors and/or crossarms since they usually have leakage currents that make noise on the galvanized bolts going through the wooden pole, 3) disconnect the lightning arrestor(s), 4) jumper around the fuse disconnect(s) and then disconnect the fuse from the circuit, and finally 5) change out insulators (this is a more difficult task and is usually not the problem, unless there is a slack span with bell insulators). If slack span bell insulators are the problem, ask the power company to spray WD40 inside the bell insulators and then tighten up the slack, or change out the bell insulators with a single section fiberglass insulator.

Sweep the beam antenna back and forth across the noise source to help pinpoint the maximum signal location. Rotate the beam polarization to see how the source is polarized. The noise will be maximum when the antenna elements are parallel with the wires immediately connected to the bad component.

Following the above procedures should help expedite the elimination of your power line noise. Send me an e-mail if you have questions.

73 de Gene Preston K5GP

g.preston@ieee.org

2004 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:

Ross Lawler, W5HFF
w5hff@juno.com

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,
224 Matlage Way

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month,
Sugar Land Community Center,
224 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

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7:30 a.m. Viking Den
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Rag Chew Net

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

Public Service Net

Monday night on 145.47 (123 PL)
at 9:00 PM

Minutes of Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Board of Directors Meeting

April 1, 2004

Attendees: *Board Members:* President: Mike Hardwick-N5VCX, 1-Year Board Member/Club Elmer: Ross Lawler-W5HFF, Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer: Mack C. Arp-W5EET, Past Secretary of Treasurer: Cameron Mitchell-K5CAM. *Guests:* John Whiteman, K5LKJ

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by President Mike Hardwick.

There wasn't a quorum so no Board business could be voted on.

Items for future Board consideration were discussed:

- Club Bank Account: Move to a more service friendly bank?
- Field Day: Three members are moving forward on Field Day preparations, but no one has volunteered to Chair this event as yet.
- License Classes: Ross Lawler and Robert Moore will try to set up license classes for those interested in attending.

Membership count: 115 ???

Adjourn: 9:25 PM

President's Corner

Where has everyone gone? It seems like the only time anyone is on the repeater (either 45 or 47) is during drive time and that is sometimes pretty thin as well. What is happening on the repeater is what is happening to the entire amateur community as a whole. Even with the largest amount of amateurs ever, clubs are suffering from low membership and mediocre participation.

With everyone's life style going 90 miles an hour, it is sometimes very hard to make time for everything. Hopefully there are enough members that can make time to keep the clubs going and interesting. If you have time and would like to help out, let one of the board members know. The club needs your support.

Field day is coming up and we need volunteers to help. Ross, W5HFF, John K5IZO and Allen N5XZ are coordinating this years Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Field Day. It will be held at the Fort Bend County Fire Training field in Richmond. If you would like to get involved with Field Day, let them know.

Interest is already perking up for next year's Mix-n-Match Swap meet. If you would like to help with the planning, let me know. There will be a lot to do over the next 10 months.

Don't forget the Belton Ham Expo on May 22, 2004.

73's
N5VCX

The BVARC Board of Directors would like to thank **Lockard & White Telecommunications Engineers** for the production of the newsletter.



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB 2004 Club Membership Application

The 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 Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County.

Today, BVARC is truly a general interest club with an impressive record of Public Service. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has recognized the clubs commitment to service with the coveted status of Special Service 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. Meetings are at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at the Sugar Land Community Center. Talk-in assistance is available in the 145.470 (minus offset 123.0 tone) repeater. BVARC administers ARRL-VEC license exam sessions on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. A Public Service Net is held at 8 PM. each Monday on the Memorial Emergency Radio Association's (MERA) 145.47 repeater.

If interested in joining BVARC or its activities contact the Club's "Elmer", Ross, W5HFF at 281-342-3340 or w5hff@juno.com or the BVARC website at www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc.

Check One: New Membership Student Membership Renewal Roster Update ONLY

Regular membership dues are \$20.00 a year. Student membership dues are \$10.00 a year. Lifetime Memberships are \$160.00. Additional family members are \$2.00 a year each but no additional copy of the newsletter.

Name: _____ Call: _____

Additional Family Member: _____ Call: _____

(Note: If this is a renewal, please indicate only changes in personal information. Thanks.)

Address: _____ Day Phone () _____

_____ Zip+4: _____ Eve Phone () _____

E-mail address: _____ Area of interest in amateur radio: _____

License Class:	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice	<input type="checkbox"/> General	ARRL Membership:	<input type="checkbox"/> Life
(Check One)	<input type="checkbox"/> Technician	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced		<input type="checkbox"/> Annual
	<input type="checkbox"/> Tech+	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra		<input type="checkbox"/> Not a member
	<input type="checkbox"/> Former Ham	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Yet a Ham		

I agree to observe the By-Laws of Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club and rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

Signature: _____ Call: _____ Date: _____

Remittance: Regular/Student Membership _____ + Family Membership _____ = \$ _____
((\$20.00) (\$10.00) (\$2.00))

LIFE MEMBERSHIP at \$160/Person _____ = \$ _____

TOTAL = \$ _____

Please make checks payable to BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB and write your call sign, if any, on your check. Send this form and your check or money order to:

**Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club
2004 Membership Drive
P.O. Box 1630
Missouri City, Texas 77459-1630**



Monthly Publication of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club.
Serving Amateur Radio for Southwest Houston and Fort Bend County
Club Call sign - KC5OIG, W5DPA

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

Editor: John C Whiteman, K5LKJ, jw@heatingtapes.com

Production Team: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, k5cam@arrl.net

Claude Sessions, K5HFY, k5hfy@arrl.net

BVARC Meeting Dates for 2004

Time to mark your calendar for the 2004 meeting dates. With the early morning efforts of Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, the dates for the last of 2004 were finalized in July. Cameron shows up before the roosters even think about getting up and signs the club up for the rooms at the Community Center, so mark your calendar with the dates for the Board of Directors and general meeting for 2004.

Date	Type	Location	Date	Type	Location	Date	Type	Location	Date	Type	Location
May 6	BOD	SLCC	May 13	General	SLCC	June 3	BOD	SLCC	June 10	General	SLCC
July 1	BOD	SLCC	July 8	General	SLCC	Aug 5	BOD	SLCC	Aug 12	General	SLCC
Sept 2	BOD	SLCC	Sept 9	General	SLCC	Oct 7	BOD	SLCC	Oct 14	General	SLCC
Nov 4	BOD	SL Lib	Nov 11	General	SLCC	Dec 2	BOD	SL Lib	Dec 9	General	SL Lib

SL Lib – Sugar Land Eldridge Road Library

SLCC – Sugar Land Community Center

Recognize this formula? $\dot{Q} = hA(T_w - T_\infty) = hA \cdot \Delta T$ Answer in next month's newsletter.

VOLUME 28 ISSUE 4

April 2004

**BRAZOS VALLEY
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

P.O. BOX 1630

MISSOURI CITY TX 77459-1630

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Monday Night Public Service Net Now at 8:00 P.M.

Next General Meeting on May 13 at 7:30 P.M.

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