



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 2009

VOLUME 33 ISSUE 9

BVARC September 10th General Membership Meeting

Change of Venue.....Change of Topic

The venue for the September meeting has been changed to the Fort Bend County Library (Sugar Land) on Eldridge, corner of 7th, just north of 90A. It will start at 7PM. This is due to the Community Center being booked (for September ONLY). Meeting must end by 8:45 PM.

Also, Bill Stone, WS5H, our presenter, has been under the weather recently and has had to delay his presentation on the "Museum Ships Weekend Event and Special Event Station Planning". We wish Bill all the best and look forward to his presentation in the near future. As a fill in for Bill's Museum Ships talk, the topic will be "**Looking for RFI in All The Right Places**" by **Jeff Hoke, Centerpoint Energy**. This will be an informal look at what Centerpoint Energy does to locate and solve RF line noise that is interfering with their customers.

A note about future meetings – In October, Steve Lee of the Houston office of the FCC will come out and give us a presentation on local enforcement efforts and the tools of the trade. (We appreciate Mike's – N5VCX, help on this coordination)

Stay tuned to the nets for the latest information on the September and October meeting/presentation information. Spread the word and invite some of your non-BVARC friends to attend wither meeting.



BVARC's August Ice Cream Social

Tasty, tongue tinglers and dazzling, multi-media eye candy were the attractions to be eaten and seen at the August General membership meeting. Ross, W5HFF, organized the Ice Cream part of the evening. (A bang-up job again. Hat's off to Ross!!!) And while we were eating the club supplied ice cream, we were treated to a complete Field Day review by Jim, N5DTT, one of the co-ordinators of the annual event, followed up by a video, set to music, of the Field Day set-up, operations and tear-down activities by Cam, K5CAM. After which, we saw a slide show (compiled by Rick, W5RH) of Field Day pictures taken by Cam -- K5CAM, Holly -- KE5WUO, John -- KD5YOU, Norma -- KE5NDN and Bill – WS5H. A good time was had by all and there was even some ice cream left over. For those of you that missed it, what can be said? There's always next August!

President's Report

Well it is September and school has started so I am now back in the classroom for one more year. I arrived home from my trip with 4 other hams to Lesotho, 7P8 land. It was nice and cool there as it is below the Equator. In fact on one Saturday it started to rain in the afternoon. When we got up the next morning there was lots of snow on the hills around us and even more on the high Mountains. I was the main SSB operator and only made about 1009 contacts but in those I worked 69 countries and 25 states even worked one here in Richmond.

Well with the year fast going away it is time to start thinking about some new officers for 2010, So if you would like to serve the members of BVARC next year let Mike hear from you. It is also time to start thing about the awards that BVARC gives to fellow members for their contributions to Ham Radio and BVARC. So put your thinking caps on and let the board hear from you on who is deserving this year.

I will not be able to make the meeting in September as I have to be at school for a meeting that same night. I have tried to get the dates changed but no luck.

It is also the start of contest time as the big ones are in October and November so how is your station playing these days? Does this club want to give it a big go this year both in the SSB and CW world wide contest? If anyone wants to do this talk to some of us and we will make a station set up for them. I will set up my station for both if there are several who would like to operate.

Frosty
K5LBU



BVARC Historical Vignettes – BVARC's Sister Club Revisited

Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian

Last month's Historical Vignette was about BVARC's sister club, the Robbinsdale Suburban Radio Club in the Minneapolis area, and the mystery of how BVARC had acquired a sister club in 1981 when BVARC was only four years old.

Long time BVARC member Claude Sessions, K5HFY, was interested enough in the mystery that he called BVARC past-president Harold Parker, ND5F, to see if Harold knew anything about the sister club. Harold helped fill in some of the blanks from the early days of the club history. I am indebted to both Claude and Harold for providing additional information about BVARC's sister club.

Two BVARC newsletters from 1981 club mention the sister club, however, almost no details are given. The September 1981 BVARC newsletter reports that at the August 1981 general membership meeting BVARC vice president Dick Bigelow, WD5CTQ, reported to the club that BVARC's "sister club, Robbinsdale Suburban Radio Club, in suburban Minneapolis had ceased to function as an active group, primarily because of a lack of cohesive club activities on a continuing basis."

Details filled in by Harold Parker, ND5F, indicate that Dick Bigelow's father lived in the Minneapolis area and was a member of the Robbinsdale Suburban Radio Club. Thus Dick had a direct relationship with the Robbinsdale club and that is apparently how the sister club relationship with BVARC was formed. It also explains how Dick, WD5CTQ, knew that the Robbinsdale Suburban Radio Club had ceased to function as an active group.

I have attempted to contact Dick, WD5CTQ, by e-mail but have not yet received a reply. I wish to thank Claude Sessions, K5HFY, and Harold Parker, ND5F, for helping to solve the mystery of BVARC's sister club.



Public Service Events Coming Up

As this issue goes to press, this information is unavailable.



Frosty, K5LBU operating at the DXpedition, Lesotho, as **7P8CF**



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**RESULTS OF THE August 11th
B-VARC AMATEUR EXAMINATION SESSION
by: John Moore, KK5NU**

B-VARC sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examination session that was held on Tuesday, August 11, 2009 at HCC's Scarcella Technology Campus here in Stafford.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Dennis Dietrich, W5DDD Larry Jacobson, K5LJ John Moore, KK5NU
George Ontko, KM5VP Robert Trahan, KE5ZFJ

Seven examination elements were administered during the evening to five applicants. Two new Technician class licenses and one new General class license, with two upgrades to General class were attained; with the total number of elements passed being 6. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 89%.

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

Michael A. Bee	- {KF5CQC}	- Technician
Brett W. Bratcher	- {KF5CQE}	- General
Randall C. Edens	- KF5CEW	- General
Tracy R. Jackson	- {KF5CQD}	- Technician
Jeremy D. Jones	- KF5CLL	- General

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

..... 73



THE BVARC Rag Chew Net

August check-ins

3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays at 7:00pm, John Whiteman, K5LKJ, Net Coordinator

07/29/09, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TOM, N5CPA, K5CEK, WS5H, WA5FMK, K5LOT, K5HFY, W5RJA (Schulenburg), K5NDB, AF5T, K5LJ, AA5OA, W5RH, KA5MEI, WA5CYI, WA5CYI/KD5CDM. (17 Check-Ins)

08/05/09, K5LKJ (NCS), WS5H, K5LOT, WA5CYI, W5RJA (Schulenburg), WD6CQO (Nederland), W5TOM, AF5T, K5NDB, K5LJ, K5CAM, N5CPA (T), KD7THJ, W5HFF (M), K5SEE, K5HFY, WA5FMK, KC5JAR (Katy), WB5EAT (Palestine), W5RH. (20 Check-Ins)

08/12/09, K5LKJ (NCS), K5LOT, W5UHZ (Beaumont), WS5H, N5CPA, W5RJA (Schulenburg), N5AFV, K5NDB, KC5FSY (Eagle Lake), K5HFY, W5HFF (M), W5TOM, AF5T, WB5VYR, W5RH. (15 Check-Ins)

08/19/09, K5LKJ (NCS), K5CEK, K5NDB, KC5JAR (Katy), N5CPA, W5RJA (Schulenburg), W5TOM, W5UHZ (Beaumont), W5HFF (M), W5RH, WA5FMK, AF5T, K5LJ, WA5CYI, KB5JJW (Weimer). (15 Check-Ins)

(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (T) = telephone check-in

Thanks.

Regards.

K5LKJ, John C. Whiteman



BVARC Newsletter and Web Site Synergy

Starting with this issue of the newsletter, we will be publishing technical articles in two parts. An “introduction and summary” in the newsletter and the “main body” of the article on the BVARC web page. This move will enable us to do a couple of things. First, we will be able to publish articles that are substantially longer than 2 or 3 pages, and second, this will allow John, our Editor, a bit more freedom in his layout and possibly provide even more content.

The first article in this new split format is K5LJ’s “Operating Conditions on BVARC’s Rag Chew Net” and “‘Rules of Thumb’ for Shortened Dipoles”. You can read the summary in this issue and you can read the supporting data in the main body on the web page. To get there, visit www.bvarc.org and go to the “Tech Article” link on the left side. This will take you to a listing of the articles available. Over time, this will become a valuable asset to the membership. All newsletters will remain cataloged, completely, on the web site on their own page, as they are now. Many thanks to Cam Mitchell, K5CAM, for his efforts in extending the capabilities of our club web site and thanks to Larry, K5LJ, for accommodating this split format in his latest article.

Should you have any comments or questions about the new format or you would like to write for the newsletter/web site, please contact Rick, W5RH, at rhiller@sdicgm.com



Monday Night NET Updates

Don’t forget the Monday Night Public Service Net starts at **8 pm**, 145.47 (PL –123.0). 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:

5/18 - 23 - Sid, n5zkd
5/25 - 22 - Pete, kd5qpx

6/1 - 20 - Cam, k5cam
6/8 - 28 - Bill & Norma, ws5h
6/15 - 19 - Sid, n5zkd

6/22 - 20 - Pete, kd5qpx
6/29 - 24 - Sid, n5zkd
7/6 - 23 - Cam, k5cam
7/13 - 29 - Randy, aa5oa
7/20 - 17 - Cam, k5cam

7/27 - 25 - Pete, kd5qpx
8/3 - 27 - Cam, k5cam
8/10 29 - Bill & Norma, ke5ndn
8/17 - 16 - Claude, k5hfy (& ws5h)
8/24 - 24 - Pete, kd5qpx

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Shortened Dipole Study for Conditions On BVARC's Rag Chew Net

Introduction and Summary

by

Larry Jacobson (K5LJ) and Rick Hiller (W5RH)

(Note: The full article, entitled "Shortened Dipole Study for Conditions on BVARC's Rag Chew Net", is available on the BVARC website - <http://www.bvarc.org/TechIndex.mht>. It is summarized here)

If you visit BVARC's Wednesday evening Rag Chew Net frequently, over the course of a year, you will find a different band condition greeting you every week you turn on the rig on. Most times local stations are strong, but, very occasionally, in the winter months especially, stations only a few tens of miles away are un-readably weak. Distant (100-300 miles) stations are usually strong, and in the winter month's interference from other nets thousands of miles away can be a problem. Band noise (QRM and QRN) is also another factor contributing to your net enjoyment.

So, with these conditions, what antenna should you use? After studying the problem, the recommendation is a low, horizontally polarized, dipole antenna that provides a ball shaped radiation pattern, covering both ground wave and sky wave modes. This is not to say: don't get on the air, if you run a vertical. Far from it, your vertical will work well on some nights and not on others. It's low band HF. A beast of it's own, but fun to play with and study the interesting propagation and band conditions that present themselves and that will vary over time.

Dipole antennas for 75 Meters are quite long (125 feet, typically). Dealing with antenna size issues is not new; even 90 years ago they were concerned with the same problems. In a May 1925 QST article, Top Loading Antennas and Loops, by a non-Ham, W. H. Murphy, the author states: "The average transmitting amateur has simply got to fit his antenna into the space. Just what makes the best antenna does not concern him very much. He is interested in 'What makes the best antenna within my space' ". So, do what you have to do.

K5LJ undertook a quick modeling study of shortened dipoles to determine some "rules-of-thumb" for this kind of antenna. A short dipole is a compromise, but not severely so (and nothing about its design is especially critical). For local coverage, it probably will out-perform most verticals when the ground losses of the later are accounted for. So the best recommendation is to make the antenna as long as possible, put a loading inductor in the center of each element and tweak the inductance value to get resonance where you want it, and then have fun.

(Further reading is on the web site)



JOTA – Jamboree On The Air

Annual World Wide Scouting Event October 17 and 18

The annual Boy Scout and Girl Scout "Jamboree on the Air" will take place in October. A group of BVARC members will be setting up a station at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church at the SW Freeway and Bellaire Blvd. in Sharpstown, on Saturday Oct. 17th. We are going to be operating an HF station (or two) and an VHF station. We would like to communicate with SSB, CW and digital modes, so if you have an interest in putting your license and hobby knowledge towards a bit of fun use, please contact Rick – W5RH rhiller@sdicgm.com and let him know that you would like to help out. For general info about JOTA, see September's QST. More will be expounded upon in the October newsletter.

Minutes of August 6th, 2009 Board of Directors meeting of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club:

Rick Hiller called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to order at 7:31 PM on August 6th, 2009 at Fudrucker's, 11445 Fountain Lake Drive, Stafford, TX. Attending were: Rick Hiller, W5RH (VP); Arnold Knoche, K5ADA (Treas./Cor. Sec.); Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX (Rec. Sec.); David Barber, K5NDB, (At-Large Dir.); Ross Lawler, W5HFF (At-Large Dir.); Norma Stone, KE5NDN; Bill Stone, WS5H; Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM;

- 1) Minutes for the July 2009 meeting were approved as they appear in the August 2009 newsletter.
- 2) Treasurer's Report was presented to, discussed, and approved by the Board.
- 3) Old Business:
 - a) Dates and times for the General Meeting locations were discussed. Also discussed was how to routinely meet the new requirements by Sugar Land for securing future meeting locations.
 - b) The Texas Land & Cattle, 12710 US 59 South, Stafford; has been secured for the January 16th, 2010 Awards Banquet. A change in location has become necessary because Saltgrass Steak House could not provide sufficient seating.
- 4) New business:
 - a) Digipeater: Stone requested that the board approve his request to install the club digipeater at West Oaks Hospital. Though it is not as high as other possible locations, it is available now, approved by the property owner, and coverage satisfies the intent of the entity that donated the funding for the equipment. Board approved the install at West Oaks. In conjunction with this request, Stone noted the digipeater would be useful to District 14 ARES (Harris County). Board asked Stone to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for District 14 use of the digipeater. Stone will provide the MOU to the board and if approved, then will be presented to District 14.
 - b) Web Site: Mitchell has consolidated all the web domain registrations under one registrar. This now makes maintenance a manageable task. He asked the board, "What does BVARC want the web presence to become?" After much discussion, the board decided to create a Web Site Committee consisting of 3 to 5 club members. Mitchell is to contact possible candidates and report back to the board.
 - c) W5DPA Call: Stone stated that various listings on the World Wide Web show the call W5DPA belonging to multiple entities. Stone requested authority to investigate and report to the board on all web non-FCC listings. Board Approved request.
- 5) Schedule:
 - a) August, Ice Cream Social: Ross Lawler, chairman, requested authority to spend up to \$100 on supplies. Request approved by board.
 - b) September, Planning a Special Event: To be held at the Sugar Land branch of the Fort Bend County Library, 550 Eldridge, Sugar Land. Meeting will start at 7:00PM because he must vacate the room by 8:45PM.
 - c) October, RFI Remediation: Jeff Hoke of Centerpoint will talk to their efforts to find and remediate RFI caused by the Centerpoint electrical grid.
 - d) November, Elections: Four positions will become vacant this year, President, Recording Secretary, At Large Director, and Treasurer/Corresponding Secretary.
 - e) December, Home Brew Night: Starting this December, a project must have been constructed within the last 12 months to be presented at Home Brew Night.
 - f) January, Awards Banquet: This year at Texas Land & Cattle.
- 6) Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX



Jerry Moak, N5GHG, SK
Bossier City, La.
long time resident of Sugar Land.

(Doesn't appear to have been a BVARC member.)

Late breaking article -
As this article goes to press, this event occurred.

BALLOON LAUNCH – August 29 – Very Successful

The Balloon Launch Team scored another success by launching BLT-25 on Saturday morning, August 29, from Wharton Airport. The balloon achieved an altitude of 94,150' (unofficial) before descending.

The payload consisted of a real time color TV link, a VHF/UHF crossband repeater, a VHF/HF crossband repeater, a APRS GPS downlink, other cameras, beeper, etc.

Check the next issue of the newsletter for more details.



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

2009 Club Officers:

President:

Charles "Frosty" Frost, K5LBU

frosty1@pdq.net

Vice President: (Interim until voted)

Rick Hiller

rhiller@sdicgm.com

Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:

Arnold Knoche, K5ADA

jakadaok@aol.com

Recording Secretary:

Pete Sauer Milch

kd5gpx@arrl.net

Board Member:

David Barber, K5NDB

d_barber@att.net

Board Member:

Ross Lawler, W5HFF

w5hff@yahoo.com

At Large Board Member

(Past President):

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

Club Happenings:

General Meeting

Second Thursday each month, 7:30 PM

Sugar Land Community Center,

226 Matlage Way

Board of Directors Meeting

First Thursday of each month, 7:00 PM

Fuddruckers, just South of the Fountains

Shopping Center on US 59 outbound..

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

jwm@hal-pc.org

Eating Schedule

Saturday morning breakfasts

Third Thursday dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Location announced in text of this edition.

Rag Chew Net

3910 KHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays

at 7:00 p.m.

Public Service Net

Monday night on 145.47 (PL 123.0) at

8:00 PM



BVARC EATING SCHEDULE

SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

59 DINER, 7:30a.m., SW Freeway outbound service road, near Kirkwood.

NEW YORK COFFEE & BAGEL SHOP, 7:30A.M., 9720 Hillcroft.

THIRD FRIDAY DINNER: September 18, 2009, 7:00p.m.

PANDA GARDEN CHINESE RESTAURANT, 1043 Eldridge Road at Jesse Pirtle Blvd. in Sugar Land.

OTHER HAM GROUPS:

WEDNESDAYS – WEDNESDAY LUNCH BUNCH

LUBY'S CAFETERIA, 10:30a.m., Bellaire Blvd. ½ blk. E. of Hillcroft.

WEDNESDAYS – AMSAT & QRP GROUP

PAPPAS BARBECUE. 11:30a.m., SW corner Westheimer & Gessner.



Hamfests

(within 200 miles of Houston)

Hamfest info for the next few months. More information at:

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html#listing>

October 3,

HamExpo

Temple Amateur Radio Club

Bell County Expo Center

[301 West Loop 121](http://www.bellcountyexpo.com)

Belton, TX

<http://www.beltonhamexpo.org>

Talk-In: 146.820 (PL 123.0)



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.bvarc.org>
Editor: John Chauvin, K5IZO, k5izo@yahoo.com
Production Team: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, k5cam@arri.net
Claude Sessions, K5HFY, k5hfy@arri.net

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC) was organized in 1977, 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 area. BVARC is a Non-Profit Corporation classified by IRS as 501-(c)-(3).

Today **BVARC** is truly a general interest amateur radio club 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 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. General membership dues are \$20.00 per year, with student dues \$10.00 per year, additional 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 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 145.47 (minus offset, PL 123 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 281-342-3340 or w5hff@yahoo.com or see the BVARC website: www.bvarc.org

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SEPTEMBER 2009

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

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

General Membership Meeting – Thursday, September 10.

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