



# BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

NOVEMBER 2011

VOLUME 35 ISSUE 11

## BVARC November GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7:30 PM, Thursday, November 10, 2011

226 Matlage Way, Matlage Way Community Center, Sugar Land, Texas

Chili Dinner & BVARC Election

### PLEASE NOTE!

The November meeting will be back in the “normal” meeting place at 226 Matlage Way

Join us for our Annual Chili Supper – your chance to bring your “secret recipe” chili to wow your fellow hams. And, don’t forget to bring your spouse and family along with you. If you do bring chili (pre-heated, please) bring a serving spoon and whatever you need that goes with it. BVARC will supply all eating utensils, an assortment of drinks and condiments: including grated cheese, Fritos, chopped onions and jalapenos. Please notify the Chili Master – Jerry KF5EYC – if you are bringing some chili. Contact Jerry by e-mail at [GMuller885@aol.com](mailto:GMuller885@aol.com) or at 713-455-8752

Also at the meeting, we will be electing a new President, Recording Secretary, and a 2-year Director-at-Large. Contact Frosty K5LBU or Mike N5VCX if you have any nominations (including yourself!) for any of these positions. Nominations will also be open from the floor (pre-vote casting) -- please ensure your candidate wants to run before nominating them.

REMEMBER – you only have 1 month left to complete your homebrew project to show at the December meeting! A twist has been added for this December’s “homebrew night” – non builders can bring their favorite piece of ham gear or accessory to demonstrate (or just talk about)



## October Meeting Report

Our President Rick W5RH was the center of attention with a technical presentation for October entitled “Understanding and Using an HF Transceiver.” Rick gave a brief history of the “transceiver” and worked his way through early tube-type rigs through the latest-and-greatest Software Defined Radios. Pretty well all radio controls were explained -- telling why it is there, what it controls and the benefits of using it (or not).

A plethora of modern and not-so-modern rigs was displayed with operation demonstrations.



# The Presidents Corner

by Rick Hiller – W5RH

## The Combination of the Two

We were talking about music the other morning on Pump's machine (WA5CYI/R -- 146.94) and the music group -- Big Brother and The Holding company (with Janis Joplin ) -- came up. Ms. Joplin was from Beaumont. As were Johnny and Edgar Winter. But, mentioning them brought up one of my favorite BB&THC songs – “Combination of the Two”. Now, this led me to thinking about combinations of two things and even further the combination of 2 strange things. I just took a trip to Germany and came across a chain of shops called ‘Tchibo’ (pronounced chee-bow). ‘Tchibo’ sells coffee and undergarments. What a combination....a refreshment and an essential.

BVARC has a strange “Combination of the Two” at our November meeting – Elections and Chili. I suppose Allen, N5AFV, could tell us how far back this tradition goes, but it has been a tradition, as long as I have been a member (since the late 80's). However strange this combination is, it is, again, an essential and a refreshment. Essential because we need to elect a few new officers to their posts. President, Recording Secretary and a 2 year At-Large BOD member. Refreshment because we have a wide selection of Chili that folks will concoct and bring for your gastronomic pleasure.

To step up, yet again, on my Presidential soapbox, I would like to put out the call for members to run for one of the three offices that are up for re-election. President is the most important, as this person drives the club and keeps the activities flowing and supported. Now, the President cannot do this alone. BVARC has a very supportive, medium sized, “core group” This is the group of folks that always show up and volunteer, no matter where, when or what. They are there or are supporting (from afar) the event and the members attending. So these folks make the Presidents job a bit, no, they make it *significantly* easier. A President should be knowledgeable of Ham Radio, BVARC activities and key core personnel (and a General Class licensee at minimum).

Recording Secretary is another key position. This person keeps notes on all Board of Directors meetings, as stated to be done in the By-Laws. His efforts are seen in the Newsletter the month following the BOD meeting. So, good note taking, transcription and clear writing skills are what are required for this job. Pete, KD5QPX, has been an excellent Recording Secretary.

The 2 Year Member At Large is an adjunct Board position. This seat on the BVARC Board is one that “represents the whole club membership – at large”. Not that the other Board positions don't; they do. The At-Large description makes more sense in a representative type situation, (i.e. City Council, House of Representatives) but, that is how it is in the By-Laws and that's what we'll stick with. This is a great introductory position to the BVARC political hierarchy. Hey, we are all in this together and your suggestions and votes would be just as important as the President's or Vice-President's. You do have things to review and comment on as a member of the Board, but it is a much lower key position than the Recording Secretary, for example.

So, with our elections on November 10<sup>th</sup>, followed by the finest selection of Chili in the Southwest part of Greater Houston area, BVARC will initiate another year in the club operational mechanics. I extend an invitation to you all to 1) let the election committee know that you would like to volunteer to run for a BVARC BOD office; 2) come to the meeting to vote for your favorite candidate, and 3) finish the evening by filling your stomach with member and club supplied victuals and libations. A better “Combination of the Two” you could not find anywhere.

Enjoy your hobby. See you on the radio. 73....Rick – W5RH (dit dit)

## THE BVARC Rag Chew Net September check-ins

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

09/28/11, K5LKJ (NCS), K5CEK, WS5H, AF5T, N5CPA, W5HFF (M) (Houston), WA5CYI, W5TOM, KC5JAR (Katy), K5IZO, W5TKZ, K5NDB, AE5YY, WA9YNJ, AA5OA, WB5PNL (Beach City), W5RH, W5RJA (T) (Round Rock),. (18 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 139, SN = 82, A = 29, K = 3

10/05/11, K5LKJ (NCS), K5CAM (Cat Springs), K0NM, K5LBU, N5CPA, K5CEK, K5NDB, WA5CYI, AA5OA, WS5H, AF5T (P), W5TOM, W5HFF (M)(Houston), K5IZO, KE5OBY, W5TKZ, KA5MEI, W5RH, KC5JAR (P), KK2Z, WX5YZ (Boling). (21 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 127, SN = 65, A = 18, K = 3

10/12/11, K5LKJ (NCS), K5CAM (Cat Springs), WA5CYI, K5CEK, K0NM, W5TKZ, K5NDB, K5AMA, W5LTD (Katy), AF5T, AA5OA, WS5H, WA5JMC, N5CPA, K5LJ, K5IZO, W5RJA (T) (Round Rock), WB5PNL (Beach City), W5RH.

(19 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 134, SN = 113, A = 6, K = 2

10/19/11, K5LKJ (NCS), WS5H, K5CEK, N5CPA, AF5T, W5TKZ, kK5EWM (Jasper), K5NDB, K5YZS (Spring), K5LJ, K5IZO, WA5CYI, W5HFF (M)(Houston), WD0EMN, KE5OBY, AA5OA, WB5PNL (Beach City), K0NM. (16 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 147, SN = 155, A = 5, K = 2

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

Thanks.

Regards.\_ John Whiteman, K5LKJ



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**FREE PARKING**

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**When:** Nov. 5  
**Where:** The Summit High School East Side  
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 (Beltway 8 bwtw Pasadena Blvd & Red Bluff)  
 Pasadena, TX.  
**Time:** 7am til ?

**Sponsored by:**  
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 Talk in on 145.290



**Results of the October  
 BVARC Amateur License Examination Session  
 by: John Moore, KK5NU**

As this issue of the newsletter goes to press, the information is not available. It will be included in next month's newsletter.



**Monday Night NET Updates**

Don't forget the Monday Night Public Service Net starts at **8 pm** on 146.94 (167.9). 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:

7/18 - 45 - Dwayne, kb5yta  
 7/25 - 44 - Pete, kd5qpx  
 8/1 - 46 - Cam, k5cam  
 8/8 - 29 - Clint, kd5hdf  
 8/15 - 28 - Dwayne, kb5yta

8/22 - 37 - Pete, kd5qpx  
 8/29 - 30 - Sid, n5zkd  
 9/5 - 32 - Cam, k5cam  
 9/12 - 31 - Clint, kd5hdf  
 9/19 - 32 - Bill, ws5h

9/26 - 40 - Pete, kd5qpx  
 10/3 - 28 - Cam, k5cam  
 10/10 - 28 - Clint, kd5hdf  
 10/17 - 33 - Dewayne, kb5yta  
 10/24 - 39 - Pete, kd5qpx

**BVARC Historical Vignettes – Slumgullion Revisited**  
**Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian**

My Historical Vignette column in the February 2008 BVARC newsletter discussed the first time BVARC had food at an election meeting. Serving chili at the BVARC November election meeting has become an annual ritual that began in 1990; however, it wasn't the first time food was served at the election meeting. In 1988 Bill Todd-Brown, N5MPN, volunteered to bring a meal he called "slumgullion" to the election meeting that he said would feed the entire group. Since none of us knew for sure what slumgullion was, newsletter editor Irv Smith, KK5QQ, was pleased to inform us in the newsletter.

From the November 1988 (Vol. 11, Issue 10) B-VARC Bulletin, Irv Smith KB5EXM editor:

SLUMGULLION  
slum•gul•lion

*Pronunciation:* (slum-gul'yun, slum'gul"-), —*n.* **1.** a stew of meat, vegetables, potatoes, etc. **2.** a beverage made weak or thin, as watery tea, coffee, or the like. **3.** the refuse from processing whale carcasses. **4.** a reddish, muddy deposit in mining sluices. [1840-50, Amer.; cf. Scots, Hiberno-E gullion quagmire, cesspool]

Bill, N5MPN, is bringing this dish for the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. (Elections!) We hope definition 1 applies rather than the third definition!

The meeting was great success and I described the effort that Bill and his wife, Peg, put into making slumgullion in some detail in the earlier Historical Vignette. The reason I am revisiting the topic of having slumgullion at BVARC meetings is that I received an e-mail from Bill Todd-Brown's son after he came across the article while looking at newsletters on the BVARC website. Both his e-mail to me and my reply to him follow. This exchange of e-mail illustrates the value of posting the club newsletter on our website.

Subject: my father - Bill Todd-Brown  
From: "Todd-Brown, Bill" bill.todd-brown@schoolunion44.org  
To: <afmattis@hal-pc.org>

Dear Sir.

I am the son of Bill Todd-Brown and I thank you for your kind remembrances of my parents, as expressed in the 02/2008 BVARC Historical Vignettes Slumgullion.

As the years pass, it is easy to lose your grounding when friends and family are distant. But I remember the enthusiasm and excitement my father had for his friends at BVARC.

Thank you for your kind words,

Bill Todd-Brown  
aka: Wm. E Todd-Brown Jr

Subject: Your father - Bill Todd-Brown  
From: "Allen Mattis N5AFV" <afmattis@hal-pc.org>  
To: <bill.todd-brown@schoolunion44.org>

Bill:

It was wonderful to hear from you. I worked closely with your father in BVARC; I was president of the club and he was program chairman. BVARC was blessed at the time to have a number of exceptional individuals including your father active in the club. It was the largest amateur radio club in the Houston metropolitan area and had some of the best programs at the monthly meetings that I have ever seen in my 30 plus years as a ham.

Your father and I hit it off well from the very beginning, perhaps in part because I am also a geologist. I live in Meyerland about two miles from where your father lived and used to visit him at his home. When your father made slumgullion for the club it turned out to be a fantastic success. It wasn't until I read the recipe that I realized all the work he and your mother put into it. For the past two years I have been writing the Historical Vignettes column to record some of the past club events before they are forgotten.

I will share your e-mail with some of the other club members who knew your father.

Best regards,

Allen Mattis N5AFV

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HAM RADIO IS BACK IN HOUSTON AGAIN!



## BVARC "Under 15" CW Net

**Tuesday 7PM**

**3.550 MHz**

Join us for a fun filled 30 to 45 minutes of working the CW mode. We welcome new folks with open ears, so join us. Net is transmitted at 11/15 WPM Farnsworth spacing, so it is easy to copy. The net structure is just like the Rag Chew Net on Wednesday nights. Pre-amble, then the call for check-ins "QNI?".... and then each station is called "QTT" to invite them to transmit a short greeting or message. Net Control Station (NCS) is Rick, W5RH, but some nights WS5H, Bill, or others take over, so listen carefully right at 7 PM. Frequency is on 3.550 MHz.

Listen to a sample pre-amble (mp3) on the CW Net web page at <http://bvarc.org/index.php?page=cwnet>  
Just have a listen or join in, but do get on the air and have some fun with some slow speed CW.



## Are You A Real Ham?

One night I heard the following on the air, “Roger, Roger OM. I am a Real Ham.” After a minute, I wondered, what other kinds of hams could there be; unreal hams, imaginary hams, weird hams or phantom hams? I didn’t know.

Nervously, I grabbed my FCC license and scrutinized it carefully. I was stunned. Right there in the middle of the license, under *Special Conditions/Endorsements* it says, “None”. Is that a mistake or a typo perhaps? Maybe I am a Non-Ham? I broke out into a cold sweat.

In a panic, I called my old buddy Ralph. Ralph knows everything about ham radio. He has been a ham so long that he says Marconi was his Elmer. Ralph calmed me down and assured me that I was a real ham. Ralph said that all hams are real hams if the FCC says so. Even though some claim only they are the real deal, anybody with a valid license is a real ham. What a relief!

With my fear arrested and my curiosity aroused, I wanted to learn more about the *Real Ham* phenomenon. Who are they? Are *Real Hams* like real men, who don’t eat quiche and don’t like change? Well, maybe they eat quiche in secret but they still don’t like change.

If change is an essential facet of technology and if amateur radio is a technology based hobby, then *Real Hams* should embrace change? Apparently not; instead *Real Hams* complain about those that did not have to pass a code test, incentive licensing and the ARRL. I don’t get it.

What about the code thing? I’ve heard *Real Hams* say we should bring back the code requirement. I kept asking myself, what purpose it would serve other than to erect an artificial barrier to entry into our hobby. CW is a challenging and fun operating mode. It is a skill one could acquire if they wanted but is it any longer a core competency for a license?

My old buddy Ralph looks back on his CW days as one of those golden moments. His radio lineage goes way back to the days of spark. Back in that day, that is all there was but Ralph says the radio art has moved on.

“You mean it has progressed?” I asked. “Sure”, says Ralph. “Listen kid (everyone’s a kid to Ralph), I got my first car in ‘08(that would be 1908). Back then you had to be a pretty good mechanic to just drive to town. You had to know about radiators, magnetos and manual shifting and you couldn’t call triple A either. Now you just jump in the car and turn the key.”

“We don’t have to rely on CW, like we did back then. With all the digital operating modes, we have lots of other choices. I haven’t tried it myself yet but I hear that you can even send e-mail by amateur radio.”

I began to feel better after my conversations with Ralph. Maybe I was a real ham after all. I’ll have to try CW after I finish my moon bounce project.

Ron, AE5NO





**Minutes of October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011 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 7:00 PM on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at Fudrucker's, 11445 Fountain Lake Drive, Stafford, TX .Attending were: Rick Hiller, W5RH (Pres.); Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z (V.P.); Bob Tomlinson, N5JSL (Cor. Sec.); Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX (Rec. Sec.); Ross Lawler, W5HFF (2yr At-Large Dir.); Eddie Runner, NU5K (Webmaster); Suzanne Runner, KF5GWZ; Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM; John Chauvin, K5IZO (Newsletter Editor); David Barber, K5NDB, Mike Hardwick, N5VCX; Mark Lawler.

- 1) Minutes for the September 2011 meeting were approved as previously distributed by email and appears in the October 2011 newsletter.
- 2) Treasurer's Report was presented to and approved by the Board.
- 3) VP Report:
  - a) March or April 2012 meeting will be EQSL.
  - b) November 2011 meeting will be Elections and Chili Supper.
  - c) December 2011 meeting will be Home Brew.
  - d) January 2012 meeting will be Banquett. Tentative dates either January 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - e) Sometime in 2012, Texas QSO Party, Chuck Sanders.
  - f) Sometime in 2012, Skywarn and/or Advanced Skywarn training at a GMM.
- 4) Old business:
  - a) Wish List: Tomlinson, Chauvin, Hiller presented a list for board consideration to receive donation from BVARC. Discussion on list items to take place during November board meeting.
  - b) Meeting locations: Next six months at Imperial Park Recreation Facility adjacent to the old Community Center.
  - c) Election of officers for expiring terms:
    - i) Jerry Muller, KF5EYC, volunteered for 2 year director position.
    - ii) David Barber, K5NDB, volunteered for 2 year director position.
    - iii) Arnold Knoche, K5ADA, has notified the board that he will resign as treasurer. Bob Tomlinson, N5JSL, Corresponding Secretary, has agreed to accept the treasurer's duties and his office will again become Treasurer/Corresponding Secretary.
- 5) Astronomy Day: October 8<sup>th</sup>, George Observatory; HF station will be established.
- 6) Greater Houston Hamfest has had its initial meeting. Fairground has been reserved but deposit not yet made.
- 7) Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Peter Sauermilch, KD5QPX



MAROONED WITH HIS NEW BRIDE AND THE LATEST ISSUE OF "QST,"  
WALTER SETTLES IN FOR THE LONG WAIT TO BE RESCUED.



2011 Club Officers:

President:

Rick Hiller, W5RH  
[rhiller@sdicgm.com](mailto:rhiller@sdicgm.com)

Vice President:

Kirk Kendrick, KK2Z  
[kmkendrick@gmail.com](mailto:kmkendrick@gmail.com)

Corresponding Secretary  
Robert Tomlinson, N5JSL  
[rbtswim@gmail.com](mailto:rbtswim@gmail.com)

Treasurer:

Arnold Knoche, K5ADA  
[jakadaok@aol.com](mailto:jakadaok@aol.com)

Recording Secretary:

Pete Sauermilch, KD5QPX  
[kd5qpx@arrl.net](mailto:kd5qpx@arrl.net)

Board Member:

Dywane Jones, KB5YTA  
[dwayneredhonda@gmail.com](mailto:dwayneredhonda@gmail.com)

Board Member:

Ross Lawler, W5HFF  
[w5hff@yahoo.com](mailto:w5hff@yahoo.com)

At Large Board Member

(One year – vs Past President)):

Bill Stone, WS5H  
[dragntow@wt.net](mailto:dragntow@wt.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](mailto:jwm@hal-pc.org)

Eating Schedule

See in adjacent column.

Rag Chew Net

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

Public Service Net

Monday night on 146.94 (PL 167.9) at 8:00 PM

Under 15 CW Net

Tuesday night, 7PM, 3.550 MHz



## BVARC EATING SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

59 DINER, 7:00a.m., SW Freeway outbound service road, near  
Kirkwood.  
NEW YORK COFFEE & BAGEL SHOP, 7:30a.m., 9720 Hillcroft.

### THURSDAYS BEFORE CLUB MEETINGS--6.15p.m.

VASOS BAR-B-Q, 9920 Hwy. 90-A, #D-120 on the SW corner of  
US Hwy. 90-A and Dairy Ashford.

### OTHER HAM GROUPS:

#### WEDNESDAYS – WEDNESDAY LUNCH BUNCH

LUBY'S CAFETERIA, 10:30a.m. to 12:00Noon +, 9797 South Post Oak  
Road, just south of the I-610 Loop in Meyer Park Shopping Center.

#### WEDNESDAYS – AMSAT & QRP GROUP

PAPPAS BAR-B-Q, 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>

### San Antonio Amateur Radio Fiesta – January 14, 2012

**Location:** Schertz, TX

**Sponsor:** San Antonio Radio Club

**Website:** <http://w5sc.org>

### Greater Houston Hamfest – March 3, 2011

**Location:** Rosenberg, TX

**Sponsor:** Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** [www.houstonhamfest.org](http://www.houstonhamfest.org)





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Editor: John Chauvin, K5IZO, [k5izo@yahoo.com](mailto:k5izo@yahoo.com)  
Production Team: Cameron Mitchell, K5CAM, [k5cam@arri.net](mailto:k5cam@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 Scarella 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 281-342-3340 or [w5hff@yahoo.com](mailto:w5hff@yahoo.com) or see the BVARC website: [www.bvarc.org](http://www.bvarc.org)

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