



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

JULY 2015

VOLUME 39 ISSUE 7

BVARC GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7:30 PM, Thursday, July 9th, 2015

2511 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478, Eldridge Park Conference Center

Up, Up and Away!

You have heard about them and what they do. You are not sure why they do what they do but they keep on doing it. It is a mixture of amateur radio, ballooning and photography and it has been going on for quite some time. Andy MacAllister, W5ACM, will come out and explain the high rising facet of amateur radio and just what it takes to be successful in launching a balloon. Make sure you make the meeting to find out just what may be floating above your head and what it may be doing.



June Meeting Recap – Field Day and Greater Houston Hamfest

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, and Mike Davidson, N5MT, co-chairman for this year's multi-club Field Day went over the planning and organizing for the event. BVARC, TDXS and ECHO will be setting up on Friday, June 26 for this year's Field Day. Of course by the time you read this, Field Day will have come and gone and would have been one of the most successful ones that the three clubs have had.

Nathan Vessay, N5NVY, presented a short review of the hamfest and all the pluses and minuses. He said the official count on attendance was 1016 which was an increase over last year. He also went over the plans and goals for next year hamfest. Full steam ahead.



Upcoming Meetings

Below is a list of upcoming BVARC meetings. Mark your calendars so you won't miss out.

July 9 th	Balloon Launch – A Basic Primer	Andy MacAllister, W5ACM
August 13 th	Ice Cream Social	Still needing volunteers!
September 10 th	Antennas – Designing, Using and Troubleshooting	Rick Hiller, W5RH
October 8 th	D-Star	Pending
November 12 th	Elections & Chili Supper	
December 10 th	Home Brew Night	Home built equipment

Program suggestions are still needed for the general meetings. If there is a program you would like, let me know so it can be scheduled for a meeting.

The Vice Prez Says

June is always one of the busiest months for BVARC. With Museum Ships Weekend Event and Field Day happening in the same month, there is a ton of things that have to be accomplished to make them successful events. However, before I get too far along, I want to thank Willis "Cookie" Cook, K5EWJ and Mike Davidson, N5MT for their hard work on make MSWE and Field Day successful events. Without their help and guidance, the events would have not happened. Both events were successful in their own way with both helping amateur radio grow.

Just to let everyone know, the change in meeting location is still moving forward. The Masonic lodge has submitted a contract for BVARC to discuss and review. If everything falls into place, the August meeting should be held in Masonic Lodge. Stay tuned to the web site and the newsletter for updates.

Just to let everyone know, Bill is still going through chemo. Bill came out to Field Day for a few hours and checked the operations and enjoy a hamburger (I knew the food would attract him). I know he still has a few more weeks of chemo so keep thinking good thoughts about Bill. I know Bill is ready to get back in the saddle again so he can quit reading my ramblings.

Museum Ship Weekend (MSWE) for the submarine USS Cavalla and destroyer escort USS Stewart is now just memory for 2015. MSWE chairman, Willis Cookie K5EWJ, sent in log sheets indicating approximately 122 contacts made over the weekend. Even with the light turn-out, several operators managed to get 30 to 40 contacts each. A brand new ham, Tom Johnson, came out and helped with set-up and tear down so he deserves two gold stars. Of course everyone deserves much more than that since they actually ate my cooking on Sunday morning. I was glad there were no illnesses from that horrible experience! Even though it is not the best, Fort Travis works very well for all aspects including feeding the raccoons. On to 2016!

Field Day is also a memory now (it is also just a few aches and pains in my back, legs and neck). Mike Davidson, N5MT did a great job coordinating TDXS and ECHO resources for the tri-club Field Day. The Fort Bend County Fire Training Field was busy from Friday to Sunday afternoon with nearly 100 people coming out to help with the event. There is a short article elsewhere in this newsletter with more information and there will be a full article next month. So keep your eyes open for the articles.

See everyone at the meeting.

73,
Mike
N5VCX



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: x

3/16 - 28 - Ron, k5hm	4/20 - 20 - Ron, k5hm	5/25 - 16 - Pete, kd5qpx
3/23 - 34 - Pete, kd5qpx	4/27 - 32 - Pete, kd5qpx	6/1 - 24 - David, n5ekw
3/30 - 24 - Terry, k5pgf	5/4 - 19 - David, k5ekw	6/8 - 26 - Rick, w5rh
4/6 - 39 - David, n5ekw	5/11 - 44 - Pete, kd5qpx	6/15 - 22 - Terry, k5pgf
4/13 - 25 - Rick, w5rh	5/18 - 27 - Cam, k5cam	6/22 - 24 - Pete, kd5qpx



BVARC Rag Chew Net May Check-Ins

05/27/15, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, W5HFF, K5LJ, W5TOM, KF5TFJ, K5IZO/5 (P)(Jasper), KE5OBY, AA0ST (Dickenson), K0NM, AF5T. (11 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 95, SN = 48, A = 6, K = 1

06/03/15, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TOM, KF5TFJ, W5TKZ, W5HFF, K5LJ, K5IZO/5 (P)(Jasper), AF5T, KC5PJT (Lindberg), K5APB (Minden, LA). (10 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 106, SN = 39, A = 3, K = 1

06/10/15, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, AF5T, KF5TFJ, W5HFF, W5RH, W5TOM, WS5H, KE5OBY, AA0ST (Dickenson), K5IZO, KC5JAR (Katy). (13 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 134, SN = 110, A = 13, K = 2

06/17/15, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, K5IZO, W5HFF, KF5TFJ, AF5T, W5TOM, K5LJ, W5RH, N5EKW (Katy), KF5PHA. (11 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 133, SN = 87, A = 10, K = 3

6/24/15, W5TKZ (NCS), W5HFF, KF5TFJ, WS5H, K5IZO, W5TOM, N5EWK (Katy), K5LJ, WA5CYI, AF5T, W5RH, KE5OBY, KD5FBA. (13 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 116, SN = 61, A = 76, K = 3

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

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



Results of the June 9th BVARC Amateur License Examination Session by: John Moore, KK5NU

B-VARC sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examination session that was held on Tuesday, June 9, 2015 at HCC's Scarcella Science & Technology Building here in Stafford, TX.

MEMBERS OF THE VE TEAM:

Larry Jacobson, K5LJ
John Moore, KK5NU
George Ontko, KM5VP
Robert B. Tomlinson, N5JSL

Three examination elements were administered during the evening to three applicants. Two new Technician class and one upgrade to Generak class license were attained, with the total number of elements passed being 3. The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 100%. Congratulations to the following who attained a license and/or passed an exam: -

James R. Poux	- {KG5IAZ}	- Technician
Michael P. Ricco	- {KG5IAY}	- Technician
Michael S. Woods	- {KF5PPG}	- 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 Science & Technology Building for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.



Museum Ships Weekend

Friday afternoon was a busy day for Mike and myself. Setup took longer than expected for several reasons. New ham and new member Tom Johnson showed up to help us set up the antenna on Friday. Thanks Tom, Mike and I really appreciated the help.

After the antenna got set up we started unloading the rest just as it got dark. The first foray by a resident Raccoon came as we started to unload the pickup. The Cabana's were not usable as the bird excrement was very prolific and we did not have cleaning supplies nor the ambition to use them if we did. I brought a 10' X 10' screen room with a roof and a good supply of bug repellent and insecticide. The mosquitoes were tolerable. Mike went to get food and then left for the island and a few hours sleep. By this time I finished eating, it was after ten and I was exhausted so I did not try to operate Friday. I tried to get a decent amount of sleep, but at least two Raccoons took turns trying to steal my food. One would distract me and the other would come under the screen and attack the food. I lost the rest of the sack of cookies and a sack of 6 bagels plus some sleep in the night. I also encountered a skunk, but stayed well away while she chased bugs. Sleep was minimal.

Mike reappeared about 0800 Saturday and we were joined by Travis Burgess, K5HTB and David Elsner, KD7THU. Travis brought a NVIS 40 meter loop to try and was able to make about 12 contacts on 40 meters and one on 17. David worked 20 meters on the beam and was able to make 33 contacts Saturday. Saturday morning we had a sack of bagels that the Raccoons were not able to steal and some fruit. Mike found some BLT sandwiches for lunch. Burgers were cooked for the four of us Saturday night.

Mike went to look for a motel with an empty bed Saturday night and left Travis, Dave and me in the camp. Dave tried to sleep in his car and gave up about midnight. Travis tried to operate some, but had little luck and slept in his recliner lawn chair. I stayed on my cot in the screen room. We chased a Raccoon once and he got into our trash. I was tired enough that I did get some sleep on my cot.

Mike brought some Cinnamon Rolls, Bacon and Eggs for breakfast and three of us enjoyed them. We were to tear down around noon, but Lubo Jakab, KG5DJS came in about 1100 and wanted to operate some. 10M & 20M had problems with the triplexer. I connected directly to the beam and tried 20 meters and that worked. I made 3 contacts then Lubo made 37 QSOs all over the US. When Lubo hit a lull, Jose Cantor worked 32 stations. This allowed us to make one of our objectives for having the event and let Lube and Jose both get some operating experience and make some 20 meter contacts.

We shut down operation at about 1:45 Local time Sunday and secured the site. We had a good time, but the results were somewhat disappointing, both in the number of contacts and the participation. We made 121 total contacts including 13 ships. The money band as usual was 20 SSB with 109 Qs. We made one on 10 meters and one on 17 meters but both were with the Elissa, about 3 miles away. Travis made 13 Qs with his NVIS Loop on 40 meters.



2015 Field Day A Great Time!

It was amazing. I had my doubts on how things would fall into place. I did not have the energy I once had for Field day but I pushed hard and was just amazed on what happened. The equipment appeared, the antennas appeared, a 60' man lift appeared and more people showed up. Even the Saturday dinner, which was organized at the last minute, turned out great for everyone.

Just to give everyone an idea of just what was involved to make the event work, I put together some numbers on the 2015 BVARC/TDXS/ECHO.

1. 24 people on Friday for set-up
2. 68 people on Saturday for set-up and to operate
3. 36 people on Sunday for operating and tear down
4. 50 people for dinner
5. A portable tower trailer
6. A 60' man lift
7. 4582 contacts
8. 15082 points

This year also presented a challenge with 40 fireman that were there all day Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning. We worked around each other and a few firemen even checked out our operation! However the worst problem was a crazy person that keep going around demanding that everyone signs the sign-in sheet. Hopefully next year that person will give it rest and do something with his sign-in sheet!

Next month there will a full acritical on Field day so stay tuned.

Thanks for everyone's help on this huge endeavor. Without your help, the event would have not happened.

73,

N5VCX



Red Daemon Contest Team Adopts Fritz, the RF Krampus as its Official Mascot.

Galveston, Tx June 27, 2015 – Just prior to the opening of the 2015 ARRL Field Day event, members of the Red Daemon Contest Team gathered at its 2015 Field Day site to officially endorse Fritz- the RF Krampus as its mascot.



“According to Greek mythology, daemons are benign or benevolent spirits in nature. Fritz represents that for our team; sometimes benign or benevolent depending on how he feels”, said team member Ron Litt, K5HM. Fritz’s disembodied visage can appear at will during team activities.

Fritz first appeared during the 2013 Texas Parks on the Air event at Mustang Island, where he caused a rain shower that forced us to shut down early. He made repeat appearances at the team’s 2014 Field Day and again during the 2014 IOTA Contest on Mustang Island.

The Red Daemon Contest Team - the Champagne Contest Team, is a loose confederation of dedicated Amateur Radio contesters. Some more dedicated than others.

2015 Field Day consisted of:

5 people; plus the chef for food service

2KW portable generator

Operating 5A Dedicated PSK; Other 4 all HF SSB and some CW

2 element tri-bander Uber Alles Beam at 35 feet

R7 Vertical – for PSK; 40 m Doublet; 80 m Inverted V

Estimated Score – Approx. 2,000 points

No GOTA but we live well. Gourmet Italian Dinner menu Friday night and Steak Dinner Saturday, including wine service or other adult beverages. Chocolate cake for desert; fresh scrambled eggs breakfast Saturday; Bagels for breakfast Sunday. Covered parking; Queen Size beds; full bath with showers

RDCT believes in contesting “our way”; whatever that is. Team Members include Ron (K5HM), Matt (K5NGU), Rick (W5RH), Stephanie (K5SFV), Nathan (N5NYV), Linda Litt and Fritz. After initially using the special event call N5T, the team received its permanent call K5RDT, In December 2014.

For More information contact:

Ron Litt, K5HM

K5hm.ron@gmail.com



BVARC Historical Vignettes – BVARC and GAAC Marathon Warm-Up Series Mugs Allen Mattis N5AFV, Club Historian

Throughout most of our club’s history BVARC has participated in public service events. One of the longest running public service events BVARC participated in was the Gulf Association Athletic Congress (GAAC) Marathon Warm-Up Series. BVARC provided communications for these races from 1987 through at least 1999. Information in the BVARC newsletter for public service events for past years is sometimes absent.

Runners who worked or volunteered at all three races received a nice mug with the GAAC logo on it. I approached GAAC officials and asked if ham radio volunteers who worked at all three GAAC Warm-Up Series races could also receive a mug. The officials approved my request and as a result a number of BVARC members received these mugs. The mugs were usually awarded at the BVARC’s annual banquet in January.

I acknowledge a special thank you to Tom McBrayer for providing information regarding GAAC.



1999 GAAC Marathon Warm-Up Series Mug

Minutes of the June 4th, 2015 Board of Directors meeting of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Bill Stone called the monthly Board of Directors meeting for the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club to at 7:16 PM on February 5th, 2015, at Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston 77074. Attending were: Bill Stone WS5H (Pres), Mike Hardwick N5VCX (V.P.), Bob Tomlinson N5JSL (Treas.), Michael Monsour ACØTX (Rec.Sec./Quart.), Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2yr At-Large Dir), Jerry Muller K9GEM (2yr At-Large Dir.), Eddie Runner NU5K Webmaster, Suzanne Runner KF5GWZ, Pete Sauermilch KD5QPX, Norma Stone KE5NDN

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

Reports:

- 1.1 A motion was made and approved to accept the May minutes.
- 1.2 A motion was made and approved to accept the Treasurer's report

Old Business:

2.1 There have been general approval regarding the Masonic Lodge, with no complaints. The Masonic Lodge has proposed a contract that seem to have been written from three sources. There are ambiguities in the contract that need to be resolved. The present Board members and others were given a copy of the contract to be commented on and sent back to Mike Hardwick. There needs to be a facility committee that needs to lock/unlock the meeting place and be sure everything is put back in order. Pete Sauermilch KD5QPX is in charge of this with Scott Medbury KD5FBA.

2.2 Hamfest: The Houston Community College West Loop campus has a date for their spring break, March 14 to 20, 2016. However this is the same weekend as the Midland Hamfest. This needs to be decided by Nathan Vessey, the Hamfest chairman.

2.3 Museum Ships: status is poor with sparse attendance.

2.4 Field Day, June 27 and June 28: The club call has been requested from Ross Lawler W5HFF.

2.5 Hayes Infinity Insurance is no more the ARRL insurance agent. The new company is called Risk Strategies and the policy has been rolled over.

2.6 General meeting, June 11 which will feature Field Day organization meeting and Greater Houston hamfest wrap-up. Asked for ideas; D-star, RFI, HF operation, HF station on site at every meeting, balloon launch, building a simple antenna, ECHO link, electronic kits, soldering instruction

2.7 ARRL, West Gulf Awards; this will be tabled till the next Board meeting.

2.8 Need to have a real membership committee, with meet and greet and classes.

New Business:

3.1 Discussion on who got flooded and what can be done.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Michael Monsour ACØTX



Hamfests

(within 200 miles of Houston)

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

07/18/2015 | [Tidelands Hamfest](#)

Location: Texas City, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Tidelands Amateur Radio Society

Website: <http://tidelands.org>

08/07/2015 | [South Texas Section Convention \(Austin Summerfest 2015\)](#)

Location: Austin, TX

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Austin ARC and Texas VHF-FM Society

Website: <http://www.austinsummerfest.org>

10/03/2015 | [HamEXPO](#)

Location: Belton, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Temple Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://www.tarc.org/hamexpo/>

Where in the World is . . .
Brunei (V8)
CQ Zone 28
IOTA OC-088

Brunei, officially known as the Nation of Brunei, the Abode of Brunei Darussalam in Malay. It's located on the northwest coast of Borneo. On three sides bordered by Malaysia and facing the South



Peace. OR Negara the island of China Sea.



It's a good place to live, with its principal product being oil. Considered a "fully developed" country by the IMF. According to Forbes Magazine it ranks as the fifth richest nation on the planet. The country has zero debt.

Brunei's government is a constitutional monarchy. Under Brunei's constitution, the Sultan is the head of state with full executive authority. Since 1962, this authority has included emergency powers, which are renewed every two years. The country has been under

hypothetical martial law since 1962. The Sultan, Hassanal Bolkiah also serves as the state's Prime Minister, Finance Minister and Defense Minister. As Mel Brooks observed, it is good to be king.

Petroleum was discovered in 1926. Oil and natural gas have been the basis of Brunei's development and wealth since the late 20th century.

This is a devoutly Muslim nation; land of gold-plated mosques and wooden water villages, a nation so rich from its oil and gas resources that no one pays tax. It is a seven-hour flight from Melbourne but Brunei is little known and very much underrated for travelers.



Brunei is clean and virtually free of crime with pristine rainforests, palm-fringed beaches and palatial resorts.

In this land of over 400,000, there are approximately 400 licensed amateurs. According to Club Log, it is 109th on the Most Wanted DX entity, List

Reporting from the Dark Side,

Ron, K5HM



Radiosport Items of Note

Because of Field Day activities, this article could not be researched in time for this edition of the BVARC Newsletter. Please check back for the series to resume next month.





The Radio Hotel – The Antenna - Part 5 by W5RH

Gain, Angles and Patterns – it's so EZ

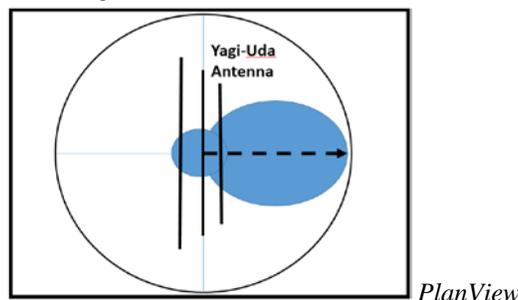
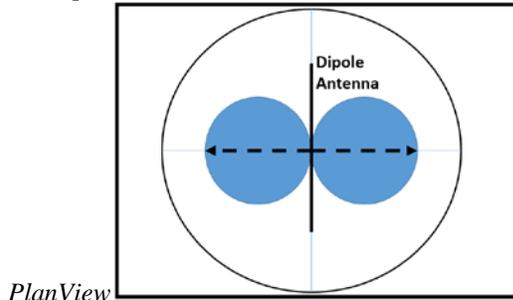
One of the great things about coupling Amateur Radio with computers is the availability of exquisite calculating programs that will provide you with a boat load of information about just about anything. Antennas and transmission lines are particularly lucky, as both of these disciplines have had tremendous development done in providing calculations and modeling of electromagnetic radiation. EZNEC is one of the many antenna system modeling programs available. A free version of W7EL's app can be had at:

<http://www.eznec.com/demoinfo.htm>

More on how to use EZNEC later in the Radio Hotel series. Briefly, it can provide you with modeling and the diagrams shown below, since we have been talking about antenna radiation characteristics.

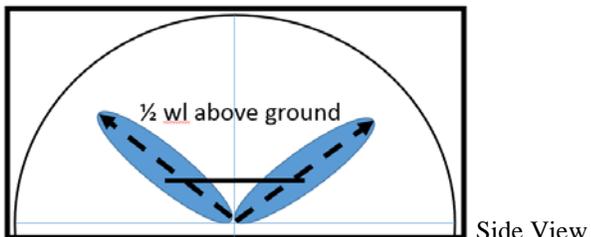
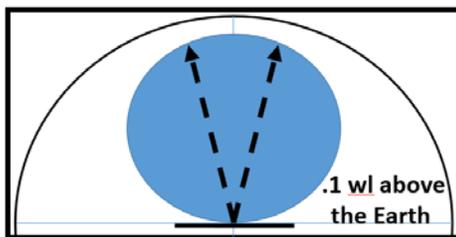
The antenna pattern is a three dimensional bulb of both the Gain and the Angle of Radiation. The gain changes the shape of the bulb looking from the top (plan view) and the Angle of radiation is determined by the view from the side.

“Gain” -- Gain is a bit of a misnomer. Gain does not cause the antenna to put out more total radiation, only more power to the antenna feedpoint can do that. Gain is simply a redirecting of the total energy into one direction. Instead of radiating equally in all directions, as a vertical will do, by configuring the right elements in the right place we can focus that energy into one direction, such as with a Yagi-Uda (Google it) antenna. Look at the following plan view diagrams....the one on the left is a dipole radiating in 2 directions off the side of the dipole. The diagram on the right is a simple 3 element parasitic array Yagi focusing the radiation in a single direction – providing gain (the radiation lobe is elongated). (Google – Antenna Gain)



Note: adding 4,5,6 or more elements to the Yagi-Uda makes the radiation pattern narrower and narrower and the gain (the elongation) stretches out more and more.

“Angle of Radiation” -- Looking at the radiation from the side allows us to see what the launch angle is of the main radiation lobe. For DX we desire a low launch angle (closer to the ground). That way the signal travels further before bouncing off of the ionosphere and back down to Earth. This angle is determined by the height above ground. Close to Earth a horizontal antenna radiates signals straight up. Put the antenna a half wavelength above Earth and the radiation angle drops to about 30 degrees. More height means lower angle in this case, to a point. Much higher and you get multiple lobes – some lower angle and some high angle. (Google -- Angle of Radiation)



One more in this part on patterns -- next time....Vertical Antennas

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



BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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

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

Club meetings are normally held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Eldridge Park Conference Center, 2511 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478. Check the above website for any possible changes.

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

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

A rag chew net is held each Wednesday at 7 p.m. on 3910 KHz +/- 3 KHz.

To obtain information about joining **BVARC** or its activities, contact the club's "Elmer," Ross Lawler, W5HFF at 281-701-7602 or see the BVARC website: www.bvarc.org

Other contacts include:

President:, Bill Stone, WS5H, dragntow@wt.net

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

NOTE: Every 3 – 4 months, this full officer's, club and eating info is published in the newsletter. For the intervening months, an abbreviated version is published but the complete info is on the BVARC website.

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JULY 2015

**BRAZOS VALLEY
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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

July General Membership Meeting – Thursday, July 9



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