



# BVARC BEACON



Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club  
AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY

DECEMBER 2018

VOLUME 42 ISSUE 12

## December General Membership Meeting.

Thursday, December 13. at 7:30 p.m. at the Sugar Land Masonic Lodge, 421 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478.

### Home Brew Night – The Maker’s Event

It’s finally here, the one meeting of the year featuring YOUR creations. Bring your stuff to the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and amaze your fellow hams with the nectar of your creative juices. There will be a grand prize \$100 gift card to the big winner, and perhaps a few other awards for others.

Don’t miss this one!



## NOVEMBER MEETING REPORT AND ELECTION RESULTS

As press time, these details are not available. It primarily consisted of the Chili Supper and the elections. However, most is covered in “The Prez Says” next page.



## Museum Ships – Saturday, December 8, 2018

BVARC will be volunteering time on the ships for a Pearl Harbor Day weekend activation. We’ll convene at the ships at about 9:00 am – activities will include some transmission line installation and some activation time. In addition to the radio activation, submariner vets will be present to speak to the public about the silent service. Contact Mark Janzer – K5MGJ (at [k5mgj@yahoo.com](mailto:k5mgj@yahoo.com)) to volunteer (to get on the gates list) and for more information.



## Board of Directors meeting is December 8!

CORRECTION: The December Board of Directors Meeting will be on December 8, NOT December 1 as stated in the November BOD Minutes published within. This change is a result of being able to secure a meeting room on our preferred date.

## *The Prez Says*

The elections are over and we have a few new people on the board. But first I want to thank the following board members for their hard work. Out-going treasurer Donovan Bali, KG5BDZ, has worked very hard over the last 4 years as treasurer keeping the BVARC books balanced. Without Donovan, I feel the club would have really been lost financially. I also want to thank Michael Monsour, AC0TX, for filling in as the 1 year director (Michael serves as the club's quartermaster which is a thankless job). Again, Donovan and Michael, thank you for your help.

We now have two new members on the board – Jeff Greer, W5JEF and Jimmy Vance, W5ZTX. Jeff has volunteered to serve as the club's corresponding secretary. Jeff will have work cut out for him but we will try to keep it down to only 80 hours a week. Jimmy has stepped up to a one year director. I had hoped Jimmy would have stepped to do more but since he is the president of KARS, I guess he doesn't have the time! Thanks to both of you for stepping up to help BVARC.

Returning as Vice President is Mark Janzer, K5MGJ. Mark has been VP for one term and decided that he could stand another term as VP. I guess I have not been too hard on him (I need to work harder). Thanks Mark for returning.

The elections have come and gone and I want to thank everyone again who have volunteered to help by being on the board of directors. Without your help, the club will not function or survive. During the last meeting I mentioned about club survival and said that I am exploring the possibility of disbanding BVAC if we cannot get more people to volunteer to help with club functions. Over the last 8 years or so, we have only had about 20 people that support the club through volunteering on the board and other functions. Those 20 go out of their way to support the club and the other 160 or so members. This is not really fair for those 20 and it hurts the organization in the long run. I don't know if the problem can ever be fixed on getting more volunteers but I hate that I have to constantly beg and plead for volunteers. Maybe BVARC needs to die and start over. Several people have suggested that we simply dissolve and let the club come back with only 20 or 25 people. Then we would have nearly 100 percent helping with the club functions. I really don't feel this will really help the club but it is a possibility. So I ask again for volunteers to help with the club and the functions. If you would like to help out and be the club treasurer, let someone on the board know.

I want to thank Rick Hiller, W5RH, for chairing the elections and Daphne Rawlinson, K5VQY, for their hard work on putting together the annual Chili supper and elections. I also want to thank everyone who brought chili and extras. Without your help, several of us would have gone home hungry. Again thanks Rick and Daphne.

The Greater Houston HamFest is just around the corner. It will be held on Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Friday will be the educational day and set-up with sales on Saturday. You will start to see flyers promoting it around the meetings over the next few weeks. We still need 30 volunteers for the HamFest so if you would like to help out, contact anyone on the board and let them know.

Don't forget this month's meeting where we'll have home-brew night. Bring your best home-built equipment to show it off to club. In the past we have had extremely good turn out for this and I hope it continues this year. Let Jon Noxon, KF5TFJ, if you would like to enter one of your prize creations for the event.

We finally have a winner of the "Station in a Box". Walter Bazarsky, W5KFL, was the lucky winner of the Icom 756 Pro III with all the accessories as well as a two meter radio. The club wants to thank Walter as well as everyone who purchased tickets for the "Station in a Box" raffle. We did manage to clear of the equipment by just a few "hertz" so the drawing was a success. Stay tuned for the next raffle coming up at the Greater Houston HamFest.

Don't forget the annual banquet coming up in January 18, 2019. Tickets will be \$30 per person that is a member and one guest. Non-members will be \$50 per person. More information is available elsewhere in this month's newsletter.

The banquet also means annual awards. Don't forget to send in your vote for the BVARC awards – The Order of the Key and Loop and Zepp awards. If you would like to know more about the awards, check the BVARC website. Make sure you send in your votes for the awards by December 31, 2018.

Last but not least, BVARC will be resuming VE testing in the New Year. Mark Janzer, K5MGJ, has stepped up to fill the position that John Moore, held for many years. When you see Mark, tell him thanks for stepping up to the plate for this important position.

Hope to see everyone at the next meeting.

73,  
N5VCX



## **Annual Awards Banquet – January 18, 2018**

### **It's all set!**

Mark Friday, 1/18/19 on your calendar for the BVARC Annual Awards Banquet  
The venue will be **Pappadeaux's Seafood Kitchen** -- 12109 Westheimer  
**6:30 PM Arrival social**  
**7:15 Dinner served**

Menu will be a starter salad with a choice of 4 entre's – Shrimp Brochette, Chicken Breast, Atlantic Salmon or a Sampler Platter (shrimp, fish and chicken)  
Dessert is coffee with Vanilla Cheesecake or Crème Brulee

The entertainment for the evening, in addition to the annual awards,  
is Tom Fontaine, local radio personality.

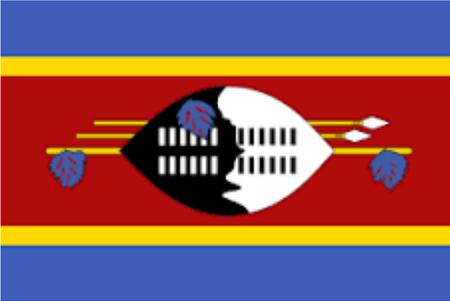
We are limited to 55 people. Tickets are available at the BVARC.org PayPal link

Members and 1 guest --- \$30, per person, for dinner  
Non-members or a second guest --- \$50

Alcoholic beverages are to the individual's tab

Should you have any questions: Please, give me a call at 832-474-3713 or send me an e-mail at [rickhillier73@gmail.com](mailto:rickhillier73@gmail.com) Rick – W5RH

Where in the World is . . .  
Eswatini (3DA)  
CQ Zone 38 ITU Zone 57



Eswatini what? Sounds like one of those smartphone apps. No, you won't find it on any DXCC list. At least not just yet.

The Kingdom of Eswatini is one of the world's last remaining absolute monarchies. The king rules by decree over his million subjects, most of whom live in the countryside and follow traditional ways of life.

Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland is a landlocked nation in southern Africa, surrounded on three sides by South Africa and on the east by Mozambique.



King Mswati III was crowned in 1986 at the age of 18, succeeding his father. The king, who is known as Ngweyama - "the lion" - often appears in public in traditional dress and has many wives (currently 15).

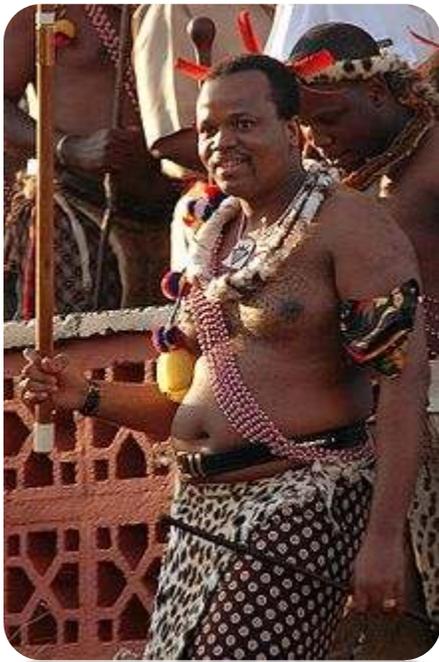


Figure 1 King Mswati III

He has been criticized for his heavy-handed treatment of opponents. The king frequently raids the treasury for money to pay for his passions, palaces and luxury cars. On his birthday in 2018, the king announced that the country, hitherto known as Swaziland, would henceforth be called Eswatini, a move that was made without consulting his ministers. This resulted in panicked changes in new bank notes, postage, official documents and signage. The nation's constitution uses Swaziland in more than 200 places. License plates and internet domain names, the country's airline, Swaziland Airlink is also affected. It's good to be king, right?

Not so fast. According to UNICEF Eswatini has the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world. The HIV-Aids virus has killed countless Swazis who have left behind thousands of orphans. Some 210,000 people, out of a population of 1.2 million, are estimated to be living with HIV.

The *Umhlanga*, a Swazi cultural tradition that celebrates chastity and virginity, attracts tens of thousands of women from across the country. On the final day of the festival, the young women, or "maidens", parade bare-breasted at the royal village. Traditionally, the king can choose one of the women as a wife. Families who don't send their daughters to the *Umhlanga* have to pay a fine, usually a goat or a cow.

To mitigate the HIV and AIDS pandemic in 2001, the king used his traditional powers and invoked a time-honored chastity rite, which encouraged all Swazi maidens to abstain from sexual relations for five years. This rite banned sexual relations for Swazis under 18 years of age but just two months

after imposing the ban, he violated his own decree when a royal fiancée was chosen, who became his 13th wife. As per custom, he was fined a cow, which he duly paid.

The currency of Eswatini is called the **lilangeni** (plural: "emalangeni"). It is tied to the South African rand at par. Shops in Eswatini usually accept and make change for both currencies indiscriminately where banknotes are concerned, but not coins. However, this is not the case in **South Africa**. All Swazi vendors will take rand, but no South African vendors will take emalangeni. The South African rand is worth about \$0.07 or about 14 rand to the dollar. So, make sure you have plenty of rand when you visit the local Swazi store for an ice-cold Coca Cola.



Figure 2 Eswatini country store

Many Western foods are available in Swazi grocery stores, but traditional foods are still common. Maize-based dishes are popular, and mealie or pap (like porridge) is a staple. Beans, groundnuts, pumpkin, avocado and sour milk are also common ingredients. Dried and cooked local meats, such as antelope (often called 'wild meat' by locals), are widely available at tourist restaurants.

"Chicken dust" is a cheap local BBQ meal; usually chicken grilled in the open served with a salad and porridge. Take appropriate precautions.

The QRZ search yielded 89 call signs. Most are overwhelmingly foreigners visiting on business or for humanitarian work and well as several formal DX-peditions. One of these was 3DA0CF, our own Charles "Frosty" Frost, K5LBU (SK). 3DA0RS is the call sign of the Radio Society of Swaziland. Due to the small number of fully licensed operators, there is no official QSL bureau in Eswatini.

Swaziland; er . . . Eswatini is 134<sup>th</sup> on the Club Log DXCC Most wanted list.

Reporting from the Dark Side,

Ron, K5HM



## December Board Of Directors Meeting

The BOD meeting has been changed to December 8<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendar with the change.

BVARC Board of Directors Meeting: 9:00 am to 11:00 am; Saturday, Dec. 8.

Bayland Park Community Center

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Bayland+Community+Center/@29.6949026,-95.4988767,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x8640c214fb19542d:0x4e5302897968d2c4!8m2!3d29.694898!4d-95.496688>

6400 Bissonnet Street, Houston, Texas 77074

Mike, N5VCX

# The Radio Hotel Coax Specs – Dissecting Series #3

By Rick Hiller – W5RH

We all use coaxial cables for our antenna systems at pretty much any frequency allocated to the Radio Amateur. Most Hams probably know very little about the characteristics of the cable they are buying. Knowledge probably limited to the characteristic (or surge impedance) and, maybe, the attenuation or matched loss rating. Coaxial cable has a slew of additional characteristics that should be considered, depending on your situation and end use. Let's have a look at some of these lesser known cable attributes. Hint: Google "**coax**", plus any of **BOLDED** words, for more info.

**Power handling** – important at any frequency, but, with too high a power level coupled with a lossy cable could certainly cause melting of the di-electric. Also, **Voltage Breakdown** is important if you are going to use antennas that require tuned feeders (ATU in the shack) and run a high SWR between the ATU and the antenna. Higher SWR generates higher voltages along the cable length. This is not good practice on coax anyway.

The type of **Shielding** used – stranded braid, solid foil or both, is important at higher frequencies to lessen the signal loss and to keep locally generated noise from entering the coax in its' long run from the antenna. The **outside jacket material** is important for cables out in the sun (UV protection) or buried under ground for protection from wet or age deterioration. Also, outgassing and long term breakdown for some materials is a concern if you install it and never want to mess with it for years. **Crush Strength** is the pressure it takes to deform the cable physical dimensions that affect the cables inherent **VSWR consistency**. Cars running over the cable or cable fed thru a door jamb on a car can crush the cable. You should look at the uniformity of the **dielectric OD** and the **OD of the cable itself**. These are really manufacturing measurement /tolerance concerns, but ones you should know about. In this regard, stay away from "hamfest, used coax". New cable is more money, yes, but much less of a headache when the used stuff starts to fail.

**A couple of installation concerns about coax. One is the weight of the cable.** Especially when center feeding a long dipole (hanging stress) or stretching elevated cable across an area (always use a catenary wire from which to hang the coax). Last, but not least, is **Bend Radius**. This specification is important when placing coax around corners. Each coax cable type has a specified minimum radius that it can be bent to in order to maintain the **VSWR consistency** and **characteristic impedance**. Depending on the **di-electric, solid or foam or air**, some cables have a very large minimum radius and others, smaller cables, have a tight radius. Always install and bend on the conservative side to save yourself problems in the future.

The characteristics of the coax that should concern you are very dependent on your needs and objectives. Big difference in the coax type used for running full power on tuned feeders to a 160/80 meter dipole, compared to feeding stacked 2 meter Yagi's at 120 feet. Even though certain characteristics are not of a big concern for your station, it is nice to know all about coax. **Two Power Point/PDF's to Google are:**

**Feed Me With Some Good Coax – W5YI Group** and **All Coaxial Cables Are Not Created Equal -- VE3EJ**

Lastly, some guidelines for coaxial use and deployment:

- 1 --Before you deploy your new coax into your antenna system, measure VSWR in a matched load condx in the frequency range it will be used, also measure the loss. Keep a record.**
- 2 --Install high quality connectors properly, whether solder-on or the new, popular crimp style. Your antenna system is a series electrical circuit, so any single failure is a system level failure.**
- 3 --When deploying, watch the bend radius and crush performance, if taking it thru a window or car door, etc.**
- 4 --Choke the coax at critical points to avoid common mode, antenna current problems and to help with lessening local received noise pick-up.**
- 5 --Use a minimum of RG-214 for 1.5 KW work. Choose coax with less than 1 dB of total system transmit attenuation for the length/frequency you require.**

**Next time.... Small "Mag" Loops      Enjoy your hobby -- W5RH**

*The purpose of **The Radio Hotel** is to give you a practical kick start into exploring the workings of antenna systems. 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.*

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club**

November 3, 2018 9:00 AM  
Bayland Park Community Center  
6400 Bissonnet, Houston, Texas

Board Members Present:  
Mike Hardwick N5VCX (President)  
Mark Janzer K5MGJ (Vice President)

Jon Noxon KF5TFJ (Rec. Secretary)  
Mark Janzer K5MGJ (Vice President)  
Jo Keener KE7NSB (2yr @ Lg Dir)

Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2yr @ Lg Dir)  
Mike Monsour AC0TX (1yr @ Lg Dir)  
Donovan Balli KG5BDZ (Treasurer)  
(telephone)

Recorded by Jon Noxon, KF5TFJ Recording Secretary

1) Call to Order: The President called the meeting to order at 9:13 AM.

2) Emergency Business: None

3) Establishment of Quorum: A business quorum was established.

4) Approval of Agenda: A motion made and seconded to approve the agenda.

5. Club President's Opening Statement: The President thanked those present for attending the meeting.

6. Approval of Minutes from Previous BOD Meeting: The Board approved the minutes for the October 2018 BoD meeting.

7. Approval of Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was approved.

8. Old Business:

- General Membership Meetings scheduled as follows, with topics not listed to be determined:  
November 8, 2018 Chili Supper, Elections and Station in a Box raffle (Rick Hiller)  
December 13, 2018 Home Brew Night (host Jon Noxon KF5TFJ)  
January TBD 2019 BVARC Awards Banquet  
February 14, 2019 DXpedition  
March 14, 2019 (open)  
April 11, 2019 (Arduino 101- Noxon)

Status of raffle ticket sales (Station in a box) discussed. Donovan proposed a discussion of lessons learned from this activity.

Cost savings measures: Board is still investigating this issue. Query with Schlumberger is still open. Janzer's potential source for storage facility determined to not be doable. To be continued as standard agenda item.

MSWE activities discussed, including the need to get going on Stewart radio room upgrades and repairs. Pearl Harbor day event discussed, which is around the weekend of December 8, and a new operating event for the club.

Added item: Raffle status ticket sellers holding on to money until turned over to treasurer.

BVARC participated in the South Texas Hamfest. Janzer, Medbury and Noxon attended and sold 55 tickets.

9. New Business:

- Need to establish arrangements for Annual Award Banquet (Coordinator, Speaker, Date, Time, Location). The event will probably be on January 11 or 18, 2019.
- Balli again stated he will not continue as Treasurer next year, so it is urgent to elect a replacement!
- General discussion on new future club activities beyond the well-established ones (Field Day, Chili and Elections, Ice Cream Social, Hamfest and so on). Suggestions included New Hams, Winter Field Day, Club picnic, Ham Radio Night at at Skeeters game, and others. Janzer offered the use of his beach house for the QRP FYBO event in February.
- Topics for club meetings discussed. (suggestions included Slow-Scan TV, Satellite operations)
- Need for club video projector discussed. Noxon will research and report at next BoD meeting.
- VE testing to continue upon availability of a replacement VE Coordinator.
- Insurance policy has been renewed.
- Need to reserve room for 2019 BoD meetings. Note: this has been done.
- Donations (\$250 or more); Lending Library including solder stations

10. Next BOD meeting date: December 1 NOTE: date changed from December 8, for which a room was not available.

Future BoD dates: (all 2019) Jan 1, Feb 9, Mar 9, Apr 6, May 4, Jun 8, July 6, Aug 3, Sep 7, Oct 5, Nov 9, Dec 7 is Possible conflict with Pear Harbor Event

11. Comments:

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:31

## Classified Ads:

Editor's Note: We have always had an informal policy of including amateur radio equipment classified ads from BVARC Members. I will formalize the details and publish them probably in the January issue. In the meantime, here is some equipment available from Tom, W5TOM.

### Radio Gear For Sale

I am selling some items that I am not using or has been kept as spare backup equipment. Items marked "See Website" can be seen on my website, w5tom.com. If you have an interest in anything listed here contact me and I will give details and negotiate a price. I will answer any questions by phone, 281-352-4818, or email, [tom@w5tom.com](mailto:tom@w5tom.com).

Elecraft KX3 radio. This radio has all the extras and some extra extras. It has the latest firmware. I built it and after it was sent to the factory for checkout and alignment. See Website.

Yaesu Ft-857D with Collins CW and SSB filters. It includes the separation kit, and all original packaging. This radio is brand new, never used! I installed the filters and tested the radio, it was then put away.

SGC 230 antenna tuner/coupler. Brand new, never used. It was purchased as a spare, tested and put away. See Website and You Tube vid "W5TOM Stealth Antennas" for applications.

LDG Z11ProII auto tuner. Lightly used and in mint condition. See You Tube vid "W5TOM Field and Emergency Antennas for applications.

RM Italy HLA 150 amplifier. 5-10 Watts in and 100 out. Works great with the KX3. Has extras and is in mint condition. The MFJ tuner pictured with the amp is also for sale. See Website menu item "0".

Assorted keyer paddles and key also for sale.

There are no prices listed. This equipment is first class and in mint condition, therefore would not have a low(investment) price. I am doing this to make sure there is not a club member out there that was about to buy an item that I have. I could then offer him a substantial saving and assistance with it. If I receive no response, the items will go on eBay.

This listing is done as a courtesy to the club members.

Tom



## BVARC Monday Night Public Service Net Updates

Don't forget the BVARC Monday Night Net starts at **8 pm** on 146.94 (167.9). The order of check-ins starts 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 Rick, w5rh, if you are interested. Here are recent check-ins with control-ops:

8/13 - 18 - Bill, kg5fqx	9/17 - 11 - Dave, k5ekw	10/22 - 18 - Clint, kf5ndf
8/20 - 17 - Dave, k5ekw	9/24 - 17 - Clint, kf5ndf	10/29 - 18 - Dave, k5ekw
8/27 - 18 - Clint, kf5ndf	10/1 - 19 - Dave, k5ekw	11/5 - 16 - Dave, k5ekw
9/3 - 13 - Dave, k5ekw	10/8 - 23 - Bill, kg5fqx	11/12 - 18 - Bill, kg5fqx
9/10 - 26 - Bill, kg5fqx	10/15 - 14 - Dave, k5ekw	11/19 - 7 - Dave, k5ekw

### BVARC QUICK STATS

Date	Members	Newsletters	Life Members
10/25/18	183	177	69

# 73eeeeeezzz

73, the time-honored end to every QSO. It has been maligned, corrupted and talked about down through the years of Ham History. Whether one prefers 73 or whatever variation on the theme, it's the feeling that counts.

Some operators have expanded on the word, if you can call it that. It is a number that seems to have evolved to a phrase but is not yet a complete sentence. Like Best 73 or Very 73, to emphasize that we **REALLY** mean it. Is that a level of sincerity greater than 73? The last time someone was that sincere, I was checking to be sure I still had my wallet.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, people were a lot more graceful and courteous. 73 was a sincere expression of thanks for a good conversation. We are not that formal anymore and it seems that just plain old 73 is no longer enough.

Lately, I've been experimenting with 73 in hopes of conveying a more accurate expression of sincerity. After all, if 73 means "best regards" then should 73s mean "best best regards regards" or "best regards best regards" or even "best regardses?" Is that even a word? How many times do you repeat best regards when you mean 73s? Perhaps 73s should mean more plurals than two. The degree of your sincerity is hard to express this way.

1	* Wait a minute.	25	Busy on another wire.
2	Very Important.	26	* Put on ground wire.
3	* What time is it?	27	* Priority, very important.
4	Where shall I go ahead?	28	* Do you get my writing?.
5	Anything? (Have you business for me?)	29	* Private, deliver in sealed envelope.
6	* I am ready.	30	* No more - the end.
7	* Are you ready?	31	Form 31 train order.
8	Close your key, stop breaking.	32	* I understand that I am to ....
9	* Priority business. Wire Chief's call.	33	Answer is paid.
10	* Keep this circuit closed.	34	* Message for all officers.
12	* Do you understand?	35	* You may use my signal to answer this.
13	Understand?	37	* Inform all interested.
14	* What is the weather?	39	* Important, with priority on through wire.
15	* For you and others to copy.	44	* Answer promptly by wire.
17	* Lightning here.	55	Important.
18	What's the trouble?	73	Best Regards.
19	Form 19 train order.	77	* I have a message for you.
21	* Stop for meal.	88	* Love and kisses.
22	Wire test.	91	* Superintendent's signal.
23	* All stations copy.	92	Deliver Promptly.
24	* Repeat this back.	134	* Who is at the key?

Amateurs didn't invent 73. We borrowed it, along with other convenient numbers for use in passing messages. Thank Walter Phillips, a journalist and telegraph operator for the Associated Press.

Expert telegraph operators often used numbers to save time and cost when sending long messages. The most well-known of these was the **92 Code** adopted by [Western Union](#) in 1859.

In 1879 Phillips included these and a host of other word shorthand, including the now famous POTUS and SCOTUS as part of his Phillips Telegraphic Code. Included were various codes for handy phrases like; 73, "best regards" 30, "good night" and 22 for "love and kisses."

By 1905, the Navy adopted many of these codes and along the way, promoted "love and kisses" from 22 to 88. Nobody knows exactly when or why this happened. Perhaps sailors placed more importance on romance. 73 and 88 remained the most used number codes and eventually they made the leap from CW to radiotelephone vernacular.

Now a part of Hamspeak, we use 73 to end a contact, send good feelings and confound those who are unlicensed. Hams have all sorts of ways to use 73 at the end of a QSO; 73s or Best 73s being the most often heard on the air.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not a stickler for ham grammar or any other grammar. I'm from New York where English is merely a subject taught in school. Understanding "Street English" requires total immersion for a period.

I understand 73 but the plural form, 73s is confusing. Do you mean 73 73? Or 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73 73? Just how many times is 73 repeated in 73s?

If I spell 73's with an apostrophe, it becomes the possessive form of a word, like "My best regards". Perhaps that is better in meaning but 73s and 73's sound the same on sideband and the nuance is lost. And what CW operator will use an apostrophe anyway?

About now, I can hear my third-grade teacher, Mrs. Goldblatt screaming at me from the beyond. "I can talk until I'm blue in the face and I can't seem to get through to you. 73 is a number and can't be conjugated!" Mrs. Goldblatt was a professional level screamer and when she got wound up, she really could get blue in the face.

After a polite but uninteresting contact I tried using half of 73. I might end it with just "7" or "7's" or even "3". Polite but not over the top. Too often though, the operator on the other end missed the point entirely and saw it as just QSB. "You faded away, there OM but thanks for a great contact and best 73's."

As an engineer, I tried using 73 with more mathematical precision to more accurately convey the level of my feelings. After a not very interesting contact, instead of "7", I will say 36.5, meaning polite but half-hearted sincerity. After a good QSO, 146. This allows the use of the full range of numerical values. It just depends on how I feel.

These days, I am working on a more rigorous approach. I developed what I call the Sincerity Index (S) to guide me in my use of 73. I added it as a custom field to my logbook to track the Sincerity Index for every contact. Where S = any positive number. So, a better way to express the feeling in your 73 is to say 73(S) where S = the Sincerity Index for this QSO; the number of times you want to repeat Best Regards. That way people can see how you really feel. If you say 73, that is mildly sincere. 73(10); that is super sincere.

If  $S < 0$ , it might look like an insult to some, so I limited the Sincerity Index only to positive numbers. After all, it is a hobby. On the other hand, if you set the value of S too high, like  $S=100$ , people will think you are making fun of them and they'll be insulted anyway.

The great comedian Don Rickles said, "There is a delicate balance between sincerity and ridicule." He should know.

So, have fun with it and 73eeeeeezzz!

Reporting from the Dark Side,  
Ron, K5HM

## BVARC Rag Chew Net

Below is the BVARC Rag Chew Net check-in information:

10/25/18, W5TKZ (NCS), K5JPP, KF5TFJ, WB4KTF (Austin), W5RH, W1BG (Katy), W5VOM, WA5ANF (T), W5TOM, K5LKJ/5 (Conroe), KG5WPE. (15 Check-Ins) / Band Rpt: Fair / Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 68, SN = 0, A = 4, K = 1

11/07/18, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TOM, K5JPP, K5IZO, W5RH, K5LJ, W5TKZ, KC5JAR (Katy), KF5TFJ, W5VOM, KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club) (Angleton), K2MPP. (12 Check-Ins) / Band Rpt: Good / Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 68, SN = 0, A = 10, K = 1

11/14/18, K5LKJ (NCS), K5JPP, WB4KTF (Austin), K5IZO (Jasper), K5LJ, W5TKZ, KG5YYQ, W5VOM, K2MPP, KG5WPE, AA5OA/5 (Needville), W5RH, WA5ANF. (13 Check-Ins) / Band Rpt: Fair / Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 68, SN = 11, A = 4, K = 1

11/21/18, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TOM, K5LJ, K5IZO, K2MPP, AA5OA/5 (Needville), W5VOM, AF5OXF (Needville). (8 Check-Ins) / Band Rpt: Fair, Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 70, SN = 0, A = 6, K = 0

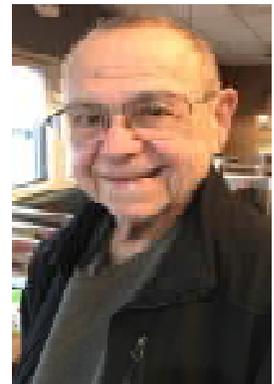
(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (RCS) = remote controlled station (T) = telephone check-in

Net conditions have been fair to good this month. Improve your knowledge. Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening. Regards. John K5LKJ



## “Station in a Box” Raffle – Winner Walter Bazarsky – W5KFL

Not a Power Ball win, but the Station in a Box raffle was definitely a win for a lucky Ham. That lucky Ham was club member Walter Bazarsky – W5KFL. Walter is now the proud owner of an Icom 756 Pro 3, power supply, LDG antenna tuner, 40 Meter Dipole kit, Heil Elite Headset and a J-38 replica straight key. Also, for handling the VHF FM repeater spectrum there was a new Kenwood 2 Meter mobile transceiver included in the stash.



The raffle HF gear was purchased by the club from the SK estate of Bill McNally, K5YDO (ex. G13YDO). Jay Fleming, KF5DCJ, donated the Kenwood 2 Meter mobile transceiver to the raffle equipment list.

Submitted by Rick Hiller, W5RH



## Hamfests

(typically within 200 miles of Houston)

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

### 01/12/2019 | San Antonio Radio Fiesta 2019

**Location:** Schertz, TX  
**Type:** ARRL Hamfest  
**Sponsor:** San Antonio Radio Club  
**Website:** <http://w5sc.org>

X  
X

### 03/22/2019 | Texas State Convention (Greater Houston Hamfest)

**Location:** Rosenberg, TX  
**Type:** ARRL Convention  
**Sponsor:** Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club  
**Website:** <http://houstonhamfest.org>

# BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

This newsletter, the **BVARC BEACON**, 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](http://www.bvarc.org). Detailed information will be published in the BEACON every 3 or 4 months. Similarly, the "Eating Schedule" will be published every 3 or 4 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Sugar Land Masonic Lodge, 421 Eldridge Rd, Sugar Land, 77478. Check the above website for any possible changes.

**BVARC** amateur radio testing is being reorganized. Check upcoming newsletters or the BVARC website for developments.

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](http://www.bvarc.org)

Other contacts include:

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NOTE: Officers, advertising and eating schedule are on the website. They will only be published in the Newsletter every few months.

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VOLUME 42, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2018

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

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

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**December 13 – General Membership Meeting – Homebrew Night**



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