

THE B-VARC BULLETIN

Volume 22, issue 2
February 1999

<p>Houston Ham Help Line 24-Hours 281-495-3495</p> <p>Get information about local clubs and testing sessions.</p>	<p>Membership renewal information:</p> <p>Members whose membership has expired or is near expiration will find their membership date highlighted on the mailing label.</p>	 <p>http://www.hal-pc.org/~bvarc</p>
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ARRL Membership - Members are urged to renew their ARRL membership through BVARC, allowing the club to take advantage of reduced insurance rates. Contact Gene, N5XGT, at 281-438-1811 for information

<p>What's in this issue?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Notes from the Prez – P. 2 ➤ Meeting Schedule – P. 2 ➤ Houston Shot News - P. 3 ➤ BVARC Rag Chew Net - P. 3 ➤ VE Exam Results - P. 4 ➤ Scanner Jack's Corner - P. 4 ➤ Monday Night PSN Check-ins - P. 5 ➤ Humor - P. 5 ➤ Field Day Participation - P. 6 ➤ 1999 Public Service Events - P. 7 ➤ This Month's Snaps - P. 8 ➤ Ads - P. 9 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hot Dawg</i></p> <p><i>Hot Dogs and Drinks for Members - FREE</i> <i>Come one, come all to the BVARC monthly meeting and join us for Hot Dogs and Soft Drinks. Starting with the June meeting you can visit with your friends and enjoy a hot dog and drink on the club. Serving starts at 6:30pm and goes until 7:30pm. There is no charge for club members. We will have mustard, catsup, onions and pickle relish as dressings for your dogs. Drinks will include Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite and Diet Sprite.</i></p>
<p>A Special Thanks to the First Colony Church of Christ for the use of their facilities which make this newsletter possible.</p> <p>Also, Thanks to Claude Sessions, K5HFY, for being in charge of production.</p>	<p>Board of Directors: John Moore, President - KK5NU, jwm@hal-pc.org Larry Jacobson, Vice-President - K5LJ, k5lj@nstci.com Doug Woodruff, Recording Secretary - KC5VYZ, dwoodruff@houston.geoquest.slb.com Irv Smith, Corresponding Secretary - KK5QQ, kk5qq@aol.com Gene Russell, Treasurer - N5XGT, hbrussell@aol.com Robert Moore, 3-Year-Director - KK5UO, kk5uo@hal-pc.org Darrell Kirk, Two-Year-Director - KC5JAR, darrellk@swbell.net Bruce Paige, Past President - KK5DO, kk5do@amsat.org Claude Sessions, 1-Year-Director - K5HFY, claudes@juno.com</p>

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Notes from the President - February 1999

As you all well know, there's a whole bunch of people and activities behind the scenes of BVARC. The meaning and true spirit of the organization is reflected by the actions of it's members. Just a few of which, I'd like to mention here for you:

Harold Parker, ND5F and all the VE Team members --

The Monday and Wednesday night nets --

The Public Service events and participants --

Just a few of the tireless workers on behalf of B-VARC --

Bud King, K5CEK - Claude Sessions, K5HFY - Rick Hiller, W5RH -

Darrell Kirk, KC5JAR and of course our Newsletter Editor Cameron Mitchell, AC5QZ

We all are indebted to MERA for the use of their W5RPT 145.470/444.550 Repeater facilities.

With this New Year, comes the inevitable changes -- so ready or not look out for the following:

No more FCC Form 610, it's shortly history - Look for the new Form 405 to be used as the catchall application form for all radio license services. Check out the Online License Renewal via electronic Form 900, alive and on-line now in real time.

We all should be aware of the proposed changes in License Classification, Structure and Privileges - like it or not, it is going to happen. And regardless of what happens, not everyone is going to like the outcome. Personally, I fail to see the 'Morse Code' requirement being abolished at any time in the near foreseeable future. It's a matter of International Radio Regulations that just isn't going to change radically. If you don't have the basic 5 WPM Morse Code endorsement, get it now while the playing field hasn't changed on you.

One of my primary concern for this next year is keeping and retaining all of our "old members" while devising some manner of attracting the newcomers to our hobby. Any and all feedback and suggestions will be welcomed.

I've got a few little club project on the agenda. Here's a short list for you to view:

A 2m/70cm J-Pole Antenna

A 2m Automated Code Practice Beacon

Novice/Technician Theory Classes -

As usual, in almost all organizations 5% of the members do 95% of the work --

"Ask not what B-VARC can do for you; but what you can do for B-VARC"

I would like to challenge each of you to:

- 1) Continue to continue your participation in club activities (Field Day - Ice Cream Social - Chili Supper/Elections - Homebrew Contest - Saturday Breakfasts - Third Friday Dinners);
- 2.) Consider upgrading your class of license by one grade;
- 3.) Find someone new to get interested in our hobby -

Let's look forward to a successful year in 1999 as we move on into the next century.

Yesterday is history, today is already over and tomorrow is here all too quickly.

And -- let's not overlook the Sun Spots -- their numbers are going up.

73 de John Moore, KK5NU

Schedule of BVARC Activities

March 1999

- 4 - General Meeting
Mike Hardwick N5VCX discussing public service events.
- 9 - VE Test
- 11 - BOD Meeting

April 1999

- 1 - General Meeting
- 8 - BOD Meeting
- 13 - VE Test

(see the December 1998 issue for a long-term schedule.)

Other Dates:

BVARC Public Service Events

March 21, 1999 Bluebonnet Metric Century bike ride
Hempstead, Texas

Contact Mike Hardwick n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

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April 17-18, 1999 MS-150 bike ride Houston to Austin.
Contact Mike Hardwick n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

Contests:

June 20 - 21, All Asia DX CW

June 27 - 28, ARRL Field Day

HOUSTON SHOT NEWS for February, 1999

by Al Mattis - N5AFV

Ten Ten International has announced that the 1999 Ten Ten International Convention will be held June 10-13, 1999 at the Garden Plaza Hotel in Oak Ridge, TN. The Springbok Chapter (ZS) is hosting the convention, and James Whittlesey, KC4RHW, is the convention chairman. Advance registration for the convention began on January 1, 1999. For information about convention registration contact Tom Henderson, K4CIH, at k4cih@earthlink.net.

The Houston SHOT chapter is pleased to welcome DH9KR and N6QPF as its newest out-of-town members. The chapter currently has 385 local members, and 1337 non-local members, for a total membership of 1722.

Visit the Houston SHOT chapter home page at <http://www.clarc.org/shot/>. The site contains information about the chapter, past editions of the Houston SHOT News, and the Ten Ten DX column written Mike Davidson - N5MT, the SHOT chapter head. The chapter thanks Bruce Paige - KK5DO, for constructing and maintaining the page, and the Clear Lake Amateur Radio Club (CLARC) for providing server space for the page.

Many of the chapters of Ten Ten International have home pages on the Internet. Links to these pages may be found on the Ten Ten International page. The Houston SHOT page contains a link to the Ten Ten International page.

Paper chasers continue to be active on 28.345 MHz, 28.425 MHz and 28.825 MHz. The Branding Iron (TX), Flying Tigers (RI), Fort McHenry (MD), Kansas Trails (MN), Restoration Project (VE), GB Ten (G), Twin Cities (MN), Route 66 (IN) and Electric City (FL) chapters are conducting specials for paper chasers to promote activity on the band. The newest and probably most active certificate program is the Trail Drivers, offered by the Branding Iron (TX) chapter. The Chesapeake Bay (MD) chapter has announced that Cindy Hamm, N3TF, is the new certificate manager for the chapter. The Restoration Project (VE) chapter has announced that the chapter will no longer issue certificates. New members of the chapter will receive a number only for use in participating in

the chapter awards program. Eva Donaldson, WB0CON, certificate manager of Colorado Frontier (CO) chapter asks chapter members to hold upgrade applications for several weeks while she is on vacation.

Sad news was received that Hal Carter, KA1VFN, certificate manager of the Sam Clemens (CT) and King Arthur's Court (CT) chapters has become a silent key. Well known paper chaser Gayle Fawcett, KC4TAR, of Okeechobee, FL has also become a silent key. We extend our sincere condolences to the families and friends of these members.

Propagation on ten meters continues to be very good. DX contacts were generally not as good in January as in December, but many DX stations are easily worked on the band. Contacts with Europe, Africa, Latin America, Asia and the South Pacific continue to take place on ten meters. Operating mobile with 25 watts, I have been able to make contacts almost every day.

Remember, the Houston SHOT (Space Houston On Ten) net meets every Tuesday evening at 8 PM local time on 28.488 MHz. All amateurs are welcome to check in, even if they do not have a Ten Ten number. If you are not a member of Ten Ten International and wish to join the organization, please check in to the net. There are many exciting activities in Ten Ten, and many friendly people can be found on the ten-meter band.

B-VARC RAG CHEW Net Check-Ins for January by Sam Wilson, N5CPA

3.960MHz +/-3KHz Wednesdays at 8:00PM

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

1/06/99---N5CPA, K5CEK, KM5ID, KK5VE, KM5DG, K5VRJ, AB5BA, W5EFB, W5RIY, KM5TO, W5TEM. (11)

1/13/99---N5CPA, K5VRJ, AB5BA, N5OAC, KM5TO, WB5VYR, K5CEK, W5RH, W5GHK. (9)

1/20/99---N5CPA, W5GHK, KK5VE, K5VRJ, AB5BA, WB5VYR, KM5ID, KM5TO, K5HFY, WA5OEN, K5CEK, WA9YNJ, K5LJ. (13)

1/27/99---N5CPA, K5CEK, K5HFY, W5GHK, W5EFB, N5VXU, KK5VE, W5TEM, K5VRJ,

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AB5BA, KM5TO. (11)

Jack Roberts, KB5TMY
14208 Laterna Ln
Houston 77083-5730

RESULTS OF THE FEBRUARY 9TH AMATEUR EXAMS

by: **Harold Parker, ND5F**

B-VARC again sponsored and administered the ARRL's Amateur Radio Examinations that were held on Tuesday evening, February 9, 1999 at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston.

V. E. TEAM:

Louis House, KD5GM
John Moore, KK5NU
Harold Parker, ND5F

ASSISTANTS:

Carl Albrecht, AA5JW
Cass Germany, KG5IT
Don Schexnaider, AB5IV

A total of 7 exams were administered during the evening to 4 applicants. One (1) unlicensed candidates received the new Technician license. A total of three elements were passed during the evening.

The overall "pass rate" for the evening was 43%

Congratulations to all the following who upgraded and/or passed exams:

David Simmons - Technician
James Sitton - Element 2

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 Vincent, WA5ETS, and everyone at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory for making these excellent classroom facilities available to us for our exams each month.

..... 73

SCANNER JACK'S Corner by **Jack Roberts, KB5TMY**

Jack Roberts, KB5TMY
14208 Laterna Ln
Houston 77083-5730

Harris County Combines with Clodine Trunking System

	Here are the freqs	TAC 1
	866.0125	
	868.975 860.7125	TAC 2
	866.5125	
	868.950 860.4875	TAC 3
	867.0125	
New	868.850	
	868.7625 860.4625	TAC 4
	867.5125	
	868.4875 860.2375	TAC 5
	868.0125	
	868.2375 860.2125	
	868.0875 859.7125	
	868.0375 859.4875	
	867.9875 859.4625	
	867.9625 859.2375	
	867.9375 859.2125	
	867.9125 858.7125	
New	867.6500 858.4875	
	867.6650 858.4625	
	867.5875 858.2375	
New	867.5500 858.2125	
	867.5375 857.7125	
New	867.0750 857.4875	
	867.0625 857.4625	
New	866.8500	
New	866.5750 857.2375	
	866.4675 857.2125	
	866.4625 856.7125	
New	866.0875 856.4875	
	866.0375 856.4625	
New	866.075 856.2375	
	856.2125	

The agencies who use this trunking system:

HCSO
ALIEF VFD
CYFAIR VFD
ALL CONSTABLES
KATY PD
KATY ISP
SOME HPD UNITS
SOME TEXAS RANGERS
SOME DEA
ALL HARRIS COUNTY PCTS.
SOME FT BEND COUNTY
WESTLAKE VFD

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Monday night PSN check-ins (KK5DO net control)

1/11/99 - 24
1/25/99 - 22
2/1/99 - 25
2/8/99 - 25
2/15/99 - 19
2/22/99 - 19

A Tale of A Snake's Tail By Paul Flowers

[This delightful tongue-in-cheek story appeared in the Illinois Central Magazine for February, 1944. It was reprinted in Dots & Dashes (publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.) Vol. 15, No. 1 Jan-Feb-March 1987, by permission of Ms. Virginia Anzelmo, of the Illinois Central Gulf News.]

Here is the tale of a rattlesnake that mastered the Morse code, back when telegraphy and pounding brass was a fine and noble profession. It was soon after I first went to work for the road with which I am still employed, the Illinois Central, than which there is none finer.

I was sent to Way, Miss. as night operator. The name was about all there was to the station, except a water tank and day and night telegraph operators. Way is back in the Big Black River bottoms, where the nights get the blackest, the bull frogs croak the coarsest and the hoot owls hoot the loneliest of any spot in creation. It is only about 4 miles from Vaughan, where Casey Jones' song and fable pulled his last throttle some 40 years ago. My duties at Way consisted of reporting trains promptly and staying awake or vice-versa, and sometimes I dozed and as a consequence could not truthfully report that a string had gone by. When I failed to get enough rest during the day and was unusually sleepy when I came to work, I would find out when the next train was due to pass and then go out and pour a handful of cinders on the rails. If the passing train did not awaken me, when I did come to I could go out and see if the cinders were swept off, and if so, I knew the train had gone. This system had its disadvantages in bad weather.

I tried another old one, that of tying one end of a string to the coal scuttle in the office, stretching it across the track and tying the other to a stick. When the train came along, it hit the string and rattled the coal hod. This was not entirely satisfactory either, because a wandering mule or cow was liable to come along before the train. But fortune brought a happy solution to my problem. One night as I sat reading a detective magazine and had just reached the point where the villain was about to push the heroine over the cliff, I happened to glance toward the door and was amazed to see a good-sized rattlesnake crawling in the door.

As it lay there on the floor, I noticed a marked resemblance to our porter, Leander, who was long and svelte too. Well, I sat there, paralyzed with fright while the snake coiled, moved his head from side to side like the pendulum on a grandfather clock, his beady, unblinking eyes taking in everything in the office. I had used all my

snake medicine the night before, so I was just where Moses was.

All at once a complete calm came over me. I rose, strode boldly to where the snake was and poured some milk out of my lunch box kit into a fruit jar lid, and set it where the rattler could see it. He took the hint and lapped it up greedily. After he had finished the milk, we eyed each other for a moment, and seemed to reach a complete understanding.

I had a practice telegraph set in the back of my office, and I went over and began tapping out slowly the alphabet in Morse code. Leander, as I called my visitor, crawled onto the table and was all attention—finest and most apt student I ever had. Soon as I would make a letter I'd pause, and he'd raise his tail and try to imitate the dots and dashes and spaces with his rattles. In an unusually short time he knew the entire alphabet. He had a little trouble with the letter "P" which consists of five dots. He seemed to lose control of his tail muscles on that one, and I thought he'd never quit making dots. But finally he mastered the "P" and his Morse was a joy to listen to. We spent many otherwise lonely hours, I with brass key and sounder, tobacco can and all, and Leander with his natural sounder. He told me he was one of twenty children, but that his brothers and sisters had been drowned in a flood. Leander was a handy creature around the office; he could grab up a broom with his tail, hump his back, put his nose to the floor and do as good a sweeping job as you ever saw.

But the biggest lift he gave was in helping me report trains. As you know, a snake's tongue when extended from his mouth is sort of like a radio antenna. Leander would crawl on the telegraph table in the depot's bay window (still there), stick his head out, poke his tongue out some more and get the vibration of a train 35 miles away. Then he would come over to the table where I was sleeping, touch my face tenderly with that sensitive tongue of his and I knew it was time to rouse up and exchange signals with the train crew and report their passing.

All good things come to an end. I got word that I was to be transferred, so one evening, as Leander and I were having our little chat in Morse, broke the news to him gently as I knew how. I told him how much I had enjoyed knowing him and how much he had done to keep me from being lonely, in his cordial, ophidian way and I invited him to go with me to my next station.

But Leander, after thinking it over for a while, tapped out "No" and explained that Big Black River bottoms were his home, where all his folks had lived since the Ice Age, and he was considerable of a homebody, and didn't think he'd get adjusted to unfamiliar scenes. He thanked me for teaching him Morse, and we had a parting of the Way.

As he slithered out he paused, looked back, transfixed me with those soulful and unblinking eyes and tapped out "73," which is the telegrapher's traditional symbol for good-by. I felt no shame as I stood there alone, with the shades of night falling fast, as tears trickled down my cheeks and Leander disappeared. He was a pal. QSY to Telegraph Tales

QSY to the Telegraph Lore Home Page

(Contributed by Claude, K5HFY)

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The annual ARRL Field Day is just around the corner
only 20 weeks, or three more meetings away:

Saturday June 26, 1999

We need to think about it, discuss it, make some decisions, and get on with it! We need to know: What do you want? Please complete this questionnaire now, or take it home for further study:

What location/operating site? _____
last year w/CLARC in Clear Lake. Your suggestion?

Saturday night supper ideas? _____
catered meal?, pot luck + meat provided?, etc?

Sunday morning breakfast? _____

Do you know a group/person that wants to cook? _____

Volunteers and gear are needed in the following areas. Please check where appropriate:

Technical Foreman & assistants Night shift crew chief & sleep-overs

Contestors radios _____ / _____ / _____

antennas _____

Operators ATV _____ satellite _____ packet _____

other _____

Talk in station

Public information contact person photographer net shots

Kitchen crew & grounds clean up

Logistics set up Saturday

Logistics take down Sunday

Refreshments service : snacks & drinks server

Logistics needs you can help with:

truck or trailer for logistics _____

portable electrical power & accessories _____

tents & shelters _____

air conditioned trailers/vehicles _____

portable lighting & fans _____

water containers, ice chests & coolers _____

lawn furniture _____

camping and cook gear : tables & chairs, mosquito netting, etc. _____

Your printed name call land line fax e-mail

Remember that after you complete this questionnaire you have the right to grumble and complain! Please return to John Moore. Larry Jacobson, or Rex Ritz, or just call in to volunteer. Thank you.

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1999 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

<i>EVENT</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>HAMS NEEDED</i>
K-9 Fun Run	March 14, 1999	12
Joint Walk	March 14, 1999	10
Blue Bonnet Bike Ride	March 21, 1999	20
Tour de Cypress	April 11, 1999	20
MS150	April 17 & 18 1999	100 2 day event
Katy Flatland Bike Ride	July 25, 1999	35
Wings Over Houston Air Show	September, 1999(not set)	60 3 day event
Alamo Challenge Bike Ride	October 9 & 10, 1999	55 2 day event
20K Warm-up Run	October 17, 1999	25
MS Walk	November, 1999	14
25K Warm-up Run	November 14, 1999	27
30K Warm-up Run	December 5, 1999	29
Houston Marathon	January 16, 2000	120

Get out your schedule and sign up now for upcoming events. Most events are about a 1/2 day and can be covered with an HT (handy talkie portable) VHF 2m radio with extra batteries. The long bike rides to Austin (MS-150) and San Antonio (Alamo Challenge) require a VHF 2m with a minimum of 25 Watts FM power and a gain antenna. Bring a great attitude to help a great cause and show the public and the government agencies that the Amateur Radio Service is a true benefit to our country and fellow man and how our frequency allocations are benefiting in public service events and disasters. If you really believe this, then come to the March BVARC meeting and get informed about using your privileges as an Amateur Radio Operator in public service.

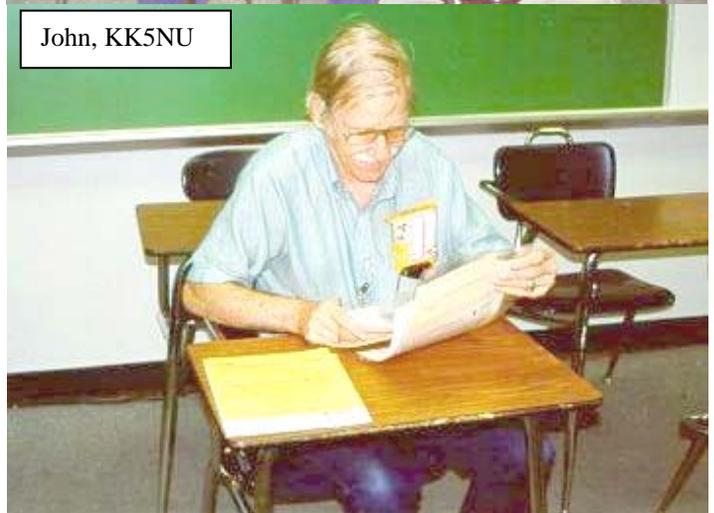
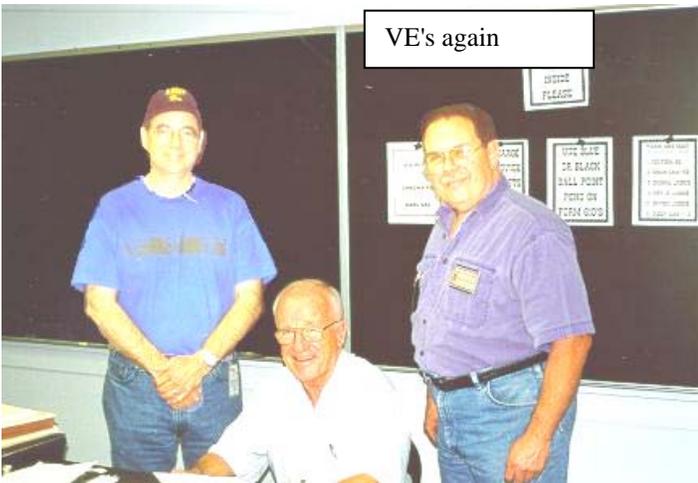
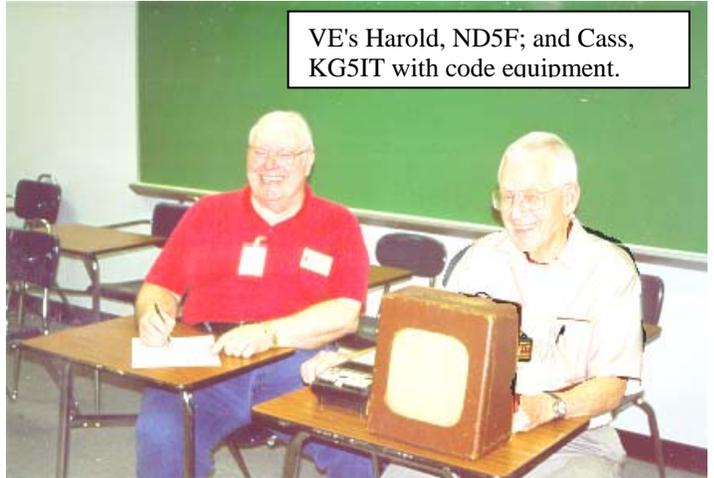
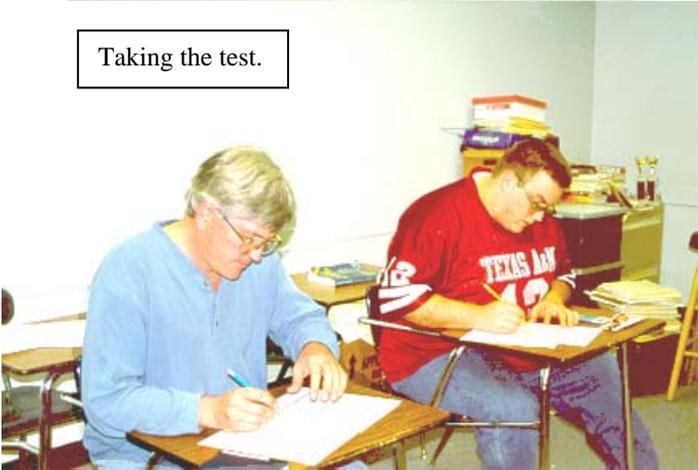
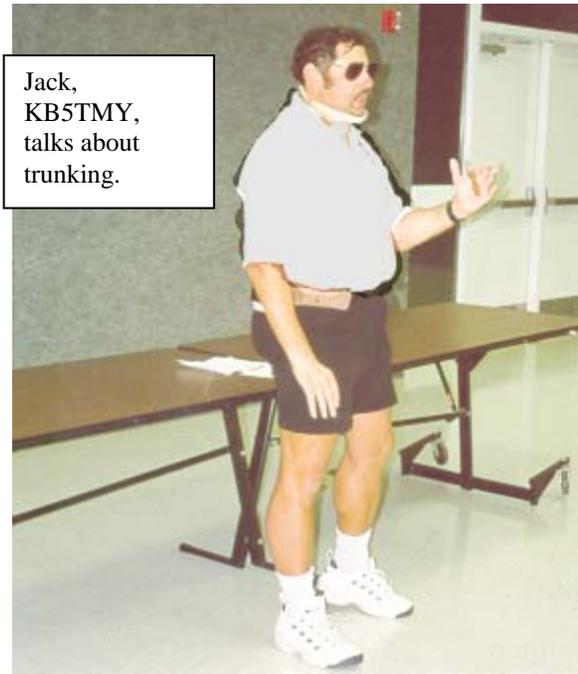
Sign up for any of the events with any of the following:

Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, home 713-771-4625 work 713-463-0022 n5vcx@worldnet.att.net

Doug Woodruff, KC5VYZ, home 281-232-8452, work 713-350-4575, kc5vyz@arrl.net

Bill Randolph, KC5KGJ, home 713-468-3771

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(Better viewed on the web page.)

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