



BVARC BEACON



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

MARCH 2018

VOLUME 42 ISSUE 3

BVARC MARCH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, March 8th, 2018 7:30pm, 421 Eldridge

The upcoming general meeting will include the "World's Biggest Buildathon" project - where participating members (or guests) will construct a solderless transmitter – as created by Rex Harper (W1REX) of Tuna Tin fame. You can get more information on the project here:

<http://qrpme.com/?p=product&id=WBB>

This version will be a slight variation – but will function exactly as described on Rex's QRPme site. Members who wish to participate should bring \$12.50 and a 9-volt battery for each kit. A needle nose pliers and a magnifying glass is strongly recommended, too.

We'll talk about the circuit and "field" test each transmitter's construction with an SW radio. If you'd like, bring a young aspiring ham with you, and they can build one too. It should take about 30 minutes to stuff the parts and start transmitting.

There are a limited number of kits available so pre-registration, to reserve a kit, is encouraged. To pre-register email K5MGJ@yahoo.com.

We'll also talk about some upcoming events, along with soliciting help we'll need for the quickly approaching Greater Houston Hamfest on March 16 & 17th.



February Meeting Report

As this issue of the BEACON goes to press, the information on this meeting is not available. Look for it next month.



Food at the Hamfest – Provided by the Texas American Legion

The Texas American Legion is providing the food for the Hamfest. Coffee and breakfast tacos will be available as soon as the doors open at 6:00AM.

A large (16 oz) coffee is \$2.00. Each hearty breakfast taco is \$2.50. Two tacos and a coffee are \$5.00 with one raffle ticket. You can served before the 8AM general opening by going to the food service window on the south side of the exhibit hall. Lunch will consist of BBQ beef sandwiches with chips and a drink for \$9.00 (The exact lunch price is being discussed, but it will not be more than \$9.00). Each lunch comes with two American Legion raffle tickets (not to be confused with the Hamfest raffle tickets). Additional raffle tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for 5.00. Raffle prizes include goodies from MFJ, Radiowavz, Hamfest Online and others.

All profits will used for the growth of the Texas American Legion Amateur Radio club and fund the ham licensing cost for veterans in need, those in the VA hospital and those at risk for PTSD.
See you at hamfest!

Bob Hawkins, KD5AT, bobhawkins1@gmail.com

The Prez Says

With less than two weeks to go for the Greater Houston Hamfest, everyone on the planning committee is working around the clock to organize another great event. There are still a ton of things that need to be done to make the March 16th and 17th Hamfest successful. If you are not aware, set-up day will be on Friday and the Hamfest will be on Saturday. We will have many activities again this year including a balloon launch.

Of course to make the event a success, we need volunteers. So if you are interested in helping out, contact me and let me know. We still need a number of people to make it a success. There will be Hamfest meetings each weekend up to the 17th. Keep checking you e-mail and the BVARC web site for the next meeting locations and times.

Also coming up is the BP MS150 Bike Ride in April 28th and 29th. Volunteers are always needed for this event. If you are interested, please check the www.bpms150hams.org web site for more information. There will be two or three information/training sessions so check the bms150hams web site or the BVARC web site. For the event we need volunteers both on the course and at the Houston Command Post. Remember, you do need a true dual band VHF/UHF radio with at least 25 watts output. A gain antenna is also needed since we are away from all the tall repeaters in Houston. If interested, please sign up on the web site to help out. Come on out and put your radio and license to a good use.

Mark Janzer, K5MGJ, is working hard for Museum Ships Weekend on the USS Stewart in Galveston. Mark said the work party went well on January 20th and he is planning to have another one in the next few weeks. Mark has worked hard on getting things ready MSWE. Interest is high again this year since we have returned to the USS Stewart to operate. If you would like to help for MSWE, let Mark know. I know we will be up and ready for the event in June. Thanks again Mark for your hard work.

Field Day is just around the corner and now is the time to start getting prepared for it. At this time, it appears that the event will be back down to a three club event with BVARC, TDXS and ECHO. I am still working on KARS so you're your fingers crossed.

Also the new location is in the plans for Field Day this year. It is still being confirmed and hopefully everything falls into place in time. The new location will have twice the operating space and 5 times the parking space. Stay tuned to the newsletter and the NETS for more information.

A great group of folks have stepped up to help this year - Scott Medbury, KD5FBA will be one of the coordinators and Bill Cordell, W5VOM, has jumped in to be the Master of Radio Energy distribution. Still left to be confirmed is Glenn Anderson, WB5TUF as the guru of digital dark side and last but not least Dave Elsner, KD7THJ and the culinary master to feed the hungry team. If you would like to help, contact Scott or Bill or myself and let them know. Don't be bashful, step up and volunteer for the great club event.

I hope to see everyone at the March meeting since I am still out west in 7 Land in Arizona. I will be back by the first of March in time for the monthly BOD and the Hamfest meeting. I definitely will see everyone at the Greater Houston Hamfest.

73,
N5VCX



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:

6/19 - 16 - Jo, ke7nsb	7/24 - 16 - Dave, k5ekw	8/28 - Harvey
6/26 - 28 - Clint, kf5ndf	7/31 - 14 - Terry, k5pgf	9/4 - 9 - Jo, ke7nsb
7/3 - 18 - Dave, k5ekw	8/7 - 20 - Dave, k5ekw	9/11 - 22 - Luke, k0ltb
7/10 - 21 - Rick, W5RH	8/14 - no net	9/18 - 14 - Jo, ke7nsb
7/17 - 7 - Jo, ke7nsb	8/21 - 10 - Jo, ke7nsb	9/26 - 10 - Clint, kf5ndf

BVARC QUICK STATS

Date	Members	Newsletters	Life Members
2/25/18	189	186	67



GREATER HOUSTON HAMFEST 2018 ARRL



SOUTH TEXAS SECTION CONVENTION

Admission : Advanced \$8.00 At the Door \$10.00
Children under 12 - Free!, Scouts in uniform - Free!
Tables \$25 each Free Electricity

Tailgate - Free!

**Balloon Launch
by
BLT Group**

**Talk-in
146.94
167.9**

Friday March 16th, 2018
Table Set-up 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Saturday March 17th, 2018

Sessions 7:00 am to 3:30 pm Sales 8:00 am to 2:00 pm Grand Prize Raffle 2:00 pm
Testing 9:00 am & 11:00 am Tailgate 6:00 am to 3:30 pm

Programs and Speakers

**ARRL Forum - Dan Henderson N1ND, ARRL Regulatory Information
Manager and Dr. David Woolweaver - West Gulf Division Director**

ARES District 14 Meeting - Jeff Walter, KE5FGA
SMD Soldering - Donovan Bali, KG5BDZ
Remote HF Operation - Jimmy Vance, W5ZTX

Balloon Program & Launch - Andy McAllister, W5ACM
Off Grid Solar for Amateur Radio - Bill Crowell, N4HPG
Public Service Participation - Mike Hardwick, N5VCX

VHF FM Society - Board of Directors Winter Meeting

GRAND PRIZE

Raffle 1st Prize

Icom IC-7300



Convention Prize

Raffle 2nd Prize

Icom IC-2730



Committee Prize

Raffle 3rd Prize

TYT MD2017



**Ham
Radio
License
Testing!**

**RV Parking
Available**

Raffle Tickets \$2.00 Each Raffle Drawing at 2:00 pm
Door Prizes \$1.00 Each Hourly drawing starts 9:00 am
Raffle tickets can only be purchased on site.

Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 Texas-36 Rosenberg, TX 77471

www.HoustonHamfest.org



RV Sites

Balloon Launch

Vendor Entrance

Vendor parking

Programs

Testing

Food

Main Entrance

Ticket booth

Tail Gate Area

Bldg C

Vendor unloading

Bldg B

Pakgrounds Rd

Hwy 36

Google

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Where in the world is . . .
The Comoros Islands (D6)
CQ 39 ITU 53
IOTA AF-007

The **Comoros**, officially the **Union of the Comoros** stands number 92 on the Club Log Most Wanted DXCC list. It is an island nation in the Indian Ocean located off the eastern coast of Africa between Mozambique and northwestern Madagascar. Other countries near the Comoros are Tanzania to the northwest and the Seychelles to the northeast. Grande Comore, the largest of the islands is home to the capitol, Moroni. The Union of the Comoros has three official languages, Comorian, Arabic and French. Take your pick.



[Sunni Islam](#) is [the dominant religion](#), representing as much as 98% of the population. [A minority](#), mostly immigrants from metropolitan France, are [Roman Catholic](#).

At 640 square miles, Comoros is the third-smallest African nation by area. With a population that numbers less than a million, the island nation is also one of the least populous countries in the world. Almost half the population is under the age of 15.

The country consists of three major islands and numerous smaller islands, all **volcanic** in origin. Since the islands are just below the equator, the climate is quite tropical

The Comoros became part of the **French colonial empire** in the 19th century before becoming independent in 1975. If you are thinking this is a great place for a dx-pedition well, maybe not.

Since declaring **independence**, the country has experienced more than 20 **coups d'état** or attempted coups, with various heads of state assassinated.

Along with this constant political instability, the population of the Comoros lives with the worst **income inequality** of any nation. As of 2008 about half the population lived below the **international poverty line** of US\$1.25 a day. The photo above shows the ramshackle housing in the capitol, Moroni.



However, there have been several successful DX-peditions to Comoros. The good news, no icy glaciers but not exactly luxury facilities. In 2016, a group of hams, well I will let them tell it in their own words. The translation is a little rough, but you will get the idea. “Everywhere on the road is dust and smog, at first glance our “dream paradise” is far away. Finally, we drive on bulky road to our house, a € 4,000 quality accommodation is unacceptable. Electricity is not working, and it seems that 100% of the time we run on the power generator. We try Internet access. Does not work either, the water flows just cold. We are all a bit in shock, gradually passing through the house, founding various faults. In the bathroom are cracked pipes to the wash-basin, on the corridor lights are broken and the worst thing is our new “friends” in the kitchen – rats. We unpacks luggage and install TCVR. In the big living room, we prepare CW and RTTY workplace and in the kitchen with rats SSB workplace.”



The DX-pedition was successful, amassing over 46,000 QSO’s so long as you are willing to ignore a few minor problems.

Reporting from the Dark Side, K5HM

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

February 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)
Keith Stolle KE5ITH (Cor. Secretary)
Donovan Balli KG5BDZ (Treasurer)
Scott Royall W5RUA (1yr @ Lg Dir)

Jo Keener KE7NSB (2yr @ Lg Dir)
Scott Medbury KD5FBA (2yr @ Lg Dir)

Non-voting attendees:

Mike Monsour AC0TX
Pete Sauermilch KD5QPX
John Chauvin K5IZO
“Lela” (Scott R’s Service Dog).

A business quorum was established.

Recorded by Jon Noxon, KF5TFJ Recording Secretary

- 1) Call to Order: The President called the meeting to order at 9:14 AM.
- 2) Establishment of Quorum: A business quorum was established. All members of the BoD present.
- 3) Approval of Agenda: A motion made and seconded to approve the agenda.
- 4) Club President’s Opening Statement: The President thanked those present for attending the meeting. Discussion regarding moving the BOD meeting location discussed; the present location will be continued to be used. GHHF meeting will follow the BOD meeting
- 5) Emergency Business: None
- 6) Approval of Minutes from Previous BOD Meeting: The Board approved the minutes for the November BoD meeting with the following change: Item 9a from the January 6 BOD Meeting Minutes shall be revised to state the Museum Ships contact shall remain two plus one; one contact covers both Stewart and Cavalla, and a second contact is required for the Selma.
- 7) Approval of Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer’s Report was approved.
- 8) Old Business:
 - 8a. General Membership Meetings scheduled as follows, with topics not listed to be determined:
 - March 8, 2018 “Solderless Transmitter” and/or public service activity
 - April 12, 2018 “ARES” “RACES” and/or public service activity
 - May 10, 2018 TBD
 - 8b. Mark Janzer discussed contact made regarding donations to the Undersea Warfare Center in support of Museum Ships activities. Donation of A/C and needed electrical rework in the Cavalla radio room discussed. Possible additional workday is to be scheduled in March. Status of any actions resulting from August BOD meeting regarding Emergency Business (people locked in sub) still open item.
 - 8c. Planning for 2018 Museum Ship’s Weekend discussed. 100W LDG remote tuner has been purchase.
 - 9b. Planning for 2018 ARRL Field Day discussed. Scott Medbury to chair FD again. Duhacsek Park discussed as possible location as alternate to the fire station. After discussions among the BOD, Duhacsek Park selected as the location for Field Day.
- 9) New Business:

Scott Medbury is working on a Amateur Radio Night at Constellation Field during an upcoming Skeeters home game.
- 10) Next BOD meeting date: February 3
Future BoD dates: March 3, April 7, May 5, June 9, July 7, August 4, September 8, October 6, November 3, December 1* NOTE: date changed from December 8, which was not available.
- 11) Comments: Nothing of substance
- 12) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 AM.



BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

01/24/18, K5LKJ (NCS), K5JPP, KD5O, W5TKZ, W5TOM, W5VOM, KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton), K5LJ, KF5TFJ, KC5JAR (Katy), AF5XL. (11 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 69, SN = 0, A = 7, K = 1

01/31/18, K5LKJ (NCS), K5JPP, K5LJ, W5VOM, K5IZO, W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, AF5XL, KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton). (9 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 69, SN = 15, A = 5, K = 2

02/07/18, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, K5LJ, WW5PA, W5VOM, W1BG (Katy), KJ5Y (RCS)(W5FMH/club)(Angleton), WA5PSV (Seguin). (10 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 76, SN = 17, A = 5, K = 0

02/14/18, K5LKJ (NCS), W5TOM, W5TKZ, W5VOM (R).
(Band conditions were good. You should have been there!) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 75, SN = 20, A = 3, K = 0

02/21/18, K5LKJ (NCS), K5JPP, W5TOM, W5TKZ, KF5TFJ, K5LJ, WW5PA, W5VOM, K5IZO, AF5XL.
(10 Check-Ins) Solar Cycle 24: SFI = 67, SN = 0, A = 5, K = 1

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

Net conditions have been Fair this month. Check out your station.

Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening, 7:00PM, 3910 +/- 3 KHz.

. Regards. John K5LKJ



Hamfests

(typically within 200 miles of Houston)

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

03/09-10/2018 | [Louisiana State Convention \(58th Acadiana Hamfest 2018\)](#)

Location: Rayne, LA

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Acadiana Amateur Radio Association

Website: <http://www.w5ddl.org/hamfest/>

03/16-17/2018 | [South Texas Section Convention \(Greater Houston Hamfest\)](#)

Location: Rosenberg, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://houstonhamfest.org/>

04/07/2018 | [HamEXPO](#)

Location: Belton, TX

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Temple Amateur Radio Club

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

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. 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 2nd 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

Other contacts include:

President:, Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, n5vcx@att.net

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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.

VOLUME 42, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2018

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

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

BVARC General Membership Meeting – Thursday, March 8



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