

President
Bill Brooks, KE5OG
Vice President
Chuck Dobbins, KA5PVB



Secretary
Bill Roberts, W5NPR
Treasurer
Angie Otoupal, N5MVV

Newsletter of the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club, AD5BB

January, 2015

Alpine, Texas

OFFICERS ELECTED

The nominating committee nominated, and the membership elected, the following to serve as BBARC officers for 2015: President, Bill Brooks, KE5OG, Vice President, Chuck Dobbins, KA5PVB, Secretary, Bill Roberts, W5NPR, Treasurer, Angie Otoupal, N5MVV. Each of these individuals has served in leadership positions in the past – N5MVV has been in her position for at least 20 years!

Thanks to these intrepid souls for their willingness to serve in these roles.

2015 DUES NOW DUE!

To quote Bob, WA5ROE, “life is like a roll of toilet paper – the closer you get to the end, the faster it grows.” For those of us getting down to the end of the roll, it is a surprise to realize that it is time to pay our dues again. (Another year has passed already? That fast? I just paid dues a few months ago!) Sorry – it has been a year since you last paid up.

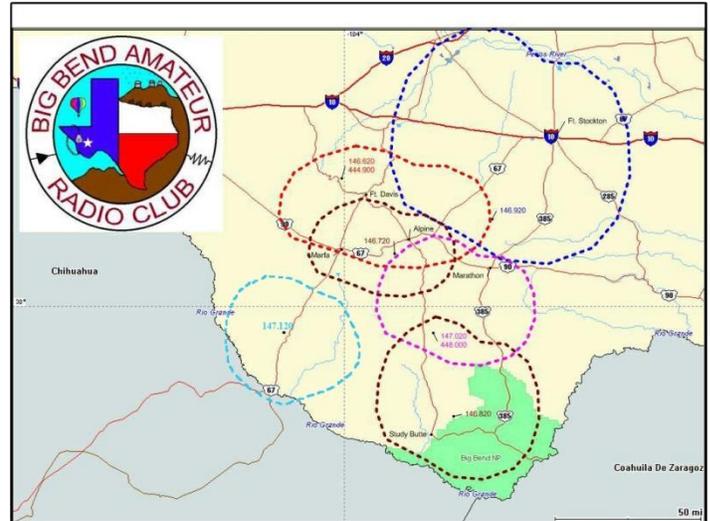
The good news is the dues are the same as last year – and the year before that and the year before that and the year before that, etc. In December, 1974, when the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club was officially founded, dues were set at \$3 per month or \$36 per year. It’s still the same now.

According to an inflation calculator on the Internet (so it must be correct!), \$36 in 1974 is now equivalent to \$172.94. What a bargain!

A major draw on the club funds over the years has been keeping our repeater network operational. This network has grown to a complex network of solar-powered repeaters covering much of the Big Bend region south of I-10. (See the following map). All these repeaters are linked together via UHF. In addition there is a portable emergency repeater which can be brought on-line as needed.

We also keep the liability insurance up to date for the club itself as well as the insurance and upkeep for the emergency communication van. Our financial needs are still great.

So remember to bring your check (or cash) for \$36 to the next meeting and give it to Angie, N5MVV or drop it off at True Value Hardware in Alpine to Bob, WA5ROE.



HERE COMES THE SUN

As amateur radio operators we know there are two ways to describe our age – through the standard use of years or by the number of sunspot cycles we have lived through. Since a sunspot cycle is roughly equal to 11 years, we sound much younger when measuring our age by means of the number of sunspot cycles we have been through (by that measure I’m a bit over 6).

But who would have guessed that when during the 11 year sunspot cycle you were born can affect your longevity? According to an article in Yahoo News, being born in the peak years of a sunspot cycle (which is good for hf propagation) is bad for your life expectancy.

“Results showed that people born during solar peaks lived 5.2 years less, on average, than individuals born in years with the lowest solar activity.”

How sunspots affect life span isn’t known, but one theory is higher levels of UV radiation may increase infant mortality by degrading folic acid (vitamin B9).

Some recent years with solar maximums were 1946, 1957, 1968, 1979, 1989, 2000 and 2013, and recent years with solar minimums were 1943, 1954, 1964, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2008.

REPEATER SYSTEM UPDATE

from N5HYD

146.620, the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club at the University of Texas at Austin McDonald Observatory site in Jeff Davis County, Texas -- Looks like the batteries are shot. Installed in 2010 with a three year warranty. Go figure.

I plan to change them out tomorrow (Christmas Day!).

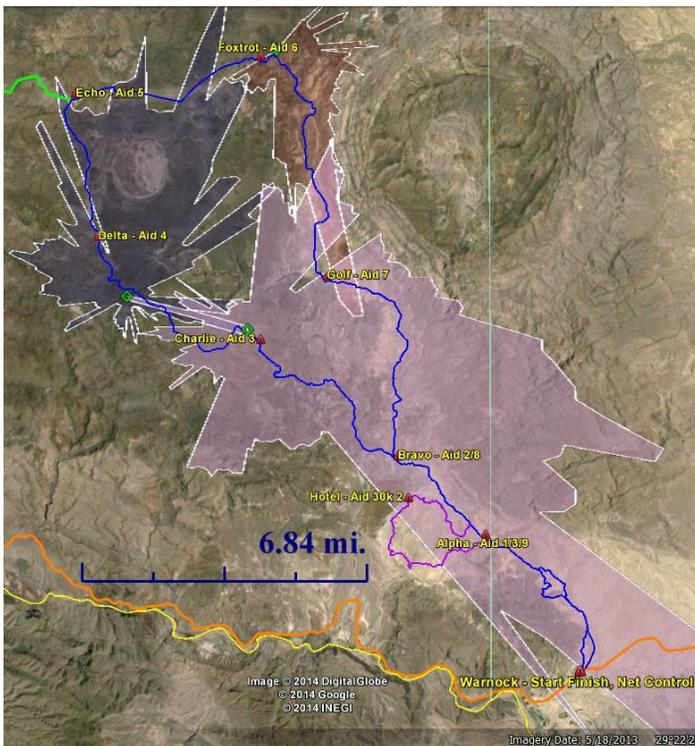
BIG BEND ULTRA RUN REPEATERS

from W5ATO

Here are the communication plans for the Big Bend Ultra Run on January 18, 2015 at Big Bend Ranch State Park.

We will be using 3 of our fixed system repeaters, our portable repeater, and 2 cross-band radios to cover most if not all of the communications for the race. In addition we have a third cross-band radio if we need it, and weather permitting, we may also have a cross-band mounted in an airplane if necessary.

This Goggle Earth map shows the course, the aid stations, the course repeaters and the repeater coverage.



All frequencies will be using 146.2 PL, the same as all of our fixed system repeaters use. PL access requires a few milliseconds for the radio to decode the tone and pass the audio on for re-transmission so sometimes the first syllable or two of your traffic can be cut off unless you pause between keying your mic and speaking. We compensate for this on our fixed repeaters by using delay modules to buffer the audio until the radio is ready to transmit. This WILL NOT be the case with the cross-band radios.

When working a cross-band radio you MUST WAIT until it fully drops its transmission before you can even key it up, and then you must pause at least one second before you speak to insure all the PL decoders in the repeater system have decoded and activated for transmission.

FIXED REPEATERS:

146.820 minus located east of Terlingua, will cover Lajitas, Warnock and just south of Alpha, solid. Spotty in other locations.

147.020 plus located 30 miles south of Alpine, is workable in wide areas along the north end of the course between Saucedo (Aid Echo) and the La Posta campsite just west of Foxtrot. It is also workable in a number of locations between Delta and Saucedo. Some locations may even work at 5 watts.

147.120 plus located 25 miles north of Presidio gives good coverage on the road into Saucedo and in many locations between Delta and Foxtrot.

PORTABLE REPEATER:

145.230 minus will be located about 1/2 mile north of Charlie and will cover much of the southern half of the course, including Charlie, Golf, Bravo and Alpha, and possibly Hotel. It will also give coverage in the southern half of Fresno Canyon north of Golf and the single track section between Golf and Bravo. It will link to the systems UHF HUB repeater at Elephant Mountain, 147.020 site.

CROSS-BAND RADIOS:

[All will be operating at 5 watts on both the link side and the simplex side for power supply concerns. These are mobile dual band radios.]

147.500 simplex will be located near the Mexicano campsites and link to either 146.82 or 147.02. It will insure coverage at Delta and fill gaps on the northwest section of the course. It will also cover south a short way and likely overlap with 145.23 slightly.

145.500 simplex will be located near the north east corner of the course and provide coverage for Foxtrot and the north end of the Fresno Canyon. It will link to 147.020.

146.500 simplex spare cross-band will be used if needed.

AIR MOBILE CROSS-BAND:

[This one will link on the UHF side and operate simplex on VHF.]

146.58 simplex

If needed and if weather allows.

PROGRAM FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the BBARC will be next Tuesday, January 13, at 7:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the West Texas National Bank.

After the normal business meeting the program will be on switching power supplies. Advantages and disadvantages will be discussed as well as the theory behind the operation of these popular power supplies.

TENTATIVE DATE PICKED FOR ANNUAL BANQUET

Pending approval at the next BBARC meeting, put the date of Friday, February 13, on your calendar for the annual BBARC Banquet. Once again it will be held at Sul Ross State University in Room 129 of the Gallego Center (the room on the ground floor with the glass wall where we had the banquet last year).

Beer, wine, and soft drinks will be provided free from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. with the meal beginning at 7:00 p.m.

BIG BEND EMERGENCY NET REPORT From WA5ROE

Date	Check-ins	Length	Remarks
Dec 7	36	20 min	
Dec 14	35	29 min	
Dec 21	37	27 min	
Dec 28	31	20 min	

Remember – the BBEN meets **every** Sunday on 3922 KHz at 8:30 a.m. Central time (either CST or CDT). Visitors always welcome.

VOLUNTEER EXAM SESSION

We will hold a VE session on Monday, January 12, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in Lawrence Hall, Room 303, at Sul Ross State University. Note that a second VE session will be held at the conclusion of the next Technician license class.

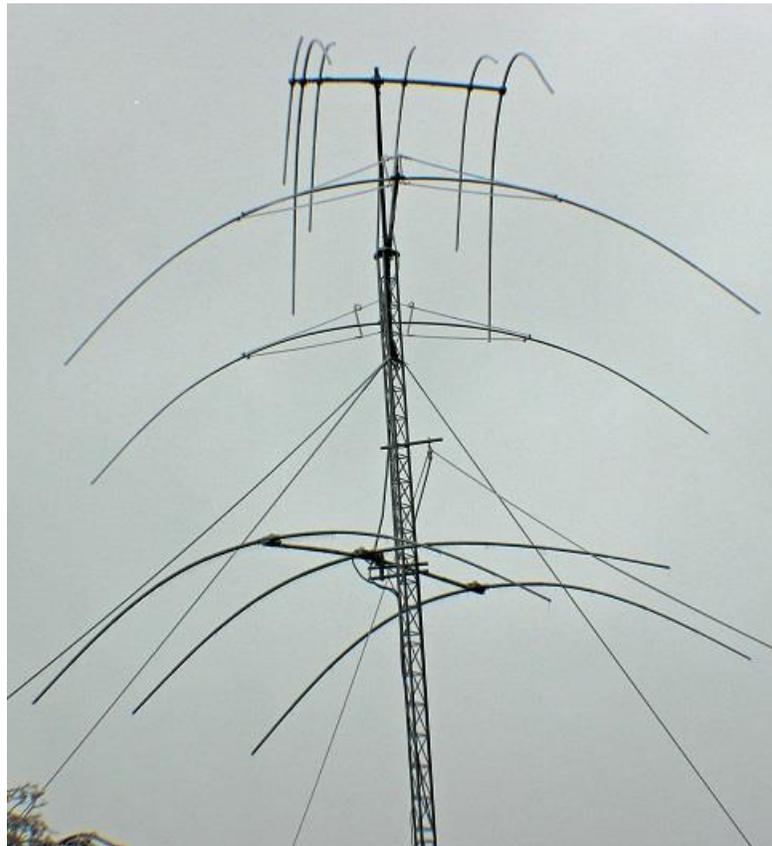
TECHNICIAN LICENSE CLASS

The BBARC will be conducting a Technician Class beginning Thursday, January 22 from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Turner Range Animal Science Center at Sul Ross, Room 130. The class will be held on four successive Thursdays, January 22, January 29, February 5, and February 12. The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual, 3rd edition, 2014, is required and will be available for purchase at a discount price (\$25).

The class will cover all elements of the Technician License and should prepare students to successfully pass the Technician exam, which will be given at the end of the course.

DECEMBER ICE STORM HITS ALPINE

Bill, KE5OG's antennas look a little "droopy." After the ice melted the elements bounced back, but the booms for the top and bottom beams rotated. The top antenna is at an angle of about 45 degrees and the bottom antenna is now a 3-element vertical.



THE BARK Newsletter of the BBARC

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BIG BEND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

<http://www.bigbendarc.com>

Meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at the West Texas National Bank Building in Alpine, 7:30 P.M. CST/CDT.

ARRL Affiliated Club

MEMBERSHIP AND NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

Annual membership is Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 each year. Dues are \$36.00 per year for individual or individual & spouse.

Membership allows you to participate in all club activities and vote at the monthly meetings.

Newsletters are available by e-mail for members, subscribers, and interested recipients. Send your e-mail address to [n5do at sbcbglobal.net](mailto:n5do@sbcbglobal.net) to be put on the list.

ABOUT THE BBARC

Founded December 17, 1974

ARRL affiliate since 1986

The BBARC is a 501(C)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

Big Bend Emergency Net, 3.922 MHz

Founded September 18, 1977

Meets every Sunday morning at 8:30 A.M. CST/CDT

Controlled net format. Welcomes new participants and visitors.

Established by Bob Ward, WA5ROE

Net Manager, Bob Ward, WA5ROE, [wa5roe at juno.com](mailto:wa5roe@juno.com)

Big Bend 2-meter Net

Founded July 9, 2008

Meets every Wednesday evening at 8:00 P.M. CST/CDT

Controlled net format. Welcomes new participants and visitors.

Established by Bob Ayer, KA1AAJ (SK)

Net Manager, Chuck Dobbins, KA5PVB, [ka5pvb at yahoo.com](mailto:ka5pvb@yahoo.com)

BBARC REPEATER SYSTEM

All standard offsets. All repeaters require 146.2 Hz PL tone encoded on your transmit signal. All repeaters are linked.

147.120+ Shafter, Cibolo Creek
147.020+ Elephant Mt. south of Alpine. System hub
146.620- Ft. Davis located at McDonald Observatory

146.720- Alpine, Twin Sisters Peaks
146.820- Terlingua
146.920- Glass Mountains, Alpine / Ft. Stockton
145.230- Emergency Repeater

BBARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 12, 2015, 3:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEER EXAMINATION SESSION, Room 130, Turner Range Animal Science Center, Sul Ross State University

January 13, 2015, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building
Program: "Switching Power Supplies"

January 18, 2015

Big Bend Ultra Run
Big Bend State Park

January 22, 2015, Thursday, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

January 29, 2015, Thursday, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

February 5, 2015, Thursday, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

February 12, 2015, Thursday, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

TECHNICIAN LICENSE CLASS, Room 130, Turner Range Animal Science Center, Sul Ross State University

February 12, 2015, Thursday, 9:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEER EXAMINATION SESSION, Room 130, Turner Range Animal Science Center, Sul Ross State University

February 10, 2014, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building
Program "TBA"

February 13, 2014, Friday, 6:30 p.m.

BBARC Annual Banquet
Gallego Center, Room 129
Sul Ross State University

March 10, 2014, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building
Program "TBA"

April 14, 2014, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building
Program "TBA"

April, 2014, Thursday, 7 – 9 p.m.

[Date to be determined]
Skywarn Training
Warnock Science Building
Room 201
Sul Ross State University

April 22 - 25, Wed.-Sat.

Big Bend Open Road Rally
<http://www.bborr.com/>

June 27-28, 2015, Sat.-Sun.

FIELD DAY
<http://www.arrl.org/field-day>