

**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

March, 2015

Alpine, Texas

### ANNUAL BANQUET HIGHLIGHTS

The annual club banquet was held on Friday, February 13 in the Gallego Center at Sul Ross State University. Beer, wine, and soft drinks were consumed until the meal began at 7:15 p.m. Again ARAMARK did an outstanding job with the meal and no one left hungry. (The peach cobbler was a special hit).

The West Texas Section Manager, our own Bill Roberts, W5NPR, announced that after serving two terms he has decided to not run for the position again. As one of his last official acts he presented the Section Manager's plaque for the highest scoring club in last summer's Field Day to the BBARC. Substitute emcee Dave Cockrum, N5DO, gave the highlights of the club activities for 2014, and Chuck Dobbins, KA5PVB, the new Vice-President for 2014, introduced the rest of the officers and presented a plaque to outgoing president, Bob Ward, WA5ROE.

Twenty-three members and guests watched scenes featuring ham radio from a series of Hollywood movies. Included were scenes from the following movies:

#### HOLLYWOOD DOES HAM RADIO

Earliest Hollywood movie with ham radio – Andy Hardy (1938)

#### Phenomenon (1996)

John Travolta gains super brain powers as a result of a light in the sky. He deciphers a top secret message his ham radio friend receives.

#### Contact (1997)

Jodie Foster, as a little girl, gets her start in ham radio before a career in radio astronomy.

#### Frequency (2000)

Fire fighter whose father died 30 years previously is suddenly able to talk to his father on his father's old ham rig.

#### Terminator 3 Rise of the Machines (2003)

The Governor (Arnold Schwarzenegger) attempts to save the world from nuclear disaster as a computer virus causes all machines to fight humans. Ham radio is present to facilitate the rebirth of society.

#### The Bank Job (2008)

Based on an actual case in England in which a ham overheard bank robbers talking on walkie-talkies.

**NBC, Unsolved Mysteries, Marfa Lights** (1989, Episode 31)  
This was not shown since the only copy available was in VHS format, but it includes actual radio traffic from BBARC members.

#### Dancer, Texas, Pop. 81 (1998)

Not about ham radio, but stars our beautiful part of Texas and our newly elected President, Bill Brooks, KE5OG (typecast as the Preacher).

### BBARC ACTIVITIES 2014

#### January

- ▶ Work session to install emergency repeater in enclosure
- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: Cory Hannsz, KF5ZBW, Physics and Principles of Technology Instructor at Wink H S  
“School ham radio participation”

- ▶ Big Bend Ultra Run 50K  
Big Bend National Park

- ▶ BBARC Annual Banquet

#### February

- ▶ BBARC MEETING,  
Program: “Using Google Earth” by W5ATO

#### March

- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: Video of the ZL8R, Raoul Island DXpedition

#### April

- ▶ TPOTA (Texas State Parks on the Air) from Big Bend Ranch State Park  
KE5OG, N5DO, and WA5ROE finished in first place using club call, AD5BB
- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: “How to Solder” by KE5OG

- ▶ Technician License Class
- ▶ Skywarn Training
- ▶ Big Bend Open Road Rally  
Fort Stockton to Sanderson
- ▶ Fort Davis Hammerfest Bicycle Race

#### May

- ▶ Technician License Class
- ▶ VE Exam Session – 9 new hams
- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: Video of the Malpelo Island DXpedition -- near-vertical island of 86 acres, 980' mountain peak.

## June

- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program "Field Day Plans"

- ▶ FIELD DAY  
BBARC Finished in Sixth place in the US in 2A.
- ▶ VE Session at Field Day – 3 new hams

## July

- ▶ BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building  
Program: N5DO, "Logging Software"

## August

- ▶ BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building  
Program: Cory Hannasz, KF5BZW, Wink H S,  
"Balloon Launch Project"
- ▶ BIG BEND BALLOON BASH, Alpine Casparis Airport
- ▶ Balloon Fire Concert, Alpine Casparis Airport

## September

- ▶ W1AW/5 (ARRL HQ Station)  
Operating in Texas as part of the Centennial Year of the ARRL. BBARC operation from KE5OG and N5DO shacks by KA5PVB, KE5OG, N5DO, NW5M, and WA5ROE.
- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: NW5M, "Operating in Honduras as Part of a Medical Outreach Team"

## October

- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: Tour of the Hobby Eberley Telescope and update on the Dark Skies project
- ▶ MARATHON TO MARATHON

## November

- ▶ BBARC MEETING  
Program: W5ATO, "Communications Operations Plan for the Big Bend Ultra 50 mile run."

## December

- ▶ Celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the BBARC
- ▶ SANTA NET

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## NEW HAMS

As a result of the recently completed Technician licensing class, there are three new hams in Alpine. Robin Ritchie is KG5GBM, her husband, Steve Ritchie, is KG5GBN, and John Jarrett is KG5GBO. Congratulations to these individuals for their successful completion of this step.

Now is the time to upgrade to General! (See next article).

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## GENERAL LICENSING CLASS SCHEDULED

There are several people in the Alpine area who have a Tech license and should probably consider upgrading to General. Plus, beginning July 1 of this year there will be a new question

pool for the General exam. So now is the time to plan to make this happen.

The BBARC will sponsor a General license class beginning Thursday March 26. It will be held each Thursday through May 9, with an exam session being scheduled for May 9. This will allow people to upgrade before Field Day and using the current question pool.

The tentative plan is to use the same location as the recently completed Technician class, Room 150 at the Turner Range Animal Science Center at Sul Ross State University. Each class would last 3 hours, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Again, no charge for the class, but students will be expected to have the ARRL General Class License Manual, 7th Edition. This includes practice exam software on CD-ROM. You can purchase it for \$29.95 from the ARRL or your favorite on-line bookstore. We will have copies available at the discounted price of \$25 at the first class if we have an idea of how many we will need.

As soon as the location is confirmed we will notify all the readers of the BARK via E-mail. In the meantime, if you are interested or know someone who is interested, have them contact Bob Ward, WA5ROE, at Morrison True Value, cell phone 386-3041, E-mail [wa5roe@juno.com](mailto:wa5roe@juno.com) or Dave Cockrum at 837-3711, E-mail [n5do@sbcglobal.net](mailto:n5do@sbcglobal.net).

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## LICENSE CLASSES FOR SOUTH BREWSTER COUNTY

There have been discussions with Julianne Braun, KF5RDN, about possibilities to have one or more license classes for the Terlingua/Study Butte/Lajitas/BBNP area. The plan would be to have classes at a convenient site in that region, with two Saturday format classes to meet the need for Technician licenses first, followed by a more traditional format General Class.

Julianne is going gauge the level of interest in these classes. If you are interested in one or both of these possible classes, please notify Julianne at 432-371-2996 or at [deracs@gmail.com](mailto:deracs@gmail.com).

We would like to have the Technician classes in early April, followed by the General class with an ending date of late May or early June.

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## ECHOLINK DISCUSSION

There was a discussion of the possible inclusion of EchoLink in the BBARC repeater system. To summarize the discussion, it appears there is interest in establishing EchoLink, but there is concern about the possible impact on our repeater system. The major concern is the effect on the dc power issues at each of our solar powered sites. Charles, N5PVL, sent an E-mail which

vividly highlighted a worst possible situation which occurred in the lower Rio Grande Valley at a time when a hurricane hit.

There would clearly need to be some control codes to override the EchoLink system at critical times and maybe even some means to automatically reduce EchoLink during the times (nights and extended periods without sunlight) that heavy usage could turn off our system.

The issue was tabled and will be discussed at future meetings as more information on possible solutions is available.

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## PROGRAM FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the BBARC will be Tuesday, March 10, at 7:00 p.m. in the Warnock Science Building, Room 201, at Sul Ross State University. The Warnock Science Building is the building with a dome on the top at the back of the University. Room 201 is a lecture hall at the ground level immediately opposite the entry doors.

The meeting will be the annual Skywarn training session conducted by the National Weather Service. It is scheduled to last until 9:00 p.m. The training is open to the general public.

Other training sessions in our area include:

Fort Davis, Wed. March 11, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Fire Department

Marfa, Wed. March 25, 7 – 9 p.m., Marfa City Hall

The whole schedule may be seen at this url:

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/media/maf/Skywarn2015SkywarnSchedule1A.pdf>

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## BIG BEND EMERGENCY NET REPORT

From WA5ROE

Date	Check-ins	Length	Remarks
Feb 1	40	30 min	
Feb 8	35	30 min	
Feb 15	44	29 min	
Feb 22	41	21 min	

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

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## REPEATER SYSTEM UPDATE

from N5HYD

I've finished aligning the new system for the Glass Mountain repeater 146.920 . This system is like the one that is currently up there (which is sick), with the addition of two new link radios. One of the link radios, the "Wink Link", will connect us to a new repeater in Wink, Texas. The other, the "WTC Notrees Link",

will give us a better path when we connect our system to the West Texas Connection.

We have an issue in that the total D.C. current draw can reach 32 amps now. The charge controller up there is limited to 20 amps. I do not have any charge controllers that go above 20 amps.

Via Email I suggested these options:

1. We can run the repeater and link radios at a lower transmit power levels. This is not hard to do, but will take a couple of hours for me to program it all up. This is my suggestion as it's cheap and easier on the D.C. power system.
2. We can buy a charge controller with a larger current draw rating. A quick look came up with ~\$600.00 for a 45 amp product and ~\$300.00 for a 30 amp product. I can get the current draw to 30 amps with no problem.
3. We can connect the radios straight to the batteries. I suggest we run the load with a low voltage disconnect module to keep from destroying batteries. About \$150.00.

The consensus is for option #3, to add a low voltage disconnect. I will pursue this option, and also lower the transmit power a bit to see if we can keep from making the low voltage disconnect do its job. I'll finalize the cost and ask for reimbursement once I get it installed.

The main criterion for a lightning magnet mountaintop site is to keep the installation robust and easy!

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## THE BARK Newsletter of the BBARC

Big Bend Amateur Radio Club  
1402 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Alpine, Texas 79830

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

Editor: Dave Cockrum, N5DO  
[n5do at sbcglobal.net](mailto:n5do@sbcglobal.net)

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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

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## 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 sbccglobal.net](mailto:n5do@sbccglobal.net) to be put on the list.

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## 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, [charles.dobbins52 at yahoo.com](mailto:charles.dobbins52@yahoo.com)

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## 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

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## BBARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**March 10, 2015, Tuesday, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

BBARC MEETING  
Skywarn Training  
Warnock Science Building  
Room 201

Sul Ross State University

**March 28 – 29, 2015, Saturday and Sunday**

Hammerfest Bicycle Event  
Meet at 7:30 a.m. Saturday and 7:15 a.m. Sunday  
at Murphy's Pizza in Fort Davis

**April 14, 2015, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building  
Program: Steve Posner, NF5FF, "Simplex Repeaters,  
Crossband Repeaters, Airborne Repeaters, and Other Ugly  
Ducklings."

**April 22 - 25, Wed.-Sat.**

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

**May 12, 2015, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building  
Program: Jonathan Baize, AD5OJ, "Homebrew telemetry system  
to check the status of stock tanks."

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

FIELD DAY

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