

**President**  
Terry Allison, K5TDA  
**Vice President**  
Lora Hawkins, W5JUW



**Secretary**  
Bill Baker, W5ATO  
**Treasurer**  
Angie Otoupal, N5MVV

## Newsletter of the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club, AD5BB

April, 2010

Alpine, Texas

### MEETING MINUTES, APRIL, 2010

April 13, 2010

The April meeting was attended by 14 people. In the absences of the President and Vice President, Secretary Bill Baker conducted the meeting.

Bill introduced Rusty Herman, KB5R who has just moved to Alpine from the Houston area.

Bill announced that Vice President, Lora Hawkins had resigned and the remaining 3 officers would be meeting to appoint someone to fill the remaining term, according to the by-laws. He asked if there were any nominations or volunteers the club would like for the officers to consider. Jim KD5KBU volunteered. No appointment will be made until the officers can meet and make a formal selection.

Jim, KD5KBU reported on the Hammerfest event and stated there were around 378 participants, one of the largest turn outs this event has seen. He also said that all went very smoothly and no accidents or injuries requiring emergency response were reported. He also noted that HAM turn out was extremely light with only 5 volunteers for the big race where about 10 are needed, and one of those volunteers was only able to stay for a short time.

Rusty brought information to the club of a motorcycle ride that would be coming to the area in October, and that they were interested in having communications support. More information and details will be brought to the next meeting.

### SKYWARN® POINTERS

As the spring and summer weather systems begin to move through our area, a short review of communications procedures might be helpful for some. There are three primary areas of importance to consider when reporting your observations.

1.) Know what you are observing. 2.) Be precise on the time and location of your observation, and your location. 3.) Know the operation level of any controlled net you may be using to report your observations.

**Know what you are observing.** Anyone who has attended a Skywarn® training workshop knows there are many different components to a thunderstorm. Wall clouds, rain free base, shelf clouds, funnels, gust-nados, etc. If you are not familiar with storm structures and elements, the Skywarn® workshop is the best place to learn.

Your next best option might be to download the "Advanced Spotters' Field Guide". This is the training guide that is distributed at the Skywarn® classes. It can be downloaded from the World Wide Web. First go to <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>. Scroll to the lower section where you will find links to many

different NWS products. Under the category 'Information Center', click on Publications. On the next page under 'Publication Links', click on Brochures, booklets, posters, wallet cards. On the next page scroll down to find the group of materials labeled 'Storm Spotter Materials'. Click on 'Advanced Weather Spotter's Guide'.

**Be precise on the time and location of your observation, and your location.** When you report an observation, be as accurate as you can on your location and the distance and direction (range and bearing) of the event you are observing. If you must make your report after the fact, check your watch and report how much time has elapsed since the observation. Even though time pieces are very accurate these days, if you can give an accurate elapsed time measurement to a net control or forecaster, then an accurate time of the event can be determined even if someone's clock is off by many minutes. Keep a ruler of some kind handy and report hail by its diameter, not the size of a red rubber ball.

**Know the operation level of any controlled net you may be using to report your observations.** Some of our readers live in areas where they have direct access to the West Texas Connection (WTC) repeater system. This is the system the National Weather Service uses in our area for Skywarn® spotter reporting. They are accustomed to the Red, Yellow, and Green net conditions.

In the Big Bend area, we most frequently use the Big Bend Repeater system and rely on someone at a base station to coordinate reporting and then relaying information to Midland. Being a small group that works together on many activities through the year we have developed our own feel for handling spotter reports on our system. Usually it is casual and the threat is not severe, we just don't get to see rain that often, so it is an event for us. But when there is a severe threat in our area, our net just kind of falls into a controlled net without anything being said. However, we do have the ability to link our repeaters to the WTC system, and when we do we must operate under the protocols that they define.

The WTC covers almost the entire Midland Weather Office region. In general that is most of West Texas south of Lubbock, west of San Angelo, east of El Paso, and includes part of southeastern New Mexico. There can be several different areas of severe and extremely severe weather events occurring at the same time. For this reason it is necessary for the Skywarn® nets to be conducted under strict net control conditions. W5MAF is the call sign of the NWS office in Midland and they control the net when Skywarn® is activated. They will announce, approximately every 10 minutes, the level condition of the net which will be Green, Yellow or Red.

GREEN: Casual reports and contacts are allowed provided transmissions are brief and provide a few seconds between transmissions to allow break-ins for serious reports.

YELLOW: Severe weather is occurring across the area. Damaging wind and larger than 3/4" hail and other severe weather has been reported. All casual discussion ceases. Severe weather reports only are allowed.

RED: Emergency traffic only! Tornadoes, rotating wall clouds, funnel clouds, and hail larger than tennis balls are the highest priority reports. All other reports should be held.

So for those who participate in Skywarn® reporting, remember these three things;

1. Know what you are seeing.
2. Report times, locations and details accurately.
3. Understand and follow the operating protocols of the controlled net you are operating on.

And as always be safe when you are out there. Be a spotter and don't become a casualty. Casualties can report nothing and can warn no one of approaching danger.

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## Presidents Corner

Terry Allison, K5TDA



The American Radio Relay League sent me a nice big envelope a couple of weeks ago. As I opened it I was trying to remember which contest I might have done well enough in to get a certificate, or even which contest I had bothered to enter. And then, there it was. 40 years as an ARRL member. I am not amused. Not that I begrudge the ARRL one second of my membership for the last 40 years. No, I am not amused that I have

done anything continuously for 40 years. I am not that old. No I am not.

That brings up another thought. You can fire up an 80 year old rig and use it to talk to modern hams using modern equipment. That is pretty cool! Sure, you can now drive around in a 100 year old car, but not in the fast lane of the interstate. My CD player does not seem to want to play any of my 78 rpm records. But that 80 year old rig can still keep up if you stay on CW or AM phone.

Which brings up another thought. When were the "glory days" of ham radio? The dawning of the radio age with king spark crashing through the airwaves? Everyone was a pioneer, advancing the radio art and learning how to communicate with a few homemade parts and pieces. Or was it the post war boom? Thousands of electronically trained servicemen coming home to a huge bonanza of surplus parts and radios. I got in on the tail end of that one as in my youth there were still lots of old WWII surplus rigs around to play with, modify, and otherwise learn radio on. Or was it the science and technology boom of the 60s and 70s? There must have been a kid novice in every small town in the nation. The Texas A&M

amateur radio club had over 100 members. We became today's scientists and engineers. Or, is it today? Homebrewing radios and accessories has never been cheaper or easier. Higher quality off the shelf rigs have never been this affordable. Licensing has never been this accessible. There are new frequencies to explore. There is so much new to learn and play with, while the old comfortable stuff is still there to fall back on.

Which brings up a final thought. Why are there not any hams in Presidio? Or in many of the small towns throughout the nation? I guess somewhere along the line you started having to take a class to get a ham license. If there are no hams to give classes, then there are no new hams coming on board? I suppose that means that places that have a ham population will continue to have a ham population if they can teach classes and get folks interested. Places that have no hams never will unless someone moves in. That seems a bit depressing. I have been in Presidio now for 3 months and it seems like a great place to be a ham. Especially if you have an air conditioned shack.

Until next time, remember a contact a day keeps the spiders out of your rig. Kitty says it is too late for that now and I will have to fumigate. Don't let it happen to you.

Terry  
K5TDA

## COWBOYS BASEBALL STARTS MAY 6



Here is the schedule;

Thursday, Friday and Saturday games start at 7:00 P.M. local time. Sunday games start at 2:00 P.M. local time. Home games in bold type are at Kokernot Field. All other games are Away.

<b>May 6-9,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Las Cruces Vaqueros</b>
May 13-16,	BBC at Las Cruces Vaqueros
<b>May 20-23,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Desert Valley Mountain Lions</b>
May 27-30,	BBC at Las Cruces Vaqueros
<b>June 3-6,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Desert Valley Mountain Lions</b>
<b>June 10-13,</b>	<b>BBC vs. West Texas Road Hogs</b>
<b>June 17-20,</b>	<b>BBC vs. West Texas Road Hogs</b>
<b>June 24-27,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Desert Valley Mountain Lions</b>
<b>July 1-4,</b>	<b>BBC vs. West Texas Road Hogs</b>
<b>July 6,</b>	<b>ALL STAR GAME (Kokernot, Alpine)</b>
<b>July 8-11,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Las Cruces Vaqueros</b>
July 15-18,	BBC / West Texas Road Hogs (Site TBA)
<b>July 22-25,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Desert Valley Mountain Lions</b>
<b>July 29-Aug. 1,</b>	<b>BBC vs. Las Cruces Vaqueros</b>
<b>Aug. 5-8,</b>	<b>BBC vs. West Texas Road Hogs</b>
Aug. 12-15,	BBC at Las Cruces Vaqueros
Aug. 17-19,	Playoffs (Best 3 of 5)
Aug. 21-22,	Playoffs (if needed) here



Thunderstorm in south Brewster County, October 7, 2009.  
View from Alpine.

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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

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### BIG BEND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

<http://www.bigbendarc.com>

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

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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 vote at the monthly meetings and includes a subscription to the club newsletter.

Newsletter subscription only, without membership, is available for \$7.00 per calendar year. .

Newsletters are available by e-mail in .PDF format for members, subscribers, and courtesy recipients only. Send your e-mail address to w5ato@arrl.net to be put on the list.

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### ABOUT THE BBARC

Founded December 17, 1974

ARRL affiliate since 1986

#### 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@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, Bill Roberts, W5NPR, w5npr@texas-skies.com

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### BBARC REPEATER SYSTEM

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

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.

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### BBARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**May 11, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**June 8, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**June 26-27, 2010, Sat-Sun**

Field Day

**July 4, 2010, Sunday**

JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> HAMBURGER BOOTH, Kokernot Park

**July 13, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**August 10, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**September 14, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**September 18-19, 2010, Sat-Sun**

Cycle fest, Ft. Davis

**October 12, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**November 9, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**December 14, 2010, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**January 11, 2011, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank, Alpine

**January 16, 2011, Sunday**

Big Bend Ultra 50 Run, Big Bend National Park