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

October, 2011

Alpine, Texas

### MEETING NOTES, OCTOBER, 2011

October, 2011

#### Upcoming Programs

NOVEMBER 8, "HetDex: A New Amateur Band?"  
Jim Fowler, KD5KBU

DECEMBER 13,  
"SILENT AUCTION"

### 2011 BREWSTER COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE SIMULATED EMERGENCY TEST (SET)

Dave Cockrum, N5DO

At 6:00 p.m. on September 29, Brewster County ARES members met at the EOC located at the Fire Station in Alpine. A scenario for an emergency situation was described to everyone, starting as follows:

"At approximately 5:30 p.m. an explosion of unknown cause has occurred on US 67, 2 miles north of the US 90 / US 67 intersection. It is thought that the explosion was caused by an accident involving a truck carrying explosive materials."

In this imaginary situation there were multiple injuries and the loss of 911 service and long distance telephone service. The 11 amateurs present were assigned to a location and given a series of messages to deliver. The locations included:

EOC – VHF and HF  
Alpine PD EOC – VHF and HF  
Command Post – Club Emergency Communication Van  
+ two operators – VHF  
Radio Station -- VHF  
Hospital -- VHF  
Convention Center -- VHF  
Airport – VHF  
Tom Santry – VHF shadow  
Marfa, Presidio County EOC at Sheriff's Office -- VHF

The BBARC repeater system frequencies were used. Net Control was in the EOC with the Alternate Net Control at the Alpine PD EOC.

Beginning at 6:30 pm the first messages were delivered. Six of the locations had formal messages to be delivered using the ARRL Radiogram form. All locations had at least six tactical messages to be delivered as well.

All messages were scripted to be similar to messages that would be delivered if it were a real emergency. The time

period was compressed, so 6 formal messages and about 50 tactical messages were delivered in a little over 30 minutes.

The high volume of messages delivered made for a frantic 30 minutes. Although in a real emergency the messages would not flow that fast, it did make for a feeling of reality with a certain level of time pressure on all operators to successfully transmit their messages.

In a critique following the exercise, everyone was congratulated by Dave, N5DO, Brewster County ARES Coordinator for a job well done. It was noted that those operators who were relatively new to amateur radio, having been licensed since 2007, were able to perform in an exemplary manner.

It was also noted that the club's calling tree was used to remind members of the SET, and it seemed to work well.

One area for improvement was noted – the need to establish packet radio links between certain critical locations such as the hospital and the EOC. A portable packet station would also be beneficial in an actual emergency. It was agreed to make an upgrade of our packet radio capabilities a goal for the next year. We all agreed that we all will need training as to how to use the existing packet capabilities the club has.

### FIELD DAY RESULTS RELEASED

Dave Cockrum, N5DO

The ARRL released the results of the 2011 Field Day. Once again the Big Bend ARC did an excellent job and exceeded our goals. Our goals, generally, are to have a great time, eat some good food, and end up in the top 10% in our category nationwide.

We were able to meet or exceed our goals in that we had a great time, ate a lot (too much) good food, and ended up in the top 5% in the nation in the 2A category. The 2A category means that we had 2 transmitters operating simultaneously, using emergency power, and are a group operation. The 2A category is the most popular category at Field Day.

A lesser goal is to try to win the West Texas Section Manager's plaque for the highest score in the Section. The past few years this plaque has been won by the Midland Amateur Radio Club., The Midland club is usually in the 3A category, meaning they have 3 transmitters operating simultaneously. There were a total of 11 stations from West Texas who turned in scores for Field Day.

This year we ended up in first place in the West Texas Section for all categories. We had 8,928 points based on 2613 contacts with 21 amateurs participating. Second place went to the Midland ARC, who were operating in 3E this year, which

means 3 transmitters operating at one time using emergency power from a home station. Instead of putting up antennas and operating positions at some location with no permanent antenna structures, they operated from an existing home station but used emergency power. They ended up with 8,094 points with 2461 contacts. They reported having 44 participants.

The third place group in West Texas was K5M, a group from the metroplex who come to Marfa each year to operate Field Day. They ended up with 3,238 points, 899 contacts, and 3 operators. They entered in the 2AC category, meaning they were the same as our 2A category except they used commercial power. In the 2A category there were a total of 387 entrants across the nation and the BBARC ended up in 19<sup>th</sup> place. We had the highest score in Texas among the 2A entrants (a total of 22 Texas stations).

The GOTA station was successful again this year and we had some out-of-town visitors who came and stayed for some time. If we had any negatives to last year's operation it was that we were missing some familiar faces. Plan now to come to Field Day 2012 the last weekend in June -- this year June 23 and 24.

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## 100 YEARS OF AVIATION IN ALPINE OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>

Jim Fowler, KD5KBU

The aviation centennial had 9 volunteers working the event at various times. Weather was good and the attendance was fair.

There were a number of WWII planes includes a B25. Unfortunately the B25 suffered a broken gasket on the port engine during a flight Friday evening so we got to watch the crew working to repair the engine on Saturday. However, for those hams who stuck around we got to see them fly late Saturday afternoon.

There were also a number of radio controlled aircraft flying and much of the ham activity was involved with coordinating the RC aircraft with the terminal building when a larger aircraft was taking off or landing.

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## GETTING STARTED IN HAM RADIO

Barb Stone, KM5VM

When I first retired, I volunteered at Big Bend Ranch State Park for several years until the reality of the 300 mile roundtrip got to my budget. The staff handed me a handheld radio and gave minimal instructions on how to use it. I decided I needed to know more about the radio in order to adequately use it.

So I asked around and found the BBARC course for newbies. Passed it and joined the club I think the year was 1993. And Here I am.

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## BIG BEND ULTRA RUN GEARING UP

Sunday, January 15, 2012 the Big Bend Ultra Run will take place in Big Bend National Park.

Many BBARC members have participated in this event, and have already been contacted to sign up for the 2012 event.

This will be the 5<sup>th</sup> time for the Ultra Run which began in 2005. And for those who are already familiar with this event, it looks like the courses and communications plans are the same as last year. However sign-up procedures are a little different this year, so please be sure to read the section on 'Signing Up'.

All communications stations need to be on station by 7:00 A.M. Sunday morning. 50k starts at 7:30 A.M., 25k starts at 8:30 A.M., and the 10k starts at 9:30 A.M.

This event has been a real delight for everyone who has attended. Most of the crew treat it as a camp out event, arriving between Tuesday and Friday, Doing a course wide Communications check on Saturday and then the event runs all day Sunday. In the down time there is lots of socializing at Rio Grande Village (RGV) and at least one or two good group dinners.

The Big Bend Ultra Run is composed of three foot races that run simultaneously on three different courses in the National Park. A 10k out and back course runs the first 5k of the Old River Road near RGV. The 25k and 50k courses both start at the north end of Glen Springs Road. 25k runners follow Glen Springs Road the entire length to Old River Road. 50k Runners turn off on to Black Gap Road and follow it to Old River Road and then east on Old River Road to Glen Springs Road.

If you would like to know more about the event, they have a website;

<http://www.bigbend50.com/home/>

Organizers for the Ultra Run come from San Antonio and they coordinate with Ham's in the San Antonio - Central Texas area to help organize their communications needs. Milton Johnson, N5HMJ and Charles Land, KC5NKK take up the duties of signing up the communications volunteers and keeping everyone up to date on details for the event.

The BBARC handles setting up the portable repeater and contingencies for communicating over the course and the director's base of operations. Bill, W5ATO will be taking care of the repeater.

Last year the repeater was located near Rio Grande Village (RGV) where the event sets up its home base of operations. Net communications were a modification of the standard single net controller, directed net procedures. But it seemed to work since most all of the operators have worked many events with each other and have excellent Net Etiquette skills.

Due to the local terrain, there is no place to locate the repeater where it will serve all locations that need communications. So we place it in a location that is favorable to a large portion of the course and very near the base of operations in RGV. With a mobile cross-band radio, hand held coverage is then possible throughout the RGV site.

Primary Net Control, Net Control 1, then locates himself on the top of the ridge at the north end of Black Gap Road. From this location he has direct sight to the repeater and to a few of the stations that cannot reach the repeater.

The twist to this operation is we then establish a Secondary Net Control. Net Control 2, in a location where he has sight of the repeater and the remaining stations which cannot communicate directly with the repeater or Net Control 1. Both

Net Controls must use two radios, or a full dual VFO dualband with V/V capabilities.

Both Net Controls monitor both the repeater and a simplex frequency. The simplex stations contact whichever Net Controller they can reach and the relay of traffic is handled with net control. And with co-net controllers it makes it possible for either of them to turn the net direction over to the other for bathroom or lunch breaks, although they still have to monitor their simplex stations.

It sounds confusing and could easily turn to chaos, but the key is having net controllers who work well off of each other and having seasoned and experienced operators in the net. We are fortunate to have both, so we are able to make it work.

New operators should not shy away. With as many experienced operators as we have, you will have all the mentors you need to help you and guide you through an exceptional event. It will be a very rewarding experience. If you have never participated in a communications support event, this is a great group, and event to work with. Let us know if this is your first organized communications event, and if you wish to operate or observe, and we will find a place for you.

### Signing Up for Big Bend Ultra Run

Many of the volunteers from last year have already been contacted by Milton and have instructions on signing up for the 2012 event.

If you are interested and have not been contacted, here is what you should do.

First, if you do not have Internet or e-mail access easily available, you may sign up through W5ATO. See 'Sign Up By Mail' at the end of this article.

If you do have easy Internet and e-mail access, The communications team information is located on the web at: <http://2012bb50.n5hmj.com/home>. This home page has links for campsite reservations. The Lodge at the Basin is already booked.

From there, click on [Join the BB50 Communications Team](#). Here you will have instructions on what information to send to Milton via e-mail. Be sure to give Milton details on what your radio equipment and personal vehicle capabilities are. These are vital considerations for many of the station locations.

**YOU STILL HAVE ONE MORE IMPORTANT STEP** to take. This year the lawyers seem to have been busy and all volunteers must sign a liability waiver. You cannot sue the event, its organizers, sponsors, Friends of The Big Bend, or Big Bend National Park, and possibly others. It seems to be a standard waiver simply saying you agree to be responsible for yourself and your property. From the 2012bb50.n5hmj home page, click on [Info Central BB50](#), then click the link for [Volunteer Waiver Form](#). This will bring up the waiver form, which you can print and sign, then fax or scan and e-mail to Milton. His fax number and e-mail address is at the bottom of the form.

Also under the Info Central BB50 link, you can find a link to the repeater frequencies details under the 'Communications Plan' link, as well as station assignments under 'Radio Operator Assignments' as well as a link to a map of the BBARC repeater coverage map, driving directions to RGV from San Antonio and course maps to be added when they become available.

Milton has lots of good information throughout this site, so explore it. He will keep it updated with the operator

assignments, so put it in your favorites or bookmarks and check on it from time to time to see that you are listed and that your assignment is acceptable to you.

### Sign Up By Mail

If it would be easier for you to sign up with hard copy forms and using the US postal mail service, PROVIDE THE INFORMATION below with regards to name, call sign, etc. on one sheet of paper, then print out or Xerox the form at the end of this newsletter, fill it out, and mail them to;

Bill Baker, W5ATO, BBARC, BBUR  
c/o Morrison True Value  
301 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Alpine, TX. 79830

Please send the following information:

\* = Required Information

\*Full Name

\*FCC Call Sign

E-Mail Address

Cell Phone (number will be kept private.)

T-Shirt Size: S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

Desired Position (do you need to be near civilization services, can you 4 wheel across large rocks and soft sand, do you have a dual band radio, do you have high elevation or high gain antennas, etc.?)

Do you have High Clearance vehicle?

See the end of the newsletter for the Waiver Form.

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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@juno.com

Editor: Bill Baker, W5ATO  
w5ato@arrl.net OR w5ato.bill@verizon.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  
Amateur Radio Relay League  
225 Main Street  
Newington, CT, 06111-1494  
[www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)

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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 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

#### **November 8, 2011, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building

Program "HetDex: A New Amateur Band?"

**Jim Fowler, KD5KBU**

#### **December 13, 2011, Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.**

BBARC MEETING, West Texas National Bank Building

Program "SILENT AUCTION"

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## 2012 Event Volunteer Waiver for 2012 Big Bend Ultra Run

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Date of Birth:

**WAIVER:**

In consideration for the acceptance of this application to volunteer at the Big Bend Ultra Run, I hereby acknowledge that Big Bend Ultra Run, their employees, officers, directors, shareholders, agents, representatives, volunteers and sponsors cannot assure my safety during participation in the Big Bend Ultra Run and its associated activities. I recognize that volunteering at the Big Bend Ultra Run exposes me to risks including, but not limited to, physical injury, rugged terrain, and extreme weather conditions. Applicant acknowledges that his/her participation at a volunteer at the Big Bend Ultra Run is entirely voluntary and hereby assumes all responsibility for personal injury.

Applicant further represents and warrants, to the best of his or her knowledge, Applicant is in good health and physical condition, and is able to engage in volunteer activities for the Big Bend Ultra Run without any health or physical concern to his or her being.

I, therefore, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, HEREBY RELEASE, WAIVE AND FOREVER DISCHARGE AND SAVE HARMLESS THE BIG BEND ULTRA RUN, FRIENDS OF BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, SPONSORS, THEIR EMPLOYEES, jointly and severally, from any and all claims, losses, damages, demands, costs, causes of action or liability of any kind, whether in law or in equity, for injury or death, or loss or damage to property, from whatever source, of whatever nature, resulting or arising from my attendance at or participation in activities for the Big Bend Ultra Run, whether as a spectator, participant, volunteer or otherwise and whether or not as a consequence of my following any program of diet and/or exercise on the recommendations of any of the aforesaid; whether prior to, during or subsequent to said attendance or participation AND NOTWITHSTANDING THAT ANY SUCH CLAIM MAY HAVE BEEN CONTRIBUTED TO OR OCCASIONED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF ANY OF THE AFORESAID.

I also understand that my image may be used by associated parties or sponsors for media relations regarding the 2012 event, or for advertising for any future event.

The undersigned has read this Release and Waiver and understands all of its terms and executes it voluntarily and with full knowledge of its significance.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**After completing and signing this form turn it in by scanning and emailing to Milton Johnson, N5HMJ (milton@n5hmj.com) or faxing it to Milton Johnson, N5HMJ at 210-957-7090.**