



# THE BARK



## Newsletter of the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club K5FD

February 2021

Alpine, Texas

### February 9 BBARC Monthly Meeting

2m repeater system

7:30 pm (7:00 early checkin with KI5ANQ)

### BBARC Minutes of Meeting

January 12, 2021

The meeting was attended by 21 members and guests.

- AI4BA.....David .....Alpine
- K5FRN .....Fran.....Fort Davis
- K5WSA.....Bill.....Fort Davis
- KA5PVB.....Chuck.....Alpine
- KB5R.....Rusty.....Alpine
- KE5KNQ .....Rob .....Alpine
- KE5WCP .....Stephen .....Fort Davis
- KF5KMA.....Dan .....Alpine
- KG5BMK ....Chuck.....Terlingua Ranch
- KG5LMG ....Marvin .....Fort Davis
- KG5ZIB.....Judi .....Fort Davis
- KI5ANQ .....Scott.....Terlingua
- KI5EXF .....Sharon.....Alpine
- KI5MRU.....Charlie .....Alpine
- N5HYD.....Doug .....Fort Davis
- N5MVV.....Angie .....Fort Davis
- W5ATO.....Bill.....Alpine
- W5JUW .....Lora.....Alpine
- W5RHN.....Bob .....Fort Davis
- WA5MHO....Dean.....Alpine
- WA5ROE....Bob .....Alpine

Due to the Covid-19 virus, the meeting was conducted on 2 meters utilizing the BBARC 2 meter repeater system.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Stephen KE5WCP.

The minutes of the December 8, 2020 meeting were read and accepted.

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Angie N5MVV reported a current balance of \$8812.92. Activity included one payment to Big Bend Telephone for \$36.08. Expenses to Doug N5HYD were reimbursed for \$965.63 (\$146.82 new solar system and miscellaneous related charges). There were no deposits.

The RV insurance will be paid this month.

Angie reminded it is time to pay dues of \$36.

The treasurer's report was accepted.

Stephen recognized the new officers and Bill W5NPR for his service as secretary, now Vice President.

### 2m Repeater Report

Doug N5HYD went to Christmas Mountain to replace the repeater with an abbreviated machine. The repeater was brought back for testing on the bench.

### EchoLink Report

Scott KI5ANQ reported a completely new system was set up (radio, computer, antenna), but had the same problems as the old one. The old one was put back up. A persistent problem breaks the Internet link, so might be in the router. Also removed all DTMF controls from EchoLink and working with Doug N5HYD on repeater commands and implemented three for EchoLink - enable, disable, and status.

Stephen mentioned the \$35 FCC license charges and the new FCC email requirement. He also reiterated club dues are \$36 and the address, 1402 N 5th St, Alpine TX 79830.

Stephen called for new business. VEC Rusty KB5R mention testing this Saturday at the American Legion at 10:00. Rusty reiterated that the \$15 charged goes to the ARRL, and that the club gets nothing. He has not heard what the ARRL will do about collecting the \$35 FCC fee.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott McClanahan KI5ANQ

BBARC Secretary

## 2 Meter Net Report

### January 2021 from Chuck KA5PVB

Our 2 meter net meets EVERY Wednesday at 8:00 PM (local time) on the clubs repeater system network. These are good training grounds for potential emergency situations as well as helping new hams in the area to have an easy way to get use to "talking on the radio"! GREAT to hear some of the KI5 prefix calls on the 2 meter system (new operators, just recently licensed). Welcome one and all, hope you come back often.

Our club website ([www.bigbendarc.com](http://www.bigbendarc.com)) has all the information about our 2 meter net. This includes the Net Control members schedule, the "script" (supplied only as a guide to insure that the important information is given out weekly - you can use it anyway you see fit) and a list of the recent check-in members.

If you have an interest in joining the NET CONTROL STATIONS as an operator, please call me (432/386-8052) or holler during the Wednesday Net. We could really use a couple of extra hands to be NCS! The script and "check-in roster" are both posted on the club website for you to download and use as a NCS!

The month of January had four (4) Wednesday's, and it went this way:  
monthly total: 63

Date	Check Ins	Net Station	Net Ctlr
Jan 6	15	KG5LMG	Marvin
Jan 13	16	N5BBJ	Bruce
Jan 20	17	W5RHN	Bob
Jan 27	15	KF5KMA	Dan

A hearty thanks to all for your participation in support of our net activities!!!!!!!!!!!!

If you don't have the time to check-in to the net and participate in the round-table discussion, take a minute of your time and check-in as an "in-and-out" (you're in for the head count, but not participating in the actual net). ALL participation is appreciated and encouraged!

EchoLink System check-ins are as follows:

KI5JTJ - Rachel from San Marcos, TX, 4 times.

KG5HEJ - Al from Terlingua, TX, 2 times.

KI5RIC - Ric from Ruidoso, NM, 3 times.

KB0VLR - Chris from Red Wing, MN, 2 times.

KC5WFH - Bill from Kingston, WA, 1 time.

A big THANKS to Scott KI5ANQ for his work on the EchoLink system, it really sounds good and the long time delay seems to be gone!

I want to specifically thank our five (5) Net Control stations for all of their efforts on behalf of the club's 2 meter net for the entire year. It just wouldn't have happened if you were NOT there! Our Net Control Stations are:

KF5KMA - Dan, KG5LMG - Marvin, N5BBJ - Bruce, W5RHN - Bob, KI5ANQ - Scott, and KI5EXF - Sharon.

When you see them, thank them for all their efforts for the 2 meter net!

Chuck Dobbins - KA5PVB

2 meter Net Manager

## Big Bend Emergency Net Report

### January 2021 from Bob WA5ROE

Date	Net Station	Check Ins	Length (min)	Remarks
Jan 3	W5NPR	53	50	
Jan 10	WA5ROE	44	45	
Jan 17	WA5ROE	52	45	
Jan 24	W5NPR	52	45	
Jan 31	WA5ROE	40	45	

Remember – the BBEN meets every Sunday on 3922 kHz at 8:15 a.m. Central time (either CST or CDT). Visitors are always welcome. Early check-ins are welcome beginning around 8:05 a.m. on 3922 kHz or on the BBARC repeater system or on EchoLink.

## Emergency Nets

Mondays .....7:30pm.....ARES section 3873 kHz

Sundays.....8:15am .....BBEN 3922kHz

Sundays.....2:00pm .....RACES state district 8 7255 kHz  
2nd and 4th Sundays, listen only

## 2m Repeater Report

January 2021 from Doug N5HYD

On 09 January 2021, Doug N5HYD and Angie N5MVV made a repair trip to the 146.820 Mhz Christmas Mountain repeater. The issues we addressed were intermittent and persistent dusk-dawn time repeater lock-up, transmitted single tone issues until 3 minute Time-Out Timer activation, and other weird things.

We had inclement weather, so we decided that Angie would remain at the lodge area while Doug traveled via a UTV and foot to the mountaintop site.

LOCAL REPEATER: Replaced Kenwood TKR-750 V2 with a Kenwood NXR-710K owned by N5HYD

LINK RADIO: Replaced Motorola SM50 with a Motorola CDM-750.

CONTROLLER: Removed an RLC-1 and used the Local Repeater's on-board controller to do it's job.

SITE: Added steel wool to keep critters out of the box.

Preliminary visual-only troubleshooting of the equipment brought down indicates water damage on the CONTROLLER circuit board.

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## EchoLink Report for K5FD-R

*January 2021 from Scott KI5ANQ*

The old EchoLink station hardware was set back up as the new hardware did not work as well. Another attempt will be made with an Intel NUC dedicated as the EchoLink station and use the existing Motorola radio and USB radio Interface device. The next goal is to run the proxy server and set up EchoLink in user mode on another Intel NUC in order to test EchoLink.

The persistent problem of losing the link to the EchoLink server improved this month. The change was disabling QoS (quality of service) in the router.

Total Number of Connections: 142

Users With Most Connections:

Gold Medal at 10	KI5JTB
Silver Medal at 9.	K5RIC-L and KG5HEJ
Bronze Medal at 6	WASROE, KC5WFH, K5AVJ,
.....	N5FAZ-R, W5LXS

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## APRS Report

*January 2021 from Scott KI5ANQ*

The APRS station was used for EchoLink testing this month. The radio does not operate EchoLink and APRS simultaneously. Now that the experiment with EchoLink on the Kenwood TMD710 is over, can go back to doing APRS work. The next challenge is interfacing APRS to the station computer.

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## Web Site Report

*January 2021 from Scott KI5ANQ*

The big work on the web site this month was the Member page, found on the main menu. Tools using Perl were developed to process the 2m net roster, BBEN roster, and newsletter distribution list to create a new BBARC member list. There are now three tables about members: contact information, participation, and totals. Club members are reviewing their information and sending updates to the club secretary.

Several new members motivated the creation of a New Member page. The link is on the home page article.

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## BBRC Repeater System

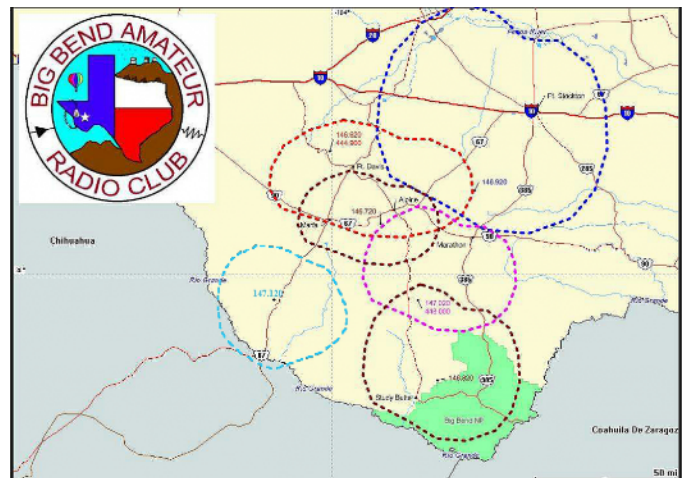
The BBARC operates six 2m repeaters, all connected via the hub 147.020. Contact with one repeater transmits from all repeaters. The frequencies are 100 kHz apart on the 2's: 146.62, .72, .82, .92, 147.02, and .12.

All repeaters use standard offsets on your radio for transmissions (negative below 147 and positive above 147). The following frequencies are for receiving (listening) with the offset your transmission frequency.

- 145.230-.....Emergency Repeater (currently off and stored)
- 146.620-.....Located at McDonald Observatory, covers Davis Mtns Resort, Fort Davis, Davis Mtn State Park, Davis Mtns, Prude Dude Ranch
- 146.720-.....Located on Pearce Mtn, covers Alpine, US 67 (frequency is "6.7") East/North, and south to Mile High Road
- 146.820-.....Located on Christmas Mtn, covers Terlingua, Study Butte, South County Road, Terlingua Ranch, northern half of Big Bend National Park, Old Ore Road
- 146.920-.....Located on the Glass Mountains, covers US 67 north, Alpine, Fort Stockton, I10 from picnic area 20 miles east of town to US 67 exit west of town, Odessa
- 147.120+ .....Covers Presidio, Shafter, Cibolo Creek
- 147.020+ .....System hub. Located on Elephant Mtn, covers TX 118 South of Mile High Road, O2 Flats (the "O2" frequency), Terlingua Ranch

All repeaters require a 146.2 Hz squelch tone on your transmit signal (CTCSS) and standard offsets. There is a 3 minute timeout. No digital modes, make sure those are off.

The repeaters cover remote areas and should be monitored for emergency calls. 146.520 is the simplex call frequency and the Wilderness Protocol frequency for this area.



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## EchoLink Station K5FD-R Alpine

Access the 2m repeater system through the club's EchoLink station. Get the EchoLink application on your smartphone or Windows station computer. [echolink.org](http://echolink.org)

## Club Officers

President .....Stephen Cook.....KE5WCP  
Vice-president.....Billy Roberts.....W5NPR  
Secretary.....Scott McClanahan.....KI5ANQ  
Treasurer.....Angie Otoupol.....N5MVV

## Club Information

BBARC is an ARRL affiliated club.

Founded December 17, 1974, ARRL affiliate since 1986

The BBARC is a 501(C)3 organization.

Contributions are tax deductible.

Monthly meetings are the second Tuesday of each month unless a special meeting or event.

Meeting location is the West Texas National Bank Building in the center of Alpine at the intersection of state highway 118 and US highway 67. Parking is on the north side of the building. Enter the north side to The Community Room.

Meeting time is 7:30pm CST/CDT.

Annual membership is Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 each year.

Dues are \$36 per year for individual or individual & spouse.

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

Dues can be mailed to Bob Ward WA5ROE at the BBARC mailing address below.

## Club Mailing and Email Address

Big Bend Amateur Radio Club

1402 N. 5th St.

Alpine, Texas 79830

[K5FD@ARRL.net](mailto:K5FD@ARRL.net)

[www.bigbendarc.com](http://www.bigbendarc.com)

The BBARC web site contains a Member exclusive area, news, events, regular reports, Big Bend Emergency Network reports, 2m Net reports, and newsletter archive.

**Member** is password protected with exclusive member information.

**Newsletters** contains PDF files of The Bark newsletter.

**Repeaters** has the reference information and coverage map of our 2m repeater system.

**Nets** has information and reports about our 2m Net and Big Bend Emergency Net.

**EchoLink** has information about the club's K5FD-R EchoLink station, logs, and setting up EchoLink.

**Licensing** has contact information for training and testing, and the schedule of upcoming classes and exam sessions sponsored by the BBARC.

**About Us** provides the officer list, dues information, meeting map and time, and mailing address.

On the right side are the Posts. The most recent are listed first, then the **Posts by Category** drop down menu. Exploring the links from the **Posts by Category** menu is fascinating and contains most of the content of the BBARC website.

## The Bark Newsletter

Published monthly on the first of the month.

Newsletters are available by e-mail for members, subscribers, and interested recipients. To be added to the distribution list, submit content, make comments, or add events, send an email to the editor.

Editor .....Scott McClanahan.....KI5ANQ  
contact.....ki5anq@arrl.net

## Big Bend Emergency Net 3922 kHz

Founded September 18, 1977

Meets every Sunday morning at 8:15 A.M. CST/CDT

Controlled net format. Welcomes new participants and visitors.

Established and managed by Bob Ward WA5ROE.

Emergency Net Mgr.....Bob Ward.....WA5ROE  
contact.....wa5roe@juno.com.

## Big Bend 2-meter Net on Repeater System

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)  
2m Net Manager.....Chuck Dobbins...KA5PVB

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## ARRL News

### New FCC Leader

FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel was appointed by President Biden immediately after the inauguration.

### Space Station Ham Radio Not Working

The astronauts replaced the 2m radio feedline on a recent space walk, and now the 2m FM and APRS are not working.

### QEX

The new issue of QEX has two projects that provide a solution whose components are a jump start on other projects. The SWR meter that speaks uses a tandem coupler board to gather antenna data. A microcontroller has the program to convert the data and tell another board to speak the data through speakers. A fourth board has buttons to command the microcontroller. The second project parses the NMEA data from a GPS with a microcontroller, then turns on LED lights for a giant display of a clock. One could build a SWR meter that is a giant LED display, or a GPS clock that talks, or both. The component scheme of using microcontrollers is different from a QRP radio kit. The component approach encourages more experimentation, and more QEX articles!

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## From the Editor

### Correction on License Fees

A major correction to last month's article concerns exam session fees. The \$15 fee goes to ARRL, not the club, so exams do not generate any income for the club, according to club VEC Rusty KB5R. Soon, exams will cost \$50, with \$35 going to the FCC, and \$15 to ARRL.



### *PayPal for BBARC?*

The mechanism of paying club dues needs to be enhanced. Writing a check is becoming passe. In the age of smart phones, COVID shutdown, and buying online, fewer people continue to use checks. The club is considering adding PayPal to the web site for paying dues and making contributions. The cost looks to be 30 cents per transaction plus 2.2% of the transaction amount. The PayPal recommendation comes from the Web Master. The Midland Club has a great web site and uses PayPal for donations.

### *Email for All Members*

The club member contact list is focused on email addresses for all members. We are almost there. The approaching FCC requirement for an email address (June 29) will force the issue. I recommend members prepare for this with a permanent Ham address. The best way to do this is to be an ARRL member and set up email forwarding. This is found on the Edit Account page of arrl.com. Make sure Username is your call sign, your email address is present, and check the Opt In to Have Email Alias. In a few days, your call sign @arrl.net will forward to your email address.

We will use other means to contact members without email. Telephone number would be next, possibly text. The final method would be USPS mail, which has a cost. If near my QTH, can drop off a newsletter. The main need for contacting club members is to notify them of monthly meetings.

### *What is a strong club?*

The data gathered for the Member page lead to thinking of measuring club strength. The Totals table showed nearly 50% were Extra class. My thought was we are a strong club. Strong because of its individual members. I scrolled up to the Participation table and saw members that are on the 2m Net roster, BBEN roster, ARRL member, current on dues, and Advanced license level. That is a strong member. How many more and what criteria? What about roles, officers, editors, treasurer, net controllers, net managers, ARES involvement, section involvement, contesting, CW, operating modes? The criteria gets big but we get a clearer view of what a strong member might be, and therefore determine club strength.

### *52 Simplex*

“There will never be any 52 commands.” - Doug N5HYD

Looking at our repeater frequencies, 82, 72, 62, the next one would seem to be 52. No, 146.52 is the national call frequency and Wilderness Protocol frequency, simplex only.

It might be fun to try simplex all at the same time. Each operator would build a contact score card to email to the organizer. The network could be tested by sending several messages between outliers through the network at one time. If our repeater system ever fails, or even parts of it, the simplex network could communicate. The exercise also gets us on 52 in case there is an emergency call. With members clustered in Alpine and Fort Davis, and QTH's at high elevations, we may have more simplex contact with members than imagined.

Scott KI5ANQ



### *Looking Forward to Field Day*

Field Day is June 26 (Friday) to the 27th (Sunday). We hope by then the BBARC event will be as in the past with all of our members, family, and friends attending.

