



**Newsletter
of the
Big Bend Amateur Radio Club
K5FD**

October 2021

Alpine, Texas



“I’d like to settle down, but they won’t let me. I’m on the run, the highway is my home.”

— Merle Haggard “The Fugitive”

October 12 BBARC Monthly Meeting
American Legion Post Alpine
7:30 pm (doors open 7:00)

CycleFest

by Scott K15ANQ

The Permian Basin Bicycle Club ran the forty-fourth annual CycleFest the weekend of September 18. Based out of the Prude Ranch, 380 riders headed down highways 118 to 17, through Fort Davis, and toward Marfa Saturday morning at 8:00. The BBARC, led by Jim KD5KBU, provided

communications support. The radio club has been part of the event for some 30 years, Bob WA5ROE told me Saturday.

The five aid stations were manned by Fort Davis Lions Club members serving food and drinks. Several additional stations had radio operators only. The purpose of the radios is to call for medical help if there is an accident, call for a SAG vehicle when a rider needs assistance, and to track the riders through the course. Jim KD5KBU as net control manned the start/finish line located at the Prude Ranch. Jim also has the county emergency radios.

The weather was perfect for the riders, and the scenery was lush with vegetation from the wet summer. It has been two years since the event was run, so riders were happy and enthusiastic to tackle their favorite course. Many flowers



A typical aid station, from left to right, the bathroom, SAG wagon, refreshments and Lions Club volunteer, and the BBARC volunteer.

were out, adding another sensory variety. The mountain scenery is captivating.

The bicyclists streaming out of Fort Davis turn on highway 166. The first three aid stations handle the bulk of the riders before the first big hill. Different ride lengths accommodate all levels of riders. Some turn around at these initial aid stations and head back through town to the ranch.

At the intersection of highways 166 and 118 where I was stationed with Dean W5MHO, the 75-mile route makes its turn back toward the ranch. We make sure no rider heads to Van Horn! Dean says they would be none too happy. Without any food or drinks at our station, no bicycles stop and we simply get a thumbs up as they prepare for the next big climb.

Some family members track their rider by vehicle. The family support vehicles do stop at our station and wait. They play a game called "Is That My Rider?" Despite the color assortments riders wear, identifying a specific rider is not easy.

The riders do not have identification numbers, so we do not have to track individual riders. Tracking ID numbers is a great deal of work for communications. On this event, we count number of riders and carefully track the last riders. As all riders clear a station, the race director releases that team. The radio team drives forward along the route counting riders and asking for assistance. At the next station, the team stops to count the riders coming in. The next station for us was Fischer Hill manned by Bob WA5ROE and Rachael KI5JTB.

After the last riders arrived at Fischer Hill, we drove on to Charlie's Bistro crowded with riders, bicycles on the ground, a giant shade tree, and food everywhere. This was the last full service stop before the *raison d'être*, the massive downhill from Mount Locke. Charlie N5CET manned the radio here. "We got everything here and all the riders stop."

The last station is Indian Hill, a pull out for Lonny KG5ZHT to set up some shade and watch the bicycles sail by. "The first two were still pedaling hard," Lonny said.

Eventually, all riders and BBARC members return to the Prude Ranch for hamburgers, raffle drawing, and live music. I said hello to my friend Neal Trammel of Alpine performing with an acoustic group of four.

The race was a success as there were no accidents. Many thanks to the BBARC members that worked the event. The BBARC crews at the first stations include Cheryl KM4TYV, Marvin KG5LMG, Rob KE5KNQ, Bill K5WSA, Stephen KE5WCP, and Pamela KG5ZIC.

The next day, only Jim KD5KBU and Bill K5WSA were needed to monitor the event. The Sunday morning race is up the hill to the observatory and then back down to the ranch. Another good report from Jim of no accidents.

Feels good to work events with radio again! Several club members experienced their first CycleFest and look forward to next year.

The BBARC volunteers' next event is the MLK weekend in January.

Photo Credits: BBARC members Rachael KI5JTB and Ron K4AAA.

Big Bend Emergency Net for Forty-Four Years

The first BBEN was September 18, 1977 and had 4 checkins: Bob WA5ROE (net control), Dave N5DO, Jim NV5S, and WA5QZT (SK). The BBEN is still run by Bob WA5ROE and Billy W5NPR with 144 participants on the roll call sheet. The BBEN is each Sunday morning at 8:15, but lots of traffic before that. Frequency is 3922 kHz in the 80m band. In the summer, the sun rising early can shutdown the band before the round table finishes, a big reason for the traffic before the net. The 2m repeaters and EchoLink are also used for checkins as some operators are out of the area or propagation (or HF rig) is not working in their favor.

BBARC Minutes of Meeting

September 14, 2021

The meeting was attended by 15 members and 2 guests ().

K4AAA.....RonFort Davis
K5RIC.....Rick.....Nogales, NM
K7VEN.....ArtFort Davis
KA5PVB.....Chuck.....Alpine
KB5R.....Rusty.....Alpine
KD5KBU.....Jim.....Fort Davis
KE5WCP.....Stephen.....Fort Davis
KG5ZHT.....Lonny.....Van Horn
KG5ZIC.....Pamela.....Fort Davis
KI5ANQ.....Scott.....Terlingua
KM4TYV.....Cheryl.....Alpine
N5CET.....Charlie.....Alpine
N5MVV.....Angie.....Fort Davis
WA5POK.....Mike.....Alpine
WA5ROE.....Bob.....Alpine

Location of the meeting is the American Legion Hall in Alpine. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Stephen KE5WCP.

The minutes of the August 10, 2021 meeting were read and accepted with the name correction of Mad Jacks to Mad Dogs.

Angie N5MVV gave the treasurer's report for June/July. Current balance is \$8932.94. Income is from dues \$108, ARRL membership \$95, donation \$4, Field Day meals \$326, and Field Day meals PayPal \$ 77.64. Expenses are Big Bend Tel (June) \$36.20, ARRL memberships (June) \$127, Big Bend Tel (July) \$36.08, Bob Ward Field Day expenses \$343.25, Rachel Ward Field Day expenses \$38.81, True Value \$37.43, ARRL Liability Insurance \$200, ARRL memberships (August) \$93, Big Bend Tel (August) \$36.08. The report was accepted.

Doug N5HYD is working on the WTX repeater connection. Chuck KA5PVB made a motion for a \$1000 line of credit to use for BBARC repeater work. The motion carries.

Rusty KB5R discussed the American Legion Hall (AHL) project of a mural on the outside walls. The mural will represent the US military from 1919 to present time. The cost is \$30,000, and the post is raising funds for the project.

Rusty also discussed the normal costs for renting the meeting room. The normal cost is \$500 for an event with \$200 refunded if the meeting room is left clean.

Rusty recommends the club donate to the mural project as a gift for the monthly club meeting. The previous site, the WTNB conference room, was free of charge for BBARC meetings. However, the unavailability during COVID required moving to ALH.

A motion was made to contribute \$500 to the mural project. The motion passed.

Jim KD5KBU gave the details on CycleFest on Saturday. The Permian Basin Bicycle Association organizes the event, but has lost the longtime leaders that did the work. Jim notes that the BBARC role is not to keep track of each rider (no ID placards are worn by riders). The communications role is mainly for medical emergencies. Ham radio is crucial since parts of the course have no cell phone coverage. There are five aid stations - Medley Ranch, Blue Mtn, Bear Mtn, Fischer

Hill, and Epenhower Ranch. Net control location is the Prude Ranch, which is the start and finish line. Jim is the net controller. Two more stations will only have a radio team - the 166 and 118 highway intersection and Indian Hill. BBARC members are to meet Jim at 7am Saturday at the Mad Dog parking log, near the 118 and 17 intersection on the southeast side of Fort Davis. There will be ham operators from Midland in the SAG vehicles. The Saturday event is over at 4pm. Be prepared for a full day in the sun - hat, sunscreen, food, and water. The Sunday event only needs three BBARC volunteers. These will be decided at the Saturday morning meeting and go straight to their station on Sunday morning - no Sunday morning meeting before the event. Let Jim know if you are operating on HT only. There is no cell phone coverage at the net control site. The event should result in a \$500 donation to club. Jim will attend an event meeting at 4pm Friday. The BBARC has been involved in CycleFest for 30 years. EMS will be on call but not on standby. If there is an emergency, club operators are to contact net control immediately before leaving their station. Radio coverage may not be available at the site of the emergency.

Mike WA5POK mentioned attending the Belton Ham Fest. Mike is also preparing a presentation on the N1MM logger for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21pm.

A presentation on SOTA was made by Chuck KI5PVB after the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott McClanahan KI5ANQ, BBARC Secretary

BBARC News

The Christmas Mountain repeater, 146.82, went offline the day after Doug N5HYD went up to work on it. The cause of the outage is a mystery and requires another visit.

There is much discussion by email about the Glass Mountain repeater, 146.92 connecting to the West Texas repeater system for emergency nets.

Lesson learned from the CycleFest operation will be discussed at the next meeting.

The next race event for the club is in January at the Big Bend Ranch State Park.

Field Day 2022 efforts have already begun. Scott KI5ANQ has some network hardware to set up. Mike WA5POK is presenting the N1MM logger at the next meeting. The goal is to do all Field Day logging on N1MM, to share the logs between stations, and to have a centralized scoreboard in the Calamity Palace.

Club elections are held at the December meeting. This meeting traditionally is a holiday celebration with food and a silent auction of donated items. The November meeting is on the 9th, and the December meeting is on the 14th.

Contributions to the club are tax deductible and can be made through the mail by check or with PayPal on the club web site. Club expenses include the repeater equipment, the RV, the phone patch on Elephant Mountain, insurance, ARRL club membership, and the monthly meeting venue.

2 Meter Net Report

September 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"!

Our club website (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, 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 an NCS!

The month of September had five Wednesdays and it went this way:

Date	Check Ins	Net Station	Net Ctlr
Sept 1	25	KI5ANQ	Scott
Sept 8	24	KA5PVB	Chuck
Sept 15	21	KI5ANQ	Scott
Sept 22	21	KF5KMA	Dan
Sept 29	15	KG5LMG	Marvin

Monthly total of 106 check-ins.

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:

KI5JTB – Rachel from San Marcos, TX. 1 time

KI5RIC – Ric from Ruidoso, NM. 2 times

KG5ZHT - Lonny from Van Horn, TX. 4 times

KD5KC - Mike from El Paso, TX. 4 times

W5RHN and K5FRN - Bob and Fran from Crystal Falls, MI 3 times

KI5EXF - Sharon from Buda, TX 2 times

KB0VLR - Chris from Red Wing, MN 2 times

KE0WQE - Alan from Parker, CO 1 time

WB5LJO - Martin from El Paso 1 time

KG5DW - Don 1 time

I want to specifically thank our five 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, W5RHN - Bob, KI5ANQ - Scott and KI5EXF - Sharon (substitute, and "possible" future NCS). When you see them, thank them for all their efforts for the 2 meter net.

73,

Chuck Dobbins - KA5PVB
2 meter Net Manager

Big Bend Emergency Net Report

September 2021 from Bob WA5ROE

Date	Net Station	Check Ins	Length (min)	Remarks
Sept 5	WA5ROE	44	48	
Sept 12	WA5ROE	47	41	
Sept 19	WA5ROE	45	48	BBEN 44 years old this week. First BBEN Sept 18, 1977 with 4 checkins WA5ROE (net control), N5DO, NV5S, WA5QZT (SK)
Sept 26	W5NPR	45	40	

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

Mondays7:30pm.....ARES section 3873 kHz

Sundays.....8:15amBBEN 3922kHz

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

ARRL News

On September 11, some 115 amateur radio volunteers from five states provided communication support for LoToJa, the longest single-day USA Cycling (USAC) sanctioned bicycle event in the country. Starting in Logan, Utah, the 203-mile course ends in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. 1,700 competed this year. Hams participate from multiple clubs in Utah. The race deploys four command centers and multiple repeaters. They provide uninterrupted communication throughout LoToJa's mountainous and remote terrain.

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From the Editor

Summits on the air (SOTA) has been the focus of two presentations from two perspectives. One view looks to make summit activations a club goal. The web sites involved in announcing, monitoring, and logging contacts were the focus of the first presentation. The available summits in our area was also reviewed. Most of the opportunities in the state are in the BBARC area. Unfortunately, all but a few are on private land.

The strategic SOTA goal of the club is to involve ranchers in ham radio. There are other options for ranchers in commercial and general public bands, but ham radio has the local use (simplex) and regional (repeaters). Our repeaters carry weather warnings. The club regularly tests the repeater and equipment with the weekly 2m net. The BBEN does the same with HF, and exercises the emergency network. APRS has many uses for sending data beginning with weather stations. I have a small ranch and livestock in south county. Ham radio is the primary communications with my wife, either mobile or at the house 75 miles away. Ham radio also taught me electronics, DC power, batteries, grounding, and complete electrical systems.

There are summits in parks and preserves, and working with the organizations might create opportunities. Mount Locke is the obvious choice with the "drive up" access and several club members working at the observatory. The Nature Conservancy has preserves with several Davis Mountain peaks, including Livermore. The club had a repeater on Twin Sisters, but members got tired of the long hike. Repeaters are on Elephant and Christmas mountains. Maybe a SOTA activation could tie into a repeater maintenance trip. We have two National Parks with peaks, Emory in Big Bend and several peaks in the Guadalupe.

The second presentation was from an experienced goat, the slang for the radio operator on the summit. Chuck KA5PVB brought his rig, log reports, and talked about experiences on Mount Locke and Elephant Mountain.

After digesting the presentations and BBARC opportunities, the impression is one of a team effort. What would make this work is for the club to organize the rig. A go kit ready for the trip no matter who the goat is. The kit could live at the hardware store. Chuck gave us a good idea of the radio, modes, antenna, and battery. These components could be built, scavenged, bought, or donated. A manual would explain operation to anyone. We have the web site and repeaters to announce activations.

The first test could be Hancock Hill. Then we buy the lama. Speaking of backpacking, hams share technology with overnight campers. Hams have greatly evolved the rock and string technique for putting a dipole antenna between treetops. Campers do the same, but string up the bear bag at night containing anything that smells. A black bear is in the area of members Charlie N5CET (has met the bear), Lora W5JUW, and Sharon KI5EXF and Scott KI5ANQ. We don't have trees, but certainly a selling point of twin towers for a dipole, is to string the bear bag up at night. Incidentally, the triangle described above contains the BBARC Field Day site. In addition to thunderstorms, we might have a black bear in the Calamity Palace at night eating leftovers - our Sunday lunch.
73, Scott KI5ANQ

BBARC Repeater System

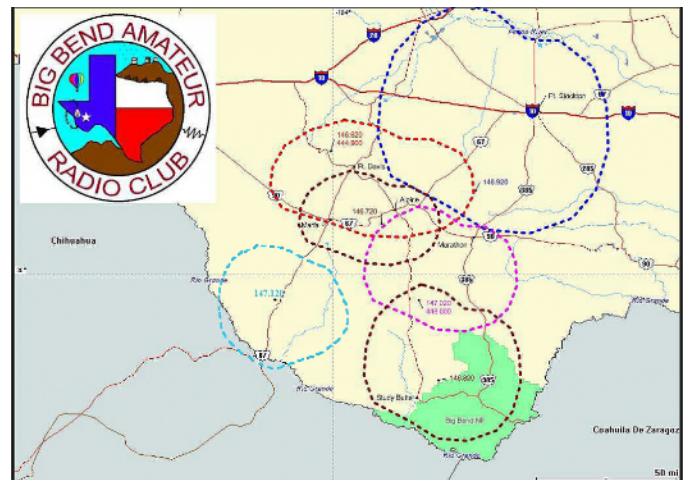
The BBARC operates six 2m repeaters, all connected via the hub 147.020. Contact with one repeater transmits from all repeaters. The frequencies are 100 kHz apart on the 2's: 146.62, .72, .82, .92, 147.02, and .12.

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.



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

Big Bend Amateur Radio Club Information

Club Officers

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

Club Information

The BBARC was founded December 17, 1974. The BBARC is a 501(C)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible. The club is an ARRL affiliated club since 1986.

Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings are the second Tuesday of each month unless a special meeting or event. Meeting location is the Alpine American Legion Hall located at 306 W Sul Ross Ave. Meeting time is 7:30pm CST/CDT.

Member Dues

Annual membership is based on the calendar year January 1st to December 31st. Dues are \$36 per year for individual or individual & spouse. Payment is in January for that calendar year. Dues can be mailed to the BBARC or paid online using the PayPal payment page of the club web site.

Membership allows participation in all club activities and voting at the monthly meetings.

BBARC Mailing Address

Big Bend Amateur Radio Club
1402 N. 5th St.
Alpine, Texas 79830-2512

BBARC Email Address

K5FD@ARRL.NET

Weekly Club Nets

Big Bend Emergency Net 3922 kHz

The BBEN was founded September 18, 1977 by Bob WA5ROE, who was also the first net controller.

The BBEN meets every Sunday morning at 8:15 A.M. CST/CDT.

The net is a controlled net format and welcomes new participants and visitors.

Emergency Net Manager...Bob Ward.....WA5ROE
contact.....K5FD@ARRL.NET.

Big Bend 2-meter Net on Repeater System

The 2m net was founded July 9, 2008.

This net meets every Wednesday evening at 8:00 P.M. CST/CDT.

The 2m net is a controlled net format and welcomes new participants and visitors.

Established by.....Bob Ayer.....KA1AAJ (SK)
2m Net Manager.....Chuck Dobbins...KA5PVB

BBARC Publications

The Bark Newsletter

The club newsletter is published monthly prior to the club meeting. Distribution is by e-mail to club members and friends of the BBARC. A current issue link is on the home page of the club web site. Current and past issues can be downloaded from the **Newsletter** page on the club web site.

To be added to the e-mail distribution list, submit content, make comments, or add events, send an email to the editor.

Editor.....Scott McClanahan.....KI5ANQ
contact.....KI5ANQ@ARRL.NET

Club Web Site

The BBARC web site has the following URL.

www.bigbendarc.com

The club web site contains a member exclusive area, news, events, regular reports, exam session information, BBEN reports and roster, 2m Net reports and net control schedule, repeater information, PayPal payment, and newsletter archive.

Navigation of the web site is through the main menu and posts. The posts have different reports, such as club minutes, 2m Net report, and EchoLink reports. The main menu has the following entries.

Member is password protected page with exclusive member information and club details.

Field Day features upcoming Field Day preparations or pictures and reports of the past Field Day.

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 by the KB5R Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Team, a separate entity from 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.

Editor.....Scott McClanahan.....KI5ANQ
contact.....KI5ANQ@ARRL.NET

...continued from page 4 - ARRL News

We take two portable repeaters to the top of mountains, and we deploy multiple APRS digipeaters. All ham vehicles run APRS, and we have APRS and a radio operator with the race director and race official. In all, nine repeaters and several simplex frequencies are used throughout the event, and APRS plays an important role. With an increase in the number of mobile vehicles needed to meet a growing event, Net Control Stations were spending a lot of radio time asking for position reports.