



BVARC BEACON

Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY



VOLUME 49 ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2025

General Membership Meeting – Thursday December 11 at 7:30 PM

Community Volunteer Fire Department Community Center, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston TX 77083

Home Brew Night

Join us at BVARC's Home Brew Night, a celebration of creativity, innovation, and hands-on amateur radio craftsmanship. Whether you bring a project to display or simply come to learn, Home Brew Night highlights the spirit of amateur radio: problem-solving, tinkering, and the joy of making something uniquely your own.



BVARC Election Results

On November 13th, 2025, BVARC had their annual elections for the following offices:

President	Treasurer	Corresponding Secretary
Recording Secretary	Two-Year at Large (Position A) Director	

There was only one person, per office, that threw their name in the hat for the election, making counting the ballots amazingly easy. After a very quick count of the ballots, these members were elected to the following offices:

Richard Bonica, KG5YCU – President	John Brockus, NE5EA – Treasurer
Blake Alley, N5BAA – Recording Secretary	Eddie Runner, NU5K – Corresponding Secretary
Lee Glassman, WA5LEE – Two-Year at Large (Position A) Director	

The One-Year at Large Director position will be filled by Mike Hardwick, N5VCX as the out-going past president.

I want to thank the members that have stepped up to fill these positions in the club. I really appreciate the spirit and initiative helping with the club and its daily activities.

I want to thank the following members whose term has ended or that they have resigned – Jeff Greer, W5JEF; Dave Ely, N5EKW; Terry Letherland, WB4PGF; and Robert Polinski, KD5YVQ. With their support for the club over the last several years, the club is much better organization.

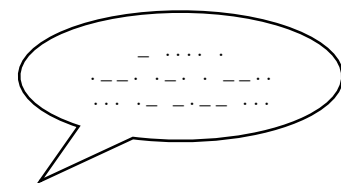
So many thanks go to the new people coming in and to the people stepping down. I appreciate all your hard work over the last several years.



Welcome the Newest BVARC Life Members

Andrew Walker KI5ZQS, Kevin Foto KD5O, Kjell Anderson KJ5EMP, Michael Palmer K5MJP, Blake Alley N5BAA, Arthur Murphy AI5TG, Robert Beauchamp AI5QE, Ronald Mahle N6RAM, Thomas Larsh K5TNL, Lee Usry K5BLU, Johnathan Taylor KI5OZK, Sean Linkenheimer N5LNK, Jorge Guterrez WK5J.

The Prez Says



It is unbelievable how fast 2025 has gone. It seems only yesterday that I was writing the Prez Sez for December 2024 and wrapping up the year for the club.

BVARC had a great year with great turnouts for both Field Days and various programs throughout the year. The club had a great turnout for the Greater Houston HamFest as well. Overall, 2025 was a great year for BVARC.

The year also brings a few changes in the club with several board members stepping down or not running for office. The biggest change in the board though is I decided not to run for office again. Check elsewhere in the newsletter for more information on both items.

Coming up on December's general meeting will be "Home Brew" night. This is the time to bring the best of your home-built equipment to show off and explain it to club members on how it works. It is great learning experience for everyone, so dust off that 1000-watt palm sized amplifier and bring it out to show. There will be prizes for the most unique item and the craziest.

For the January meeting we are tentatively planning to have Walter Holmes, K5WH, do a presentation on the newest balloon launch packages that the South Texas Balloon Launch Team is doing. Walter has done this presentation before, and it is something you do not want to miss.

February there will be a presentation by Rick Hiller, W5RH on the finer points of receiving antennas. You may think that it is the same as a transmit antenna, but Rick will show you that there is a big difference. Make sure you come out to Rick's presentation and learn about the unique things that a receive antenna is used for.

Of course, there will be the Greater Houston HamFest on February 20 and 21, 2026. Tickets should be on sale by December 15th so get ready to get them.

Do not forget about winter Field Day on January 24th and 25th, 2026. At this time, it is planned to be held at the Fort Bend Fire Training Center in Richmond. If you would like to help, contact Richard Bonica, KG5YCU.

Hope to see you at Home Brew night!

73, N5VCX

December 2025 –Amateur Radio Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 P S	2 ST	3 RS	4 S	5 S	6 B VE Testing Bayland 10:30AM
7 BVARC Board Mtg 5:30 PM Zoom	8 P S	9 ST Brews w/ BVARC Project Halo 6:30 PM	10 RS	11 S BVARC Meeting 7:30 PM	12 S	13 B
14	15 P S	16 ST	17 RS	18 S	19 S	20 B
21	22 P S	23 ST	24 RS	25 S	26 S	27 B
28	29 P S	30 ST	31 RS	B: IHOP Bkfst 6:30 AM Sat P: Public Svc Net 8 PM Mon S: Stir Crazy Net Noon M-F		T: 10-10 Net 8 PM Tue R: Rag Chew 3910 kHz 7 PM Wed

12/6/2025 VE Testing, 10:30 AM, Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St, Houston TX 77074.

12/9/2025 Brews with BVARC, 6:30 – 9:00 PM, Project Halo Brewing, 6510 FM359 Ste 300, Fulshear 77441.

1/24-25/2026 Winter Field Day, Fort Bend Fire Training Center, Richmond TX (tentative)

2/20-21/2026 Greater Houston HamFest 2026, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Rosenberg TX.

A Note of Thanks from Your New BVARC President

First, I want to thank every member of BVARC for your support as I step into the role of President. Yes, I ran unopposed. But I'm choosing to believe that means you all had great confidence in me... and *not* that everyone else suddenly remembered they had laundry to do that day. Either way, thank you for trusting me with this two-year adventure. I'm honored to serve—and excited for the road ahead.

A huge thank-you also goes out to everyone who stepped up to fill the open officer and board positions. Without dedicated volunteers, this club would operate about as well as a radio with no coax connected—technically still a club, just not doing much transmitting. Your willingness to serve keeps BVARC alive, active, and strong, and I appreciate every one of you.

In the coming weeks, I'll be reaching out by phone and email to connect with officers, board members, and committee leads. Don't worry—no surprise visits, no pop quizzes. Just friendly conversations about how we can bring back the camaraderie, excitement, and teamwork that have always been a part of BVARC's identity. Together, we can get this club united, engaged, and moving forward with purpose.

BVARC has a rich history, and I want to honor the leadership that built the foundation we stand on today. Some of our best traditions—events, activities, and “the way we used to do things”—helped create strong friendships and a sense of belonging. I plan on bringing back some of those traditions while also creating new ones that will carry us into the future. Think of it as a blend of “the good old days” with some modern upgrades—kind of like putting a digital display on a boat anchor rig.

But the real strength of this club is its members.

My hope is that every person in BVARC sees a place where they belong.

Everyone has a skill, a talent, or a curiosity that can make this club better.

You don't have to run a committee to make an impact.

You don't have to lead a project to be important.

Just join in—lend your talent, your time, or even just your enthusiasm.

Even a small contribution helps: helping someone tune an antenna, showing up at Field Day, supporting an outreach event, or simply welcoming a new ham at a meeting. When more of us participate, the work gets lighter, the club gets stronger, and the fun increases.

Some of our big goals for the next two years include:

- **Growing our membership** - bringing in new hams, reconnecting with old ones, and showing the community what BVARC has to offer.
- **Strengthening education** - both internally for our members and externally for the public. More workshops, more learning opportunities, more chances to share our knowledge.
- **Youth outreach** - inspiring the next generation of operators and makers. If we don't show them ham radio, TikTok definitely won't.
- **Supporting public events and incidents** - demonstrating the value of amateur radio through service, training, and community involvement.
- **Building a more active, engaged club** - where everyone feels welcomed, included, and appreciated.

These goals are ambitious, but they are absolutely achievable—if *we work together*. And with the talent, creativity, and dedication I've already seen from so many of you, I have no doubt we can accomplish them.

Thank you again for your trust, your humor, your patience, and your commitment to this club. I truly believe we can make these next two years something special—something we'll be proud of and something we'll definitely talk about on the nets for years to come.

73,

Richard Bonica

President, Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC)

Thank You

This year is my last year as president of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club. Being president for 16 of the last 23 years has been a wild time for me. I have seen the club grow from 85 to 350 members and a bank account that was so low we couldn't pay our insurance! There have been club issues with squirrels that killed all repeater traffic to losing our meeting place multiple times. One of the worst times with the club was when a club member threatened to kill other club members, causing armed security to be hired for an event. Of course, the best time was the beginning of the Greater Houston HamFest and the great turnout of our Field Day events. Overall, as I said, it has been a wild time.

But the one thing that has been the positive point is the club membership. They have come out to help for events and have, on occasion, stepped up to be on the board of directors. Without the members' help, BVARC would not have made it. I want to thank everyone for the help, direction, and support for the 16 years I have been president. Without your help, I would not have made it, and the club would have been in worse shape. Again, thank you for your help and support. I could not have done it without you.

Of course, just like a bad penny, I am not going away. I will still be on BOD for at least one more year for the transition, with the ability to constantly pester Richard in his new position.

Again, thank you.

73,

N5VCX



Ham Exam Question

Within what distance must an amateur station protect an FCC monitoring facility from harmful interference?

- A. 1 mile B. 3 miles C. 10 miles D. 30 miles

Waves & Coffee – It's the end of the year, so... 73?

Is 73 related to the halfwave dipole antenna?
By Stephen W2WF

This is the last installment of this column for the year and as Hams we're tempted to immediately say: "73!", which means "goodbye" to us. But, why do we say 73? What's so special about that number?

Well, according to the insufferable genius in the hit TV comedy "The Big Bang Theory", Sheldon Cooper, he's quoted as saying the following:

"What is the best number? There's only one correct answer and 5318008 is not it (inside joke).

The best number is 73. 73 is the 21st prime number, its mirror 37 is the 12th and its mirror 21 is the product of multiplying 7 and 3. In binary, 73 is a palindrome 1001001 which backwards is 1001001. Exactly the same!"

Of course, CW enthusiasts learn early on that 73 is also a palindrome in Morse code: dah-dah-dit-dit-dit dit-dit-dit-dah-dah.

So based on this, I tend to agree that 73 is an awesome number.

We could go on to mention "Code 92" of Western Union, published back in 1859, as the first place where 73 was written down to mean "Best Regards"; however, I refer those interested in that part of the story to their favorite internet search engine.

Here I'd like to show how 73 comes out of the equations for the halfwave dipole antenna and refers to the input impedance of 73 ohms for that antenna.

We'll start with the equation for the \vec{E} field and the equation for the \vec{B} field that were derived for the halfwave dipole antenna in a previous installment of this series and go from there.

If you're interested in following along this "end of the year mathematical journey", please access the full article at <https://bvarc.org/home/tech-downloads/>.

The Greater Houston HamFest Presents The ARRL Texas State Convention

Note Date Change for 2026 - 2-20 & 2-21



Tickets:

On-line - \$10
At the Door - \$15
Children 12 and under
Scouts, Military,
& First Responders
In Uniform - FREE
Tables - \$25
Tailgate - \$5

When

Friday February 20th, 2026
12 PM to 6 PM
Saturday February 21st, 2026
8AM to 3PM

*Door Prizes Every half hour
starting at 9:00 am!!*

Sponsors/Vendors

- * Ham Radio Outlet
- * The SignMan of Baton Rouge
- * ABR Industries
- * EPO

Where:

Fort Bend County Fairgrounds
4310 TX- 36 S, Rosenberg, TX 77471
29°31'12" N 95°48'38" W

Raffle Prizes

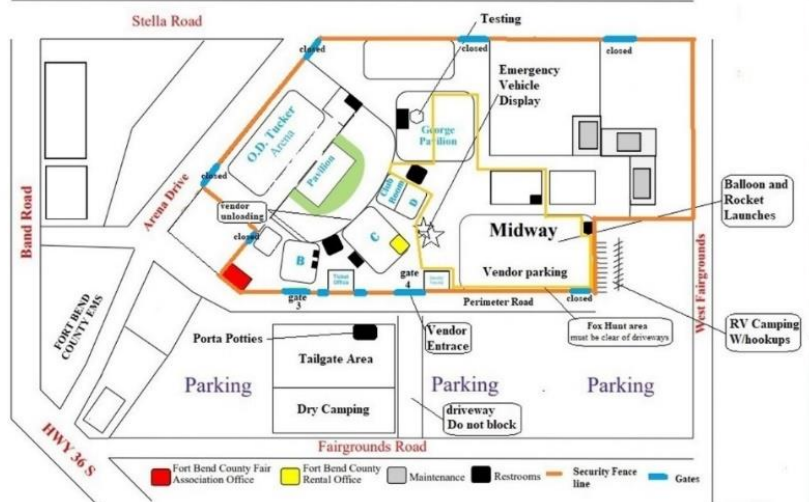
Single Ticket - \$5
Five Tickets - \$20

**Grand Prize
Prize info
coming soon!**

Guest Speaker

John Stratton, N5US
ARRL West Gulf Division Director

Radio Programming Classes
Testing & Balloon Launches
Overnight camping available
Free Shuttles to your car



Contact:

Chairman: Mike Hardwick, N5VCX
713-826-6917



[FB.com/groups/HoustonHamfest](https://www.facebook.com/groups/HoustonHamfest)

[Twitter.com/HoustonHamfest](https://twitter.com/HoustonHamfest)

www.HoustonHamfest.org



Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Minutes



November 9th, 2025 @ 5:30pm via Video Conference

Board Members

President – Mike Hardwick – N5VCX	Vice President – Kori Rahman – WX5KR
Treasurer – Dave Ely – N5EKW	1 Year At-Large – Robert Polinski, KD5YVQ
2 Year At-Large – Terry Leatherland – K5PGF	2 Year At-Large – Kirc Breden – N5XJB
Secretary – Jeff Greer – W5JEF	

Board of Directors Meeting

- ❖ Establish Quorum - Established
- ❖ Call Meeting to Order - 5:33 p.m.
- ❖ Opening Statement – The President thanked those in attendance for coming.
- ❖ Agenda Review – Approved.
- ❖ Treasurer’s Report – October and November Treasurer’s reports approved.
- ❖ Secretary’s Report – PO Box up for renewal; \$360 approved for 1 year renewal.
- ❖ Old Business
 - BVARC.org website storage – Eddie working on some ideas; not an emergency to fix.
 - 2027 Hamfest – Meeting this week. 2026 and 2027 Fairground fees paid. Club tables will be zero cost again next year.
 - Term limit proposals – need 10% of membership present at meeting for a quorum, then 2/3 of those present at the meeting must vote for a bylaw change for it to pass.
- ❖ Programs
 - November – Elections and Chili Supper
 - December – Homebrew Night. \$150 approved for prizes.
 - January – TBD
 - February - TBD
- ❖ Committees
 - Election – Chuck KF5UXP
 - Newsletter
 - Donovan working newsletter.
 - Historical Archives
 - Eddie is in process of putting up archival material on the website.
 - By-Laws
 - Finance – Terry and Dave. Quicken reporting working well. \$95 subscription renewal due in May 2026.
 - Events and Membership – Wings over Houston next year will be October 30-31 and November 1.
 - Food Team
 - Ice cream social, chili supper
 - Parks on the Air

- Elmer/ Subject Matter Experts
- Museum Ships Wknd – Mark Janzer
- Field Day – Richard Bonica
- Winter Field Day – Richard Bonica
- Greater Houston HamFest
- Banquet
- Awards
- ❖ New Business
- ❖ Next Meetings – Pursuant to Article V Section G #1 of the Club By-Laws
 - Sunday, December 7th, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- ❖ Closing Statement(s) – The President thanked those in attendance for coming.
- ❖ Meeting Adjournment – 6:32 p.m.

Recorded by: Jeff Greer, W5JEF



NOVEMBER 2025 VE - FCC TESTING SESSION RESULTS

For the November 8th test session, at Bayland - we had 1 candidate and conducted 2 tests

New Licensee:

Samuelson, D. (Technician) KJ5NCL

VEs in attendance – K5LJ, K5GOL, and KF5UXP – **THANKS!**

Congratulations to All!

The next BVARC test session will be at the Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St., Houston TX 77074, on **Saturday January 3rd**, starting at 10:30.

Pre-registration is required.

For new licensees the testing fee, paid at the session is \$15. An additional \$35 license fee (totaling \$50), will be collected by the FCC separately for new, renewal and vanity calls. License upgrades **do not** pay the added \$35 fee, just the \$15 session fee.

YOUTH LICENSING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The ARRL has created a youth program (18 and under) to defray the licensing costs to a total of **\$5** (deducting the \$35 increase and \$10 off the \$15 VE session fee). See: <http://www.arrl.org/youth-licensing-grant-program>

Also, BVARC is implementing it's own program for **youth** licensing. We'll provide a **new VHF/UHF transceiver (Baofeng, limited supply)** at the VE session, to youth that successfully pass their Technician test. The HT's are a very generous donation (Dec. '23) from a BVARC member, THANKS!

Bottom line, a young person for \$5, can walk into a test session and walk out with a new radio and a pending license.

Details for candidates are found at <https://bvarc.org/home/ham-radio-license-testing-houston/>

Pre-register to attend a test session at: <https://hamstudy.org/sessions/arrl/77008/inperson>

Become a VE! <https://www.arrl.org/become-an-arrl-ve>

For questions, Email Mark Janzer, K5MGJ at (k5mgj@yahoo.com)

BVARC Rag Chew Net

Below is the BVARC Rag Chew Net check-in information:

10/29/25, K5LKJ (NCS), KI5HOC, KF5UMC (Madisonville, TN), K5DBL (Manvel), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), K5LJ, KA5LPH. (6 Check-ins)

Solar Cycle 25: No Data. Band Rpt: FAIR

11/05/25, K5DBL (NCS)(Manvel), W5RH, W2WF (Katy), WA5CYI, KF5AIE (Woodville), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), K5JPP, K5LJ, KI5HOC, K5LKJ (T). (10 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 147, SN = 76, A = 28, K = 6, Band Rpt: POOR

11/12/25, W5RH (NCS), K5LJ, KI5HOC, AA00A (T)(Pearcy, AR). (4 Check-ins)

Solar Cycle 25: NO DATA / Band Rpt: FAIR

(M) = mobile (P) = Portable (R) = Relay (RCS) = remote controlled station (T) = telephone check-in

Net conditions have been POOR to GOOD this month. Fire up the rig and learn what others are doing and share your experiences. Come join in the conversation each Wednesday evening. Regards.
John K5LKJ

Ham Exam Answer: A. 1 mile.

Advertising in the **BVARC BEACON**

Business card sized ads are \$10 per month or six months for \$50.

Half page ads are \$25 per month, \$125 for six months, or \$250 per year.

Full page ads are \$50 per month, \$250 for six months, or \$500 per year.

BVARC EATS

Saturday Breakfast 6:30 AM, IHOP, 12725 Southwest Fwy, Stafford TX 77477

Wednesday Lunch Bunch 11 AM to Noon, Luby's Cafeteria, 10575 W Airport Blvd, Stafford TX 77477

Regularly Scheduled Club Happenings

General Meeting Second Thursday each month, 7:30 PM, in-person and Zoom, 16005 Bellaire Blvd

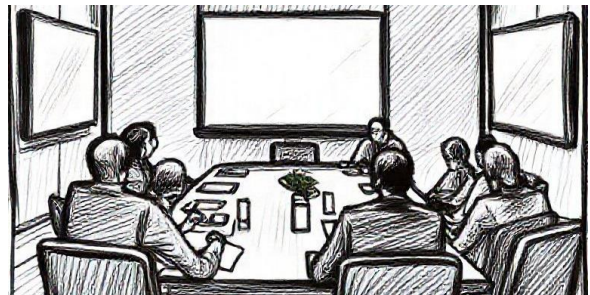
Board of Directors Meeting The weekend before the 2nd Thursday, in-person and/or via Zoom. Check the website as this might change. In person meetings are usually at Bayland Park Community Center.

Volunteer Examiner Program Monthly ham testing session 10:30 AM usually on the Saturday before the General Meeting, at Bayland Park Community Center. Please check the BVARC website for any last-minute changes or updates.

Rag Chew Net 3910 KHz ± 3KHz Wednesdays at 7 PM

Public Service Net Monday night on 146.94- (167.9) at 8 PM

Stir Crazy Net Monday-Friday on 146.94- (167.9) at 12 PM.



2026 Club Officers

President (2026-2027)

Richard Bonica KG5YCU kg5ycu@gmail.com

Vice President (2025-2026)

Kori Rahman WX5KR kori113@gmail.com

Treasurer (2025-2026)

John Brockus NE5EA johnbrockus@gmail.com

Recording Secretary (2026-2027)

Blake Alley N5BAA n5baa@baaelectronics.com

Corresponding Secretary (2025-2026)

Eddie Runner N5UK eddie.runner@yahoo.com

2-Year Director (2025-2026)

Kirc Breden N5XJB n5xjb@yahoo.com

2-Year Director (2026-2027)

Lee Glassman WA5LEE leemanpa@me.com

1-Year Director (2026)

Mike Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net

BRAZOS VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

This newsletter, the BVARC BEACON, is a monthly publication of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club. For a full listing of officers and information about BVARC, please go to www.bvarc.org. Detailed information will be published in the BEACON every 3 or 4 months. Similarly, the “Eating Schedule” will be published every 3 or 4 months unless there is a change.

General membership dues are \$25 per year, with student dues \$10 per year, additional family members \$5 per member per year.

Club meetings are both in-person and via Zoom on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. If you have signed up for the email reflector, you will receive notice and the attendance password, etc. It will also be on the website a few days beforehand.

BVARC amateur radio testing takes place typically on the Saturday before the 2nd Thursday of each month at 10:30 AM.

Location: Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, 77074. **Before going** please check the BVARC website for any changes.

A Public Service Net is held each Monday at 8 PM on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 tone) repeater.

A “Stir Crazy Net” is also held weekdays at 12 Noon on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 tone) repeater.

A rag chew net is held each Wednesday at 7 PM on 3910 kHz +/- 3 kHz.

To obtain information about joining BVARC or its activities, see the BVARC website: www.bvarc.org.

Other contacts:

BVARC President Richard Bonica KG5YCU kg5ycu@gmail.com,

Newsletter Editor Donovan Balli KG5BDZ dballi@mail.com,

Editor Emeritus John Chauvin K5IZO k5izo@yahoo.com.

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2025


**BRAZOS VALLEY
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 2997
SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997**

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Board of Directors Meeting – 5:30 PM Sunday, December 7, 2025, via Zoom

General Membership Meeting – 7:30 PM Thursday, December 11, 2025, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston TX 77083



If your mailing label is highlighted in color, it's time to renew your membership!