



BVARC BEACON

Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY



VOLUME 50 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2026

General Meeting Topic: Receive Antennas

One of the most overlooked parts of our station equipment set-up is the receiving side of things. We intrinsically think that due to an antenna's inherent reciprocity that we are good in both the transmit and receive aspects of our stations. Depending on the band, sometimes we are. But, as we decrease the frequency of our pursuits it becomes less and less a 50/50 proposition. Local noise, regional noise, polar noise, and just plain band noise will try to ruin a good evening of HF radio fun.

Most hams spend their antenna system design time thinking about transmit power, feedlines, antenna forward gain and towers. But the flip side is important too: You can't work what your station can't hear. In many cases, improving the receive side of things gives you *more* real-world performance than adding another 6 dB on transmit.

Come to the February meeting to learn more about the receive side of things. Maybe the presentation can get you on your way to better DX or for you to discover that elusive noise abatement solution you have been hoping for. See you there....Rick W5RH

**General Membership Meeting Thursday
February 12 7:30 PM**

>>> DIFFERENT LOCATION <<<

Houston TranStar

6922 Katy Rd, Houston TX 77024



Robert Polinski KD5YVQ, SK 2/2/2026

I would like to inform the club of Robert Polinski, KD5YVQ, passing on Monday, February 2nd, 2026. Robert was 72 and lived in Kingwood and was a life-long resident of the Houston area.

For those who only know Robert by name and call sign, he was truly a "jack of all trades." I looked the phrase up and found the rest of it truly matched Robert – "A jack of all trades, master of none, but oftentimes better than a master of one." Robert's career took him from computer networking to electronics repair to industrial construction to automotive maintenance. His hobbies covered an even bigger area from motorcycle riding to fire-truck restoration to amateur radio. Robert was a multi-talented individual that will truly be missed.

As most of you know, Robert was the trustee of the 146.94 repeater. Robert took the reins of 94 in the 2000's from WA5CYI. He then oversaw the new transmission line and antenna installation in 2013. Robert maintained the 94 repeater for nearly 20 years and worked tirelessly to make sure it stayed on the air during that time. Robert was a person that not only took care of the equipment, he took care of the hams that used it.

As more information is known about surviving family and memorial services, I will pass it along to the club.

Please keep Robert's family in your thoughts. — Mike Hardwick, N5VCX



From the President's Desk

Yes, I'm Talking to You — Let's Get Involved (and Stay Alert)

Fellow hams, radio enthusiasts, and people who accidentally joined BVARC and then stayed because we're awesome —

As your President, I'm officially calling you out (lovingly) because the next stretch of the calendar is stacked with **big events**, **big opportunities**, and a **big need for participation**.

This isn't just a "mark your calendar" moment — this is a *show up, pitch in, and make radio magic happen* moment.

Coming up fast, we have **HamFest**, **Summer Field Day**, and our public-service support of the **MS150**. Three events. Three missions. All three absolutely depend on **you**.

HamFest – Your Club Needs Hands (and Strong Backs)

HamFest is nearly here, and while it may *look* like a collection of tables covered in radios, cables, and "I swear I'll fix it" projects, it doesn't happen by accident. It happens because **members step up**.

HamFest needs:

- Setup help
- Teardown help
- Friendly faces
- And people willing to say, "Sure, I can help with that."

Yes, you'll still have time to browse. Yes, you'll still buy something you didn't plan on. But HamFest is one of our biggest outreach events, and it only works if we all help make it run.

👉 **Details and updates are on the BVARC website — please check it and jump in.**

Summer Field Day – We Need Operators, Helpers, and Problem Solvers

Summer Field Day is where amateur radio leaves the comfort of the shack and reminds us why we do this. It's hot. It's sweaty. Something will break. Someone will say, "That's not supposed to do that."

And it is **absolutely worth it**.

Field Day needs:

- Operators (new and experienced)
- Loggers
- Setup and teardown help
- People willing to learn, teach, or just assist

If you've ever wanted to get on HF, try contest-style operating, or see how emergency-style operations actually work, **this is your event**.

👉 **Watch the BVARC website for Field Day plans and participation info.**

MS150 – This One Really Matters

Let me get serious for a moment.

The **MS150** is one of the most important public-service events we support. This is amateur radio doing exactly what it was designed to do: providing reliable communications when it matters.

The MS150 **needs volunteer radio operators**. You don't need to be a contest wizard — just willing to help, follow instructions, and keep your radio on.

👉 **Volunteer and coordination info will be posted on the BVARC website — please consider signing up.**

Keep an Ear on the Radio

One more reminder — **keep your radios on and your ears open**.

You never know when an **exercise callout** or **propagation test** might happen, sometimes with little warning, just to see how we respond. It might sound official... or it might sound like that *crazy guy in the red truck* keying up and saying, "Hey, let's see who's listening."

That kind of readiness doesn't happen by accident. It happens because people monitor, pay attention, and answer when the call goes out.

My Ask as President

BVARC isn't just a roster of callsigns. It's a group of people who **show up, participate, and answer the call** — sometimes literally.

So here's my challenge to you:

- Pick **one** event
- Pick **one** role
- Keep your **radio on**
- And say **yes** when the call comes

You'll learn something, help someone, and probably go home tired, smiling, and slightly sunburned.

Check the **BVARC website**, watch the announcements, and raise your hand. I'll see you out there — possibly in a red truck, probably with a radio.

73,

Richard Bonica, KG5YCU

President, **Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club**



JANUARY 2026 VE - FCC TESTING SESSION RESULTS

For the January 3rd test session, at Bayland - we had 3 candidates and conducted 4 tests

New Licensee:

Bufford, J. (Technician) KJ5NUY

Upgrade:

Propfe, W. (Extra) KJ5NPH

Wise, R. (Extra) KI5UHW

VEs in attendance – K5LJ, K5GOL, W5ICR 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 February 7th**, starting at 10:30. We'll also have test session at the Greater Houston HamFest on **Friday, February 20th** and **Saturday February 21st**, at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds.

Pre-registration is required (BVARC VE Team).

<https://hamstudy.org/sessions/arrl/77008/inperson>

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 its 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 HTs 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).

February 2026 –Amateur Radio Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
B: IHOP Breakfast 6:30 AM Sat P: Public Service Net 8 PM Mon			R: Rag Chew Net 3910 kHz 7 PM Wed S: Stir Crazy Net Noon Mon-Fri T: 10-10 Net 8 PM Tue			
1	2 P S	3 S T	4 R S	5 S	6 S	7 B VE Testing 10:30AM
8 BVARC Board 1:30 PM	9 P S	10 S T Brews w/ BVARC 6:30 PM	11 R S	12 S BVARC Meeting 7:30 PM	13 S Orlando HamCation	14 B Orlando HamCation
15 Orlando HamCation	16 P S	17 S T	18 R S	19 S	20 S Greater Houston HamFest	21 B Greater Houston HamFest
22	23 P S	24 S T	25 R S	26 S	27 S Orange Hamfest	28 B Orange Hamfest

2/10/2026 Brews with BVARC, Tue 6:30 PM–9 PM, Project Halo Brewing, 6510 FM 359 Suite 300, Fulshear TX 77441

2/20-21/2026 Greater Houston HamFest 2026, Fri 12–6 PM, Sat 8 AM–5 PM. Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Rosenberg TX. <https://houstonhamfest.org/>. There will be a VE Testing Session at the HamFest.

6/27-28/2026 ARRL Field Day. Details will be on <https://www.bvarc.org> as plans develop.

UPCOMING HAMFESTS

2/13-15/2025 Orlando HamCation, ARRL Southeastern Division Convention, Central Florida Fairgrounds and Expo Park, 4603 West Colonial Drive, Orlando FL 32808.

<http://www.hamcation.com>.

2/20-21/2026 Greater Houston HamFest 2026, Fri 12–6 PM, Sat 8 AM–5 PM. Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Rosenberg TX. <https://houstonhamfest.org/>.

2/27-28/2026 Orange Hamfest 2026, Fri 1–6:30 PM, Sat 7 AM–2 PM, Orange County Convention & Expo Center @ 11475 FM 1442, Orange TX 77632.

https://www.qsl.net/w5nd/index_files/HAMFEST%20INFO/hamfest%20info.htm.

3/20-21/2026 Acadiana DX Rayne HamFest, Fri 3–8 PM, Sat 8 AM–2 PM, Rayne Civic Center, 210 Frog Festival Dr, Rayne LA 70578. <https://www.acadianadx.org/>.

4/11/2026 Ham EXPO Spring 2026 (Belton Hamfest), Sat 7 AM–1 PM, 301 W Loop 121, Belton TX 76513. <https://tarc.org/hamexpo-schedule/>.

5/15-17/2026 Dayton Hamvention, Fri 9 AM–5 PM, Sat 9 AM–5 PM, Sun 9 AM–1 PM, Greene County Fair and Expo Center, 210 Fairground Road, Xenia OH 45385. <https://hamvention.org/>.



Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Minutes



January 3rd, 2026 @ 13:30
Houston TranStar, 6922 Katy Rd, Houston, TX 77024

Board Members

President – Richard Bonica – KG5YCU	Vice President – Kori Rahman – WX5KR
Treasurer – John Brockus – NE5EA	1 Year At-Large (Past Prez) – Mike Hardwick – N5VCX
2 Year At-Large – Lee Glassman – WA5LEE	2 Year At-Large – Kirc Breden – N5XJB
Corresponding Secretary – Eddie Runner – NU5K	Recording Secretary – Blake Alley – N5BAA

Board of Directors Meeting

- ❖ Called Meeting to Order: 13:32
- ❖ Established Quorum
- ❖ Opening Statement: N5VCX encourages others to aid in transitioning new BoD.
- ❖ Agenda Review: CS updated and approved
- ❖ Treasurer’s Report: Concerns raised about the loss of available funds compared to last statement and budget. December 2025 report to be corrected by Treasurer and re-sent. ARRL budget items approved.
- ❖ Corresponding Secretary’s Report: Secretary documents and USPS key delivered to new officers.
- ❖ Recording Secretary’s Report: Secretary report now split.
- ❖ Old Business
 - 2026/7 Hamfests: Fairgrounds paid both years due to new policies. 2026 prizes purchased. Website to go live next week.
 - Term limit proposal passed – after two terms (4 years), president not eligible for re-election.
 - Elections/Hand-off: no resistance to handoffs.
 - Winter Field Day: primarily a training event – teams to be established. Antennas and computer configurations to be documented by WA5LEE and N5XJB with help from KI5NPM, W5VOM, and KG5YCU. New home for trailer and computers to be established.
- ❖ Programs
 - January – Balloons with Walter K5WH
 - February – Rick Hiller W5RH
 - Outside programs: develop teams for college career fairs, farmers markets, etc.
- ❖ Committees
 - Election: Chuck KF5UXP
 - Newsletter: Donavan
 - Donavan working newsletter.
 - Historical Archives: Eddie NU5K
 - Eddie is in process of putting up archival material on the website.
 - Establish standard list of monthly archives.
 - By-Laws: Terry K5PGF and John K5IZO
 - Finance: John NE5EA and Eddie NU5K
 - John NE5EA and Randy AK5G to audit treasurer’s report.
 - Finance committee members to be reviewed by President to stay compliant with non-profit guidelines.
 - Events: Eddie NU5K
 - Membership/retention: Eddie NU5K
 - Food Team: President to re-establish team for general meetings.

- Parks on the Air: President to back off association with POTA due to establishment of KE5HP.
- Elmer/ Subject Matter Experts
 - Antenna classes in the works; part one was this last Saturday.
 - Elmer interests to be integrated in roster.
- Museum Ships Wknd – Mark Janzer
- Field Day – Richard Bonica
- Winter Field Day – Richard Bonica
- Greater Houston HamFest – Mike Hardwick
- Banquet
- ❖ New Business
 - Bank signatories
 - ARRL insurance expiry 2/1
 - Antenna party – indoor VHF/UHF antenna to build; radios to be donated – publish writeups online each time.
 - Fundraiser
 - Communication path
- ❖ Next Meetings – Pursuant to Article V Section G #1 of the Club By-Laws
 - February 8th, 2026 – 18:00 – online Zoom video meeting
- ❖ Closing Statement(s):
 - Randy Pollard: Encourages club to start with pledges. Provided years of archival documents. Encourages annual banquet. Encourages re-establishment of special services club designation. Bring back the old BVARC!
- ❖ Meeting Adjournment: 15:33

Recorded by: Blake Alley, N5BAA

Your Club Needs Your Voice!

BVARC is looking for Net Control Operators! Running a net is one of the best ways to sharpen your "radio muscles" and give back to the hobby. We are currently seeking volunteers for our **Stir Crazy** (Noon daily), **Monday Public Service**, and **Wednesday Ragchew** nets.

Don't worry if you've never run a net before—we'll provide the scripts and the "elmering" to get you comfortable. Help us keep our frequencies active and our community strong. Contact the Net Team today to sign up for a slot!

If you can not RUN as net, at least please check in.

Ham Exam Question

What transmitter frequencies would create an intermodulation-product signal in a receiver tuned to 146.70 MHz when a nearby station transmits on 146.52 MHz?

- A. 146.34 MHz and 146.61 MHz
- C. 146.10 MHz and 147.30 MHz

- B. 146.88 MHz and 146.34 MHz
- D. 146.30 MHz and 146.90 MHz

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

Sponsors/Vendors

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

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

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

Yaesu FTX-1 Field

Second Prize Third Prize

FTM-310DM FT-70DR

Guest Speaker

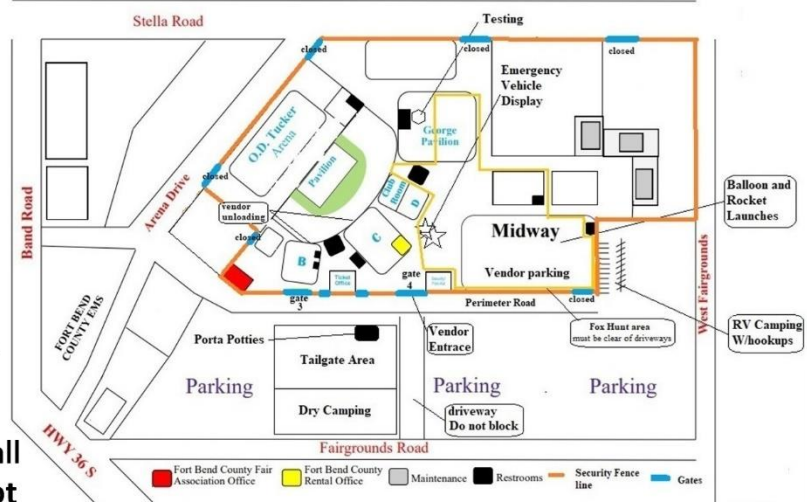
John Stratton, N5US

ARRL West Gulf Division Director

Radio Programming Classes

Testing & Balloon Launches

**Overnight camping available - Must Call
Free Shuttles to your car to parking lot**



Contact:

Chairman: Mike Hardwick, N5VCX
713-826-6917

v002 01032025



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

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

www.HoustonHamfest.org

Waves & Coffee – Telegrapher’s Equations - Part I

Oliver Heaviside’s work that enabled telegraphy
By Stephen W2WF



Oliver Heaviside was a fascinating scientist who lived in the 1800’s. He was a driven and mostly self-taught mathematician and electrical engineer. One of his accomplishments was the synthesis of Maxwell’s equations from the original 20 equations down to 4 using Vector Calculus. So, if you’ve seen the familiar 4 “Maxwell’s Equations”, then you may be keen to know that writing them in that compact and elegant form is due to Oliver Heaviside.

Another seminal work attributed to Mr. Heaviside would be the derivation of the so called “Telegrapher’s Equations”. These result from his rigorous analysis of the physics of the transmission line using the concept of lumped parameters.

The motivation for this was the very practical problem of the feasibility of economical transatlantic communication cables. This problem had been tackled by the well-known scientist William Thomson, Lord Kelvin. He’d come up with an equation that considered the resistance and the capacitance of a transmission line. However, his analysis resulted in an equation called “The Diffusion equation”. This was not good since the model showed that the signals from Europe would *diffuse* or *disperse* before they reached North America. Lord Kelvin’s model showed that transatlantic cables could be viable, if you used *extremely* conducting cables. Such cables would simply be too expensive.

So up to this point in our story, the theoretical analysis didn’t make transatlantic cable communication sound promising. The project was at a standstill.

Enter Oliver Heaviside and his thorough study of the problem. His analysis came up with a slightly different model for the transmission line since it included an additional term: the inductance of the transmission line. Thanks to this modification, Heaviside’s model no longer resulted in a diffusion equation but rather a “Wave equation”. That in turn meant that the transatlantic cables would be economically viable even if you didn’t have expensive conducting cables. This made transatlantic communication via undersea cables viable!

If you want to read more about the physics of this fascinating story, grab a cup of coffee if you like and access the full article at: <https://bvarc.org/home/tech-downloads/>

BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

12/17/25, K5LKJ (NCS), K5LJ, AA0ST (Collins, MO), KA5LPH, W5ICR, W5RH, K5DBL (Manvel), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), KI5HOC, K5LJ, WB5UPT (Rosharon), WD5L. (11 Check-ins)
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 117, SN = 54, A = 12, K = 2,
Band Rpt: GOOD

12/24/25, K5LKJ (NCS), K5LJ, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), KI5HOC. (4 Check-Ins)
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 142, SN = 103, A = 21, K = 3,
Band Rpt: FAIR

12/31/25, K5DBL (NCS), K5LJ, W5ICR, W5RH, K9ZZK, 55LZD. (6 Check-ins)
Solar Cycle 25: No data available. Band Rpt: GOOD

01/07/26, K5LKJ (NCS), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), K5LJ, KI5HOC, W5RH, AA0ST (Collins, MO), W5ICR, KJ5BWB (Belton), N5ZNS (Farmersville). (9 Check-ins)
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 145, SN = 118, A = 4, K = 0,
Band Rpt: GOOD

01/14/26, K5LKJ (NCS), WB4KTF (Austin), AA0ST (Collins, MO), K5LJ, AA5OA (Percy, AR), KI5HOC, K5DBL (Manvel), W2WF (Katy), WA5CYI, W5ICR, KA5LPH, K5LKS, W5RH. *** K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5RH. (13 Check-ins)
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 127, SN = 61, A = 7, K = 2,
Band Rpt: GOOD

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

Net conditions have been FAIR 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. 146.34 MHz and 146.61 MHz. Expect subtractive products for nearby frequencies: $2f_1 - f_2$ and $2f_2 - f_1$.

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 \pm 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

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.

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.

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FEBRUARY 2026


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

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Board of Directors Meeting – 6 PM Sunday, February 8, 2026, via Zoom

General Membership Meeting – 7:30 PM Thursday, February 12, 2026, Houston TranStar, 6922 Katy Rd, Houston TX 77024



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