



BVARC BEACON

Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY



VOLUME 48 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2024

January General Membership Meeting is replaced by the Annual BVARC Banquet

The BVARC Banquet is January 18th, 2024, Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet Street, Houston 77074.

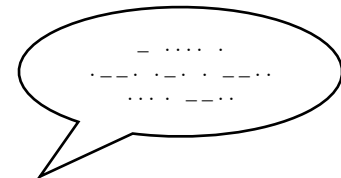
Meet and greet starting at 5:45 PM, Dinner served at 6:30 PM, until 8:30 PM.

The next General Meeting will be Thursday, February 8th: join us for Homebrew Night!

Don't forget the Greater Houston HamFest is on March 1st and 2nd. Sign up to volunteer now!

The Prez Sez

By the time you are reading this, 2024 should already be here (unless we are in a time loop or something). Hopefully, everyone has had a wonderful Christmas and brought the New Year in safely. The past year has been busy for the club with 2024 looking just as busy.



I want to wrap 2023 with some info on the December meeting. I want to thank Mike Lambert, K15MIK, on the great presentation on battery and solar power. It was informative and provided knowledge the members can use for normal use as well as during weather events. Thanks, Mike, for a great program.

The meeting also has a great food spread by Daphne's food team – Scott, Louann, and Chuck. No one should have gone away hungry with the choices that Daphne had on the table.

Finally, the donations that were brought in exceeded expectations. Two dozen toys were brought in for **Toys for Tots** and sixty-five pounds of food for the **Houston Food Bank** were collected. I want to thank everyone for donating at this time of the year. Since the donations went so well this time, I am proposing that this becomes a regular, twice a year event for BVARC. Beginning in 2024, the club shall collect for the **Houston Food Bank** and **Toys for Tots** at the August Ice Cream Social as well as the December meeting. A club as large as BVARC can help support those that are less fortunate than us by our donations.

Coming up quickly is the BVARC annual banquet. The cut-off date for purchasing food tickets is January 3rd so if you plan to come to the banquet, please purchase your ticket as soon as possible. Go to the BVARC main page to order.

Award recommendations have been slow as well. The awards are:

The Loop and Zepp Award – This is presented to a member that has exhibited outstanding service in HF operation and use.

The K1JT Award – This is presented to a member that has exhibited outstanding service in the VHF/UHF operation.

The Dr Bill Award – This is presented to a member that has exhibited outstanding service as a Volunteer Examiner.

The Order of the Key Award – The club's highest award. This is presented to a member that has exhibited outstanding service to the club, and amateur radio.

Recommendations can also be made for Presidential or Appreciation awards for outstanding service by a club member. For nominations, please send an e-mail to n5vcx@att.net with your recommendations by no later than January 3rd.

Our guest speaker for the Banquet will be Jeff Walter, KE5FGA, ARES South Texas Section Emergency Coordinator. Jeff has been a ham for twenty years and the STX coordinator since 2008. Make sure you come to the banquet for Jeff's presentation and honor those club members that have worked hard and have been diligent on providing support for the club and the amateur radio service.

Winter Field Day is just around the corner on January 27th and 28th. It will be held at Duhacsek Park off Old Richmond Road and Voss Road in Sugar Land. Kori Rahman, WX5KR, will be coordinating the event and has an article elsewhere in the newsletter. Make sure you come out to BVARC's 2024 Winter Field Day event.

Also around the corner is the Greater Houston HamFest. By the time you read this, the website will be up and will have the information on the March 1st and 2nd event. Please sign up if you would like to volunteer for the event.

Since it was missed for the December general meeting, Homebrew Night will be held at the February general meeting. So, get ready and put together the best of your homebuilt equipment and bring it out for the club to see. There will be three prizes given for the most unique item constructed, the most expensive item built and (what else) the cheapest item built. Make sure you get your "item" built and operational by February 8th. Please contact me or Kori to let us know you are bringing the perfect homebuilt piece of equipment.

As always, do not forget the regular BVARC events – Brews with BVARC, Parks on the Air, the weekday Stir Crazy NET, the Wednesday Rag Chew Net, the Monday night NET, and the Question-AIR Net, the Saturday Breakfast bunch, and the Wednesday lunch bunch. Remember BVARC is the most active club in the Houston area, and this is because you, the member, keep supporting the club. – **N5VCX**

DECEMBER VE - FCC TESTING SESSIONS RESULTS

For the December 6th test session at Bayland Park - we had 5 candidates and conducted 9 tests.

New Licensee:

Ahlen, M. (Technician)
Lewis, R. (Technician)
Lotf, H. (Technician)

Upgrades

N3VAC (General)
KJ5DKJ (General)

VEs in attendance – K5GOL, K5LJ, W5LIC, K5IZO and WM5N – **THANKS!**

Congratulations to All!

The next BVARC test session will be **Saturday January 6th** at 10:30am. **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 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. This is the result of a very generous grant from a BVARC member.

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

Examination sessions are held each month, most times the first weekend of the month and usually on the same weekend as the Sunday BVARC Board meeting. These testing sessions are at the Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St., Houston TX 77074.

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>

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



BVARC Winter Field Day 2024

Where:
Duhacsek Park
17034 Old Richmond Rd
Sugar Land, TX 77498

When:
January 27th - 28th 2023
(From Saturday at 11am
until we wrap up on
Sunday afternoon)

Winter Field Day 2024 is fast approaching, and in case you missed it, BVARC is again participating! We will be operating out of Duhacsek Park in Sugar Land on January 27th through the 28th with at least five HF stations for the entire 24-hour contest period. The modes we will be set up to operate include voice (SSB), CW, and digital (RTTY, JS8Call, VarAC, etc.). Our goal is to assemble a portable operation running on non-commercial power only and operate as many modes and bands as we can.

In order to achieve this, **WE NEED YOU** to operate our stations, log lots of contacts, and make BVARC a top contender in this worldwide contest! No matter your license class or experience level, you can come and operate at our stations using the club call sign with help and guidance from your fellow hams. You can come by and operate for a few hours, or stay overnight with us (see details below). We hope you will join us for a great time practicing emergency radio operation, having some delicious food, and enjoying the company of your fellow hams.

Details about BVARC's Winter Field Day event:

- We will be operating out of the historic home at Duhacsek Park in Sugar Land.
- Talk-in will be on the 146.940 MHz repeater to provide directions to the park.
- A sign-up sheet for operators and volunteers will be posted on the BVARC website (BVARC.org). Operating slots are listed in one-hour increments, and those who sign up first will have priority when selecting bands during their time slot.
- If you would like to stay overnight with us you will be welcome to do so, we prefer you come before 10pm so we won't have to open and close the gate much during the night. You will want to bring a cot and/or sleeping bag so you can sleep comfortably in the designated sleeping room.
- The contest hours are 1pm CST Saturday January 27th to 12:59pm CST Sunday January 28th. We of course will need folks to help set up and break down (see volunteer sign-up sheet for details).
- All HF stations will be ready to operate on SSB and will have a PC with logging software and digital mode software. You do not need to bring any radio equipment. If you plan on operating CW please bring your own key and adapter for 1/4" or 3.5mm as each radio is different.
- We will be providing lunch, dinner, and late night snacks, as well as breakfast on Sunday.

So mark your calendars and come **GET ON THE AIR** with BVARC for Winter Field Day 2024! If you have any questions about this event please reach out to me (WX5KR) at Kori113@gmail.com or Anthony (W5LIC) at W5LICTX@gmail.com. **-Kori, WX5KR**

**No BVARC POTA in January...
join us at Winter Field Day instead!**

**January 2024 Brews with BVARC
Tuesday, January 9th at 6:30 PM
Urban South Brewery – HTX
1201 Oliver St, Houston TX 77007**



River Oaks Car Stereo

Since 1990

4129 Richmond Ave

Houston TX 77027

713-626-7627 -

help@riveroakscarstereo.com

riveroakscarstereo.com

NUSK - Eddie
KBSYTA - Dwayne
KBSOBB - Eddie Jr
KFSRKL - Blake
W5LIC - Anthony

The Radio Hotel – Benefits of the Skin Effect

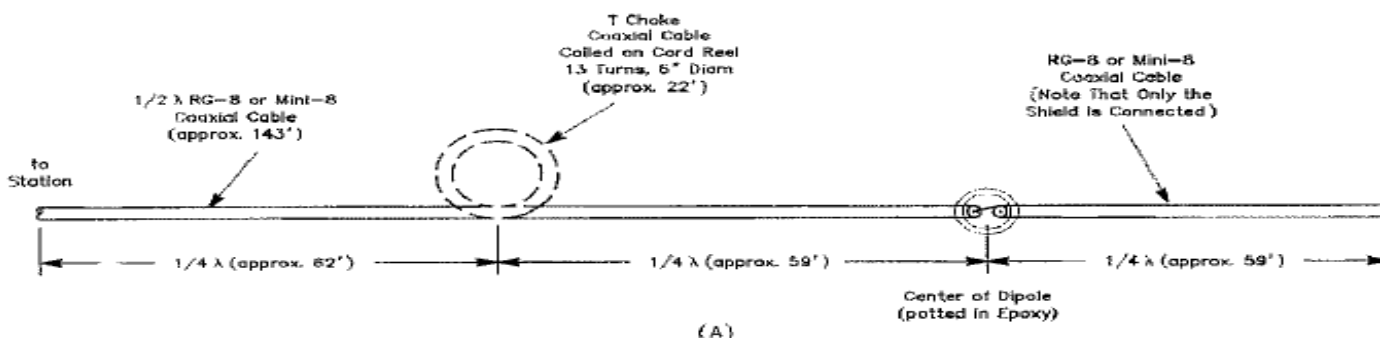
Using coaxial cable's inherent 3 wires

One of the least appreciated characteristics of RF is the interesting flow of current in a wire. In short, DC (zero frequency) current flow utilizes the whole wire's cross section to pass its current thru to the other end. But, as the frequency is increased from DC to AC power to RF frequencies in the 60 kHz and above region, the cross section of the wire is used less and less. At RF, where our ham interest lies, current flows near the edges of the wire's cross section with no flow using the middle of the wire. Current penetrates the surfaces very little. This effect makes coaxial cable have the equivalent of 3 wires – the center conductor, inside surface of the shield and the outside surface of the shield. Hence, this characteristic received the moniker – “skin effect.” Certain higher frequency low loss coax/Heliac™ takes advantage of this by making the center conductor on some larger coax a hollow tube, thus making the coax lighter in weight, but still maintaining efficient power transfer.

Skin effect usage is not a new concept. A few patents of the past can be researched that show the use of the skin effect on vertical antennas. US Patents 4,352,109 – End Supportable Dipole (Isopole) 1982, US 4,217,589 – Ground Independent Feedline Resonant Device 1980 and US 2,485,457 -- Antenna System 1949.

Hams are not a group to let some nifty RF phenomena go to waste. Google the W5GI “Mystery Antenna” that utilizes ¼ wl coaxial cables for “3 wire” phase reversal sections to create a gain dipole. Phase reversal sections like these have been used for years in the active portions of antennas as highlighted in many antenna books of the 1940's and 50's.

(I'll have Eddie put these next articles on the BVARC Tech Pages) Take a look at Robert Zimmerman, VE3RKZ's July 2010 QEX article “20 meter Sleeve without the Sleeve.” James Taylor, W2OZH, wrote about his Resonant Feedline Dipoles in the August 1991 QST article “RFD-1 and RFD-2 Resonant Feedline Dipole” (See Figure 1 below). Both of these articles use a ½ wl piece of coax with the end ¼ wl stripped to expose the center conductor. The other ¼ wl is the feedline and the open shield provides the center feedpoint with the outer shield skin effect surface as part of the radiating part of the antenna. A necessary choke at the lower end provides a stopping point for the antenna currents making the antenna a resonant ½ wl. This configuration is “end fed,” so to speak. It can be single band or even dual band, as per W2OZH. (Note: For those music fans with a sharp eye, Robert Zimmerman and James Taylor are not the music world's Bob Dylan and James Taylor – HI.) World Radio October 2010's End-Fed Dipole Lite: Taking Kurt's Design to the Field by Richard Fisher, KI6SN is an excellent example of the deployment of Taylor's RFD antennas.



One latest example of an end fed antenna with a center feed point due to skin effect is the “OH3JF 5/8 WL Vertical Dipole QST Dec 2023.” This antenna is a 30 meter 5/8 WL vertical that utilizes the same open feed point configuration and choke to make the antenna currents symmetrical along its length.

I am sure there are other examples of the use of skin effect to make our ham antennas more flexible or convenient to deploy. Unfortunately, skin effect can have detrimental effects on our antenna feed line systems. Hence, our abundant use of ferrite-based toroids and clip-on chokes to limit its effects.

Enjoy your hobby 73...W5RH

Where in the World is . . . Saudi Arabia (HZ,7Z, 8Z) CQ Zone 21 ITU Zone 39

Yup, it's Big Sandy alright. Think over 830 square miles of sand on top of 268 billion barrels of oil. Then there are camels, horses, nomads, and more sand. Sometime after the rise of Islam in the 7th century CE the name Arab came to be used for all residents of the Arabian Peninsula.

Except for the great cities of Damascus, Cairo, Baghdad and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the vast spaces of the desert were bleakly populated by roving bands of nomads. Each band was ruled by their local prince or pasha. However, from the 10th until the 20th century the Hashemite Sharifs of Mecca maintained the most influential region: a state in the most developed part of Arabia known as the Hejaz. Although the tribal nomads owed nominal fealty to the Turkish Pasha in Constantinople, they all exercised a degree of independence among each other.

In the 14th century Arabia fell under the growing Ottoman Turkish empire. The first Saudi state was established in 1744 in the area around Riyadh in Central Arabia. It rapidly expanded until it controlled most of the present-day territory of Saudi Arabia.

Turkey entered WW I, allied with Germany. To protect the Suez Canal as its strategic route to India and the Far East, the British provided weapons and money to the tribal chiefs. This little dust up was known as the Arab Revolt – think Lawrence of Arabia. Lawrence helped to foment unrest amongst the tribesmen using guerilla warfare.



With the end of the War, much of the Ottoman Empire was carved up between the European powers and several Arab tribes. New countries were created including Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia. And Palestine.

Oil was discovered in Saudi Arabia in 1938. This discovery would soon be identified as the largest source of petroleum in the world. Before the discovery, the people of Arabia were largely nomadic. The country's economy was based on tourism

revenue from observant Muslims' pilgrimages to the holy city of Mecca.

After the discovery, Saudis established a strong infrastructure dotted with wells, pipelines, refineries, and ports. Today, oil accounts for roughly 92% of the Saudi budget.

QRZ lists 722 call signs, including several princes and special event call signs, although the Saudi government claims there are now more than 500 licensed amateurs.

The Saudi Amateur Radio Society was established by the Council of Ministers in 2018. Its implementation regulations are issued by Ministerial Decree! It's still good to be king.

The first amateur license in Saudi Arabia was issued as HZ1HZ in 1949 and is still in use today. The original holder of this call sign was Sheikh Ahmad Zaidan. This year his daughter took over the callsign. She became the first Saudi woman to obtain a ham radio license in the western province of Saudi Arabia and the only active



YL in the whole country. It was not an easy task to attain this achievement. She had to go through the Saudi Ham Radio exam on the 31 of December 2013 with 20 others, she was the only YL and the only person to pass it.

Club Log lists Saudi Arabia as number 261 on their most wanted DX list.

Reporting from the Dark Side,

Ron, K5HM.



MINUTES

Board of Directors Meeting

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

December 10th, 2023 5:00 PM Via Videoconference

Board Members Present:

- President – Mike Hardwick – N5VCX
- Vice President – Kori Rahman – WX5KR
- Treasurer – Dave Ely – N5EKW
- 2 Yr. at Large (A) Director – Chris AC5CM
- 1 Yr. at Large Director – Terry Leatherland K5PGF
- Cor. Secretary – Jeff Greer – W5JEF

Guests Present:

- Sean N5LNK (Recording Secretary Elect)
- Rick W5RH
- Daphne K5VQY (1 Yr. at Large Director Elect)

Meeting:

1. **Establishment of a Quorum:** A business quorum of Board Members was established.
2. **Call to Order:** The President called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.
3. **Club President's Opening Statement:** The President thanked those in attendance for taking the time to join the meeting.
4. **Emergency business:** None.
5. **Approval of Agenda:** Agenda approved as corrected.
6. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the previous Board of Directors meeting were approved.
7. **Approval of Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's report was approved with revisions.
8. **Corresponding Secretary:** Corresponding Secretary's report was presented.
9. **Old Business:**
 - December Meeting – Mike KI5MIK, Batteries and Solar
 - **Programs**
 - i. January – Annual Awards Banquet will be held on January 18th at Bayland; tickets are on sale now.
 - ii. February – Homebrew Night
 - Committees
10. **New Business:**
 - Budget of \$750 approved for Winter Field Day.
 - Budget of \$550 approved for awards for banquet in January.
11. **Next BoD Meeting Date:** January 7th at 5 PM on Zoom.
12. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned 5:51 PM.

January 2024 – Amateur Radio Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
P : Pub Svc Net 8 PM Mondays Q : QuestionAIR Net 7:30 PM Tuesdays			R : Rag Chew 7 PM Wednesdays S : Stir Crazy Net Noon Mon-Fri		March 3: Greater Houston HamFest	
	1 P S	2 Q S	3 R S	4 S	5 S	6 FCC Testing Bayland Park 10:30 AM
7 BVARC Board Mtg 5 PM – Zoom	8 P S	9 Q S Brews w/ BVARC @ Urban South 6:30 PM	10 R S	11 S	12 S	13
14	15 P S	16 Q S	17 R S	18 S Banquet @ Bayland Park 5:45-8:30 PM	19 S	20
21	22 P S	23 Q S	24 R S	25 S	26	27 Winter Field Day starts 1 PM
28 Winter Field Day to 12:59 PM	29	30	31			

BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

11/22/23, K5LJK (NCS), AB5YS (Harrisonburg, LA), K5AKM (Alexandria, LA), KF5ONT (Conroe), W5TKZ, N5VCM, W5ALW, KI5HOC, K5TPC (Bellaire), K5LJ, WJ1Q (Georgetown)(T), WD5L. (12 Check-Ins)
 Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 172, SN = 149, A = 18, K = 4 /
 Band Rpt: GOOD

11/29/23, K5LJK (NCS), K5AKM (Alexandria, LA), K5LJ, W5TKZ, K5JPP, W5ALW, K5TPC (Bellaire), KI5HOC, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5VOM. (12 Check-Ins)
 Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 182, SN = 125, A = 7, K = 1 /
 Band Rpt: FAIR

12/06/23, K5LJK (NCS), K5JPP, K5AKM (Alexandria, LA), KI5HOC, K5LJ, K5TPC (Bellaire), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), KJ5BDL (Manvel), W5TKZ, W5VOM, WB5ZPK (Dickinson), W5ALW. (12 Check-Ins)
 Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 142, SN = 125, A = 15, K = 2 /
 Band Rpt: GOOD

12/13/23, K5LJK (NCS), W5TKZ, W5ALW, KI5HOC, K5LJ, K5TPC (Bellaire), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), AA5OA (Pearcy, AR). (8 Check-Ins)
 Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 126, SN = 114, A = 10, K = 2 /
 Band Rpt: GOOD

12/20/23, K5LJK (NCS), W5VOM, K5LJ, W5TKZ, KI5HOC, K5TPC (Bellaire), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5LIC (Bellaire), KI5RLZ (Channelview)(T). (9 Check-Ins)
 Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 126, SN = 114, A = 10, K = 2 /
 Band Rpt: FAIR

(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 K5LJK

Advertising in the BVARC Newsletter

Rates are as follows: Business card sized ads are \$10 each or 6 monthly installments for \$50; Half (½) page -\$25 per monthly for \$125 for six months and \$250 for one year. The rates for a full page are as follows; \$50 per month, \$250 for six months and \$500 for the year.



2024 Club Officers

President (2024-2025)
 Michael Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net

Vice President (2023-2024)
 Kori Rahman WX5KR kori113@gmail.com

Recording Secretary (2024-2025)
 Sean Linkenheimer N5LNK sean.N5LNK@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary (2023-2024)
 Jeff Greer W5JEF greerjw@hotmail.com

Treasurer (2023-2024)
 David Ely N5EKW davidely@prodigy.net

2 Year At-Large Board Member A (2024-2025)
 Vacant

2 Year At-Large Board Member B (2023-2024)
 Drew Dasher N1ER adasher18@hotmail.com

1 Year At Large (2024)
 Daphne Rawlinson K5VQY daphne_rawlinson@hotmail.com

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.

The QuestionAIR Net is held every Tuesday at 7:30 PM on the 146.94 (minus offset, PL 167.9 tone) repeater.

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

Other contacts: **BVARC President** Mike Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net, **Newsletter Editor** Donovan Balli KG5BDZ dballi@mail.com, **Editor Emeritus** John Chauvin K5IZO k5izo@yahoo.com, **Newsletter Printing, Assembly, and Mailing** Mike Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net, Jeff Greer W5JEF greerjw@hotmail.com, Gokhan Koralturk KG0KHN gokkor@gmail.com

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JANUARY 2024

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED


FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

Board of Directors Meeting – 5 PM Sunday, January 7, 2024, via Zoom

BVARC Banquet – Thursday, January 18th, 2024, Bayland Community Center, 5:45 PM - 8:30 PM.

No General Membership Meeting in January

No Parks on the Air in January



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