



BVARC BEACON

Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY



VOLUME 49 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2025

BVARC January General Meeting Road Trip!

For 2025, BVARC will start off the year with a road trip for its general meeting. The club has had road trips before ranging from the **Transtar** Operations center in Houston, to the Fort Bend County Emergency Management center, and even a tour of the transmitter site at the Senior Road broadcast tower in Missouri City. After talking to several club members, the tour at the Senior Road tower trip was very much enjoyed and it was suggested to be put on the schedule again. **So, after several requests, the January 9th general meeting at the Community Volunteer Fire Department will be cancelled and changed to a road trip for Saturday, January 18th.** This tour is being coordinated by BVARC member Bill Cordell, W5VOM. Bill has been connected to the Houston broadcast industry since the last century and has helped BVARC on many occasions. The details for the road trip are:

When: 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM Saturday, January 18, 2025

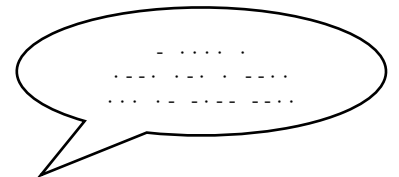
Where: 4110 McHard Road (FM 2234). Missouri City, 77489 (½ mile west of Fort Bend Tollway)

Talk-in: 146.880, minus offset, 167.9 tone

To help you find the location, there is a sign at the entrance with the address and SRTG at the top of the sign. There will be donuts around 10 AM and Subway sandwiches and drinks around 2 pm. Orders will be taken during the tour of the transmitter site.

If you need more information, please contact me, N5VCX or Bill, W5VOM. Hope to see you at the tower on the 18th.

The Prez Says



Our new year is here and unfortunately it has started on a very sad note. The New Year's Day celebration in New Orleans was devastated when a person drove down Bourbon Street, killing 15 people and injuring over thirty people. The investigation is ongoing but hopefully the authorities will find all the answers to this horrible crime very soon. Please keep the families of those killed and injured in your thoughts.

A new BVARC BOD will be starting in 2025 with two new members – Robert Polinski, KD5YVQ and Kirc Breden, N5XJB. I want to thank them for stepping up to the plate by volunteering to help manage the club. I also want to thank the returning members – Kori, WX5KR; Jeff, W5JEF; Dave, N5EKW; and finally Terry, K5PGF. And for the outgoing members Drew, N1ER and Daphne, K5VQY thank you for your time on the Board. Everyone needs to remember that that the club needs your support through volunteering to keep the club going.

The December meeting went very well with Home Brew night. There were four club members that presented their unique home brew projects. Steve Clark, K5ICR had a rebuilt HeathKit SB220; Terry Leatherland, K5PGF had a portable data radio; Richard Bonica, KG5YCU had a portable ENCOM antenna and Andre Pollard, W5SFZ had a 100 watt amplifier. Andre was the winner of the indoor 10 MHz/14 MHz antenna. We also had one non-member, Rick Covert WD5L, display multiple projects that he has been working on over the years. Thanks to everyone for bringing out their best home-built equipment.

Our January general meeting will be moved to Saturday, January 18th. We will be meeting at the Senior Road Broadcast tower on McHard Road at 10 AM for a tour of the facilities. There is more information in the newsletter about this upcoming BVARC Road Trip.

Coming up January 25 and 26th will be Winter Field Day. It will be held at Duhacsek Park in Sugar Land. Check BVARC website or contact Kori, WX5KR or Richard, KG5YCU for more information.

Do not forget the Greater Houston HamFest coming up on March 7th and 8th, 2025. It will be held at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. Check houstonhamfest.org for more information.

The 146.88 WR5AAA repeater is on the air in Houton and is providing great coverage around Houston. The repeater was brought back due to the kind donations of Bill Cordell, W5VOM. The repeater is the 1500-foot level of one of the tall towers in Missouri City. It has a minus offset and tone of 167.9.

See you at the Senior Road Tower on the 18th! 73, N5VCX

Net Control Operators Needed!

With 350 members, Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club is the largest club in Houston and the second largest in Texas. A club of this size needs the support of its members to help with various functions to keep the club functioning. There are many positions that a member can do to help with the club from serving on the board of directors to coordinating events to helping with the Greater Houston HamFest. However, one of the easiest ways to help the club is to serve as NET control on the club's different NETS. If you are interested on helping and being a NET control, please let me know. There are many openings on the Monday night NET, and the Stir-Crazy NET and I even bet John, K5LKJ would let you take a shot at the Rag Chew NET.

If you would like to be NET control, let me know so we can put you in the driver's seat. There are many different time slots to choose from so throw your name in the hat to help now.

So set some time aside to help the club and support amateur radio. You can contact me at n5vcx@att.net or call me at 713-826-6917. 73, N5VCX

BVARC Newsletter

After being absent for several months, the printed version of the BVARC Beacon returned with the November edition. The printed version did not go out for several months due to changes at my work schedule and traveling for family. However, this month's edition should be hitting your mailbox early next week except for members that opted out of the printed version.

To get the printed version of the newsletter sent out, it requires a production team. The team must fold, seal, stamp and label the newsletter so it can be mailed. This process takes anywhere from 8 to 10 hours to do 300 newsletters. Over the years since Cameron Mitchell assembled the newsletter, we have had John Chauvin to JP Pritchard to Daphne Rawlinson to yours truly putting the newsletter together and mailing it (I know I missed several people on this and I apologize for that). I want to thank all of them for their hard work putting the newsletter together over the years.

So, with my work schedule changing I am looking for an assembling team to continue assembling the printed version of the Beacon. There are many pros and cons on why have a printed version and all of them have been discussed. **However, if an assembly team cannot be found over the next three months, the printed version will be discontinued with the March edition.** This will bring the 47-year history of the BVARC printed newsletter to an end. It is unfortunate that it has come to this but if a team cannot be found to assemble the newsletter, the newsletter will only continue in the on-line format only.

I do want to acknowledge a group of people that helped assemble the November newsletter. Without their help last month, the newsletter would have not been mailed out. So, I want to thank the following people for their assembly of the November newsletter.

Dusti Huie, AI5ER – Brady, Texas Lewis & Rita Harris – Beaumont, Texas
Gerald Richmond, N5ZXJ – Temple, Texas - President Temple Amateur Radio Club
John Worthen – KF4ZPI - Abilene

Hopefully BVARC members will step forward to build a team to continue the half-century tradition. It would be a shame to have non-members upstage BVARC members on such a time-honored function of the club.

The Radio Hotel **The Antenna – 2015 Original Series**

Antennas are a very interesting subject to the neophyte and even to the substantially experienced Extra Class ham. Knowing how and why they work is of benefit to any ham, so that they can design, build, experiment and troubleshoot their homebrew or commercial antenna system. The Radio Hotel in 2015, February through November, promoted a series of articles describing antennas from a theoretical and practical sense. Have a read through these 9 submissions to get a birds eye view of your favorite skyhook. It starts out with Part 1 copied below from February. Have a read of this and then follow it up with the March 2015 edition found at www.bvarc.home/tech-pages **The Radio Hotel Complete Index. Good luck.** Enjoy your hobby 73...Rick W5RH

The Antenna Part 1 – I heard N5XZ say the other day that the most important part of a Ham Radio station is the antenna. I couldn't agree more. It's similar to the old adage: rather a master carpenter with poor tools than a novice carpenter with the best tools. Give me great antennas and it does not matter that I am QRP at 5 watts or barefoot at 100 watts, I will work many more stations than if I was 1000 watts and an end fed long wire at 10 feet.

One reason, I will hear much more with the better antenna. We typically listen more than we transmit. So, it is not just transmit we are trying to improve, it is the receive side of things also. Lucky for us that antennas exhibit reciprocity. They say, if you can't hear um, you can't work um. Better antennas provide stronger receive signals, less noise, appropriate main lobe launch angles, and, through directionality, maximum station rejection, noise rejection, etc. Of course, all this depends on how the antenna is designed and/or configured. It is an excellent attribute for you, when working with antennas, to understand what makes them tick. Find out why they work, how they work and from there, you can best figure out how to deploy them to get the best performance out of them. Local, regional or DX work – they all have different requirements.

Now, I understand, sometimes you are not able to do much...nothing wrong with the above referenced end fed longwire at 10 feet, if that is all you can put up. Look on the positive side – it is outside, and not folded into some multi-sided quadrangle looking like a piece of misunderstood modern art in your attic. Being outside, in itself, has a bit of gain associated with it. If that is what you have, then make the best of it. Maybe use more power or see what bands are the better bands for you. Also, try the various modes to see which one works best for you. You can still have tons of fun.

However, just because you can't put up a 4 element SteppIR at 75 feet does not mean that you don't need to know how antennas work. It is even more important that you understand antenna systems when you are in such a critical situation, because then you can think through your given situation and apply all of your antenna knowledge in getting the best performance out of the area that you have to use. In QST in 1925, W.H. Murphy stated that "The average amateur has simply got to fit his antenna into his space. Just what makes the best antenna does not concern him very much. He is only interested in 'what makes the best antenna within my space.'" This adage still holds true today, but in order to place the best antenna into your space, I recommend that you know how antennas work.

Next – March 2015: The Antenna - Part 2 - The Recipe

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Minutes

December 8th, 2024 @ 5:00pm via Video Conference

Board Members

President – Mike Hardwick – N5VCK	Vice President – Kori Rahman – WX5KR
Recording Sec. – Sean Linkenheimer – N5LNK	Corresponding Sec. – Jeff Greer – W5JEF
Treasurer – Dave Ely – N5EKW	2 Year At-Large – Drew Dasher – N1ER
2 Year At-Large – Terry Leatherland – K5PGF	1 Year At-Large – Daphne Rawlinson – K5VQY

Board of Directors Meeting

- ❖ Establish Quorum – Established
- ❖ Call Meeting to Order – Called to order at 5:04 p.m.
- ❖ Opening Statement(s) – Thanks for joining; thanks to those who have served on the Board!
- ❖ Emergency Business
 - None
- ❖ Agenda Review – Approved
- ❖ Treasurer’s Report – Approved October report (with corrections) and November report approval table pending review.
- ❖ Corresponding Secretary’s Report – Reported
- ❖ Old Business
 - Greater Houston HamFest
 - Sales to open next week
 - Venue reserved
 - Raffle prizes procured
 - Working on speakers
 - Next Houston POTA
 - Brazos Bend State Park POTA was successful
 - January 11th at Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge
 - Elections
 - Recording/Corresponding Secretary positions will be combined beginning 2025.
 - Sean N5LNK stepping down to focus on family.
 - Bayland Community Center after Dec. difficult to book. (45 days prior max.) Also working on Eldridge Park facility as a backup.
 - Houston Christian Univ Radio Club Alliance
 - Terry K5PGF would like for the Board to grant he and Mike N5VCX authority to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Husky Amateur Radio Club to allow the two clubs to coordinate and work together. Terry circulated a draft version (newer draft to follow) of the Memo for the Board’s review. Board members to provide feedback/comments over the next week, and will vote on approval at the next Board meeting.
- ❖ Programs
 - December – Homebrew Night; snacks & sweets
 - January TBD
- ❖ Committees
 - Newsletter – BVARC is looking for a team to assemble the newsletter; if no one volunteers, printed copies will end after March 2025. 8-10 man hours per month.
 - Historical Archives
 - By-Laws
 - Finance
 - Events and Membership
 - Food Team
 - Club Website
 - Parks on the Air

- Elmer/ SME
- Museum Ships Wknd
- Field Day
- Winter Field Day
- Greater Houston HamFest
- GHHF Website
- Banquet
- ❖ New Business
 - BVARC food team to support club Winter Field Day
- ❖ Next Meetings - Pursuant Article V Section G #1 of the Club By-Laws
 - January 5th, 2025 Board Meeting @ 5:00 pm via Zoom
- ❖ Closing Statement(s) – Thanks for coming.
- ❖ Meeting Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Ham Exam Question

What is the power factor of an RL circuit having a 60-degree phase angle between the voltage and the current?

- A. 1.414 B. 0.866 C. 0.5 D. 1.73

January 2025 – Amateur Radio Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
P: Pub Svc Net 8 PM Mondays R: Rag Chew, 3910 kHz, 7 PM Wednesdays S: Stir Crazy Net Noon Monday-Friday T: 10-10 Int'l Local SHOT Net, 8 PM Tuesdays			1 RS	2 S	3 S	4 VE Testing 10:30 AM Bayland Park
5 BVARC Board Mtg 5 PM Zoom	6 PS	7 QST	8 RS	9 S	10 S	11 Houston POTA at Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge
12	13 PS	14 QST	15 RS	16 S	17 S Cowtown Hamfest 25	18 BVARC Road Trip Hou Marathon Cowtown Hamfest
19 Houston Marathon	20 PS	21 QST	22 RS	23 S	24 S	25 S Winter Field Day
26 Winter Field Day, Duhacsek Park	27 PS	28 QST	29 RS	30 S	31 S	

Chevron Houston Marathon is January 18-19, 2025, in downtown Houston. It's a great way to volunteer with your radio.

Winter Field Day is January 25-26, 2025, at Duhacsek Park in Sugar Land.

Greater Houston HamFest is March 7-8, 2025, at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds.

Houston POTA next event will be January 11, 2025, at Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge.

River Oaks Car Stereo: The End of an Era

After 35 years, River Oaks Car Stereo has closed its doors. Eddie Runner, NU5K, the owner of River Oaks and a long time BVARC member had to shut the doors of his business after the building lease was lost. This will be a big loss in the car stereo world in Houston as well as having a place to have a ham radio installed in a vehicle. Eddie has been a great supporter of amateur radio and BVARC for many years and the business will be missed. According to his website there may be a chance for a VER 2.0 of River Oaks Car Stereo so keep checking his web site.

– N5VCX

BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

11/20/24, K5LKJ (NCS), KJ5PBZ (New Caney), K5LJ, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5LIC (Channelview), W5ICR, KI5HOC, K5TPC (Tomball), KI5UKI (De Quincy, LA), KJ5Y (Pearland)(R), KI5RLZ, (Channelview), K4USN.

(12 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 163, SN = 94, A = 8, K = 1 /

Band Rpt: FAIR

11/27/24, K5LKJ (NCS), K5LJ, W5RH, KI5HOC, N5LER (Onalaska), N5VCX, AA5OA (Percy, AR). (7 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 222, SN = 141, A = 7, K = 1 /

Band Rpt: FAIR

12/04/24, K5LKJ (NCS), K5LJ, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5ICR, KI5HOC, K5TPC (Tomball), W5RH, WW5PA (Rosenberg), K4USN, AA5OA (Percy, AR), KI5UBL. (11 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 245, SN = 169, A = 11, K = 2 /

Band Rpt: GOOD

12/11/24, K5LKJ (NCS), KI5HOC, W5ICR, W5PBZ (New Caney), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), W5ALW, K5LJ (7 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 172, SN = 114, A = 8, K = 1 /

Band Rpt: FAIR

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

Net conditions have been FAIR 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

Upcoming Hamfests

3/7/2025 - 3/8/2025 Greater Houston HamFest

Rosenberg, TX

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

<https://www.houstonhamfest.org>

2/7/2025 – 2/9/2025 Orlando HamCation, ARRL

Southeastern Division Convention, <http://www.hamcation.com>

1/17 – 18/2025 Cowtown Hamfest 25, ARRL North Texas Section Convention, Forest Hill, TX,

<http://www.cowtownhamfest.com>

2/8/2025 Rio Amateur Radio Club Hamfest, Harlingen, TX, <https://rioarc.org>

2/21 – 22/2025 Orange (Texas) Hamfest 2025, Orange, TX,

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

CW Training Classes

Over the last few months, there have been several club members talking about learning CW. Even though it is no longer required for an Amateur Radio license, many hams have an interest in learning it. So.....

I asked John Whiteman, K5LKJ, to do an informal poll on the Stir-Crazy Net to see how many people would be interested in learning CW. There were several people that expressed interest in learning CW, enough that I feel a CW class would be something the club should start up.

Before the class starts though, I want to check with the rest of the club and see if the interest is there with the rest of the membership. If you are interested in learning CW and would like to attend classes, please drop me an e-mail at n5vcx@att.net and let me know. If there is enough interest, a class can be organized and started around the first of the year.

So let me know if you would like to dive into the world of Morse Code! 73, N5VCX

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 for a year.

Ham Exam Answer: C. D.5.

BVARC EATS

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

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

From the BVARC Advice column: Don't throw your HT at anybody. It Hertz!

2024 BVARC VE – RESULTS WRAP UP

Happy New Year! For 2024, the following is a summary of the BVARC VE Team examination results:

New Technicians	37
New Generals	7
New Extras	1
Upgraded Generals	10
Upgraded Extras	8

Note that the new licensees are those candidates that walk into the session, without a license, and walk out having passed either the Technician exam, Tech and General exams, or for one stellar candidate, takes and passes all three exams in one session.

Tech exams passed	45
General exams passed	18
Extra exams passed	9
Tech exams failed	3
General Exams Failed	34
Extra exams failed	17

A summary of all the exams passed and attempted is listed here. When a candidate passes an exam, the VEs encourage them to attempt the next license class exam, for exposure to the requirements for that license class and for practice. Sometimes, the candidate “unexpectedly” passes that next class exam!

All of the work scheduling, setting up the sessions and serving these candidates is credited to the VE team. Their support and professionalism have been greatly appreciated, as expressed by the candidates at the sessions. The BVARC team 2024 session count is listed next to their call. Thanks VE team!

K5MGJ 13	W5ICR 8	W5LIC 5	N1ER 2	K5IZO 1
K5GOL 13	K4USN 7	WM5N 4	NK5Q 1	N5EKW 1
K5LJ 12	KG4NDS 6	WX5KR 2	KF5BMZ 1	

The next BVARC test session will be January 4th, 2025, a date for February is pending room availability.

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 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.

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.

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)

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** 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

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2025

**BRAZOS VALLEY
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SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997**

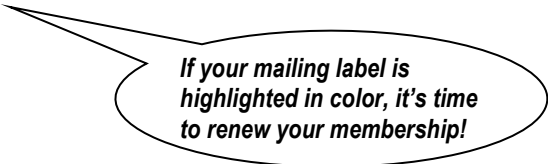
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

Board of Directors Meeting – 5 PM Sunday, January 5, 2025, via Zoom

General Membership Meeting replaced with a Road Trip – 10 AM - 2 PM Saturday, January 18, 2025, 4110 McHard Road (FM 2234).
Missouri City, 77489

Houston POTA – January 11, 2025, Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge



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