



BVARC BEACON

Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY



VOLUME 49 ISSUE 4

APRIL 2025

General Membership Meeting Thursday April 10 at 7:30 PM

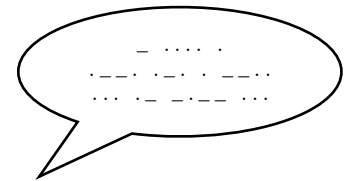
Community Volunteer Fire Department Community Center, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston TX 77083

Kori Rahman WX5KR will have all the information you need to get involved in **Parks On The Air** (POTA).

Upcoming Houston POTA Dates for 2025: 5/3 - Brazos Bend State Park, 7/19 - Galveston Island State Park, 9/27 - Stephen F. Austin State Park, 11/15 - Lake Livingston State Park. See <https://parksontheair.com/> for information about Houston POTA and other POTA activations.

The Prez Says

The 22nd annual Greater Houston HamFest is over, and it was a successful event. With over 1100 people and 40 vendors attending the two-day event, Houston area hams had an exciting time. With great food and lots of door prizes as well as great raffle prizes, if you didn't attend you really missed out on a great time.



Also, this year marks the most expensive item ever sold at GHHF - \$35,000! Lee Glassman, W5LEE, purchased a fully-equipped communications vehicle that was constructed out of a heavy-duty ambulance. Hopefully, Lee will bring it back next year to show off what he has done to it.

Talking about next year, mark your calendar for the 2026 GHHF – March 6th and March 7th at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. More information on next year will be on the GHHF web site soon.

Coming up for our general meeting on April 10th, will be Kori Rahman, WX5KR, telling us about the fine points of getting into POTA and what you need to do to be successful. Make sure you come out to the general meeting to hear Kori's presentation.

On our May 8th meeting will be Mark Janzer, K5MGJ, with a presentation on Museum Ships and what he is planning for this year's event. Museum Ships is held on the first weekend of June each year and has over 100 museum ships from all over the world involved in the event. Mark is looking for people to help with the event as well as operate. Make sure you attend the May meeting for Mark's presentation and let him know if you would like to help or operate or both.

And of course, the June 12th meeting will be Richard Bonica, KG5YCU and his organizational meeting for the ARRL Field Day which will be on June 28th and 29th. Richard is looking for people to help with set-up, operate and teardown. The event is the largest club event beside the Greater Houston HamFest. Make sure you come out to the meeting and see where you can help Richard out.

BVARC will be joining forces with Harris County Precinct 4 soon. Check out the article in the newsletter about the new opportunity for the club in the future.

BVARC will also soon be working with the City of Sugar Land Emergency Management office on ham radio training and testing. This opportunity is just getting started and will soon be a regular function of the club.

That's it for now. Hope to see you at the general meeting on April 10th!

73, N5VCX

April 2025 –Amateur Radio Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
P: Public Service 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
		1 ST	2 RS	3 S	4 S	5 Bayland Park VE Testing 10:30 HF Orientation 12 Belton HamExpo!
6 BVARC Board Mtg 5:30 PM Zoom	7 PS	8 ST Brews w/ BVARC	9 RS	10 S	11 S	12
13	14 PS	15 ST	16 RS	17 S	18 S	19
23	24 PS	25 ST	26 RS	27 S	28 S	29
30	31 PS	31 PS	31 PS	31 PS	31 PS	31 PS

4/5/2025 Belton HamEXPO! 2025, Belton, TX 76513

4/5/2025 BVARC HF Orientation Session, 12-4 PM at Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet St, Houston TX 77074

4/8/2025 Brews with BVARC, 6:30pm at Texas Leaguer Brewing Company, 13503 Pike Rd, Missouri City, TX 77489 <https://txleaguer.com/>

5/3/2025 Houston POTA, Brazos Bend State Park, 21901 FM 762, Needville TX 77461

5/17/2025 Radio in the Park, 9 AM at Hermann Park, for more information see <http://setac.club>

6/6-8/2025 Museum Ships Weekend, Seawolf Park on Pelican Island, Galveston TX

6/28-29/2025 ARRL Field Day 2025, more information on the reflector, at meetings, and in the newsletter!

7/19/2025 SETAC Hidden Transmitter Hunt – Mobile, begins transmitting on 146.56 MHz at 10 AM, for more information see <https://setac.club/>

7/12/2025 Tidelands Texas City Hamfest 2025, 8 AM - 2 PM, Charles T. Doyle Convention Center, 2010 5th Avenue North, Texas City, TX 77590, for more information see <https://www.tidelands.org/events/tidelands-texas-city-hamfest-2025/>

3/6-7/2026 Greater Houston HamFest 2026, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Rosenberg TX

HEADS UP – Following the Saturday April 5th test session (at Bayland Park), from noon to 4pm, BVARC will host an **HF orientation session**. An HF station will be set-up for orientation and operations for non-hams and Technicians who are unfamiliar or curious about the HF SSB and CW modes. Stay tuned, food might also be included...

Museum Ships Weekend

Planning and preparations for Museum Ships Weekend, June 6-8, 2025, are in full swing. It's one of BVARC's legacy annual operating events. It is a great introduction to operating in conditions like Field Day, in a non-competitive event. All members are welcome to participate. The event will be held at Seawolf Park on Pelican Island. We'll have up to three stations available for operations. There will be limited overnight accommodations available on the Stewart for operators. <https://www.nj2bb.org/museum/>

Contact Mark Janzer (K5MGJ@yahoo.com), to express your interest and to help out.

Of note:

- The South East Texas Amateur Club (SETAC) members, Anthony, KE5GIP, Norman KD5ZZA and Bob KI5UNT activated the USS Stewart (N5FKP) on Saturday February 15th. They checked and verified a couple of the Stewart's vintage receivers are in working order!
- BVARC member K5LJ, Larry Johnson, was one of the top operators for the 2024 event, having contacted 47 of the ships.



Waves & Coffee – Ionospheric Physics

Is the plasma angular frequency important?

By Stephen W2WF

Let's take a detour away from antenna physics in this column and look at our propagating electromagnetic waves as they go up into the atmosphere. Of course, we know that after leaving our antenna, the E&M waves go out in directions specified by their radiation pattern. For example, an idealized vertical antenna will radiate in the expected doughnut shape. The question to consider here is what happens when these E&M waves hit the ionosphere?

Before we can tackle that question, we must define our terms. What is a plasma? In the context of physics, the typical answer is that it's highly ionized gas or the "fourth state of matter." It is much more than that since a plasma is very electrically conducting, has long range interactions, and can consist of both electrons and ions.

So, our simple model of the ionosphere will be a slab of plasma that gets hit by a time varying electric field E . To keep the math manageable, we'll assume that there's no magnetic field involved, only the E field. We'll also assume that we only have an electron plasma, so no ions, nor neutral atoms, will be complicating our analysis.

Even with these assumptions we'll see that the physics point to a quantity of practical interest: the Plasma Frequency. It is this quantity which depends on the density of the plasma that tells us the cutoff frequency of the plasma. This is perhaps better known to hams by its other name: the MUF or maximum usable frequency of the ionosphere.

If you want to read more about this interesting topic, please access the full article at <https://bvarc.org/home/tech-downloads>.

The Radio Hotel -- The Station Notebook

Tracking your ham radio history

by Rick W5RH

Back in the mid-80's I spent some time in the research department of Petty-Ray Geophysical. One of the absolute requirements for each person in that department, whether a programmer or an electronics or mechanical tech was to keep a notebook. Kind of like a diary of your research and design work. The notebook was a historical track of your thoughts, your project work successes and failures. A great resource to have access to when you are looking for that information you knew you had, but have since forgotten. Look in the notebook and it will be there.

I have continued this engineering notebook practice throughout my 40+ years of various work positions and even in my personal life since then. I have separate spiral bound notebooks for various aspects of my life and I do a new one each year for finances and just general stuff.

Now, although I do use physical notebooks most of the time, I am not specifically recommending them. In today's world of blogs and vlogs you can keep it all digitally with pictures, etc. A better way to do things, IMHO. It can be multiple .docx files that you add to as a dated blog-like reference. Even though I do some in the digital WORD blog world, I regularly print them out and put them in a 3 ring binder, dated of course.

In using this pattern of action, it is easy to apply it to ham radio. For ham radio, specifically, I have quite a few notebooks dating back to my reentry into the ham radio world in the mid-80's. All my stations set-ups, lots of antennas and other ideas. If you are just starting out in our hobby you might think that you can remember it all. You can't. 6 years down the track when you run into a problem with your car's mobile set-up, and you have forgotten the key step to solving it (again), the formerly documented Station Notebook solution will bring a fast end to the problem.

So, whichever way you choose – hard copy pencil and paper (the original word processor – HI) or blog or vlog, I do encourage you to do so. Looking further out into your trek thru ham radio 20 years from now you will enjoy going back thru and reading of your exploits.

Enjoy your hobby – Rick – W5RH

Fire takes out critical weather warning tool for Texas Gulf Coast

Between March 24th and 25th, a fire at a Hitchcock radio tower destroyed the NOAA weather radio transmitter located there. Several other government transmitters were also destroyed there as well. The National Weather Service stated on social media, **“We do not currently have a timeline for replacement, but would anticipate it will be down for at least a month - and probably several months.”**

According to NWS, a fire broke out at the facility that housed the radio, which appeared to be a total loss. The transmitter which broadcasts on 162.55 MHz, will be down until the equipment is replaced.

In the meantime, NWS stated that weather information will be available on their web site as well as other NWS radio stations in the SE Texas area.

Greater Houston HamFest Raffle Winners

I want to thank the winners of the raffle at the GHHF. I appreciate Dee, Andrew, Majid and Kent for coming out to the 2025 GHHF and spending time. I hope to see them at the 2026 GHHF!



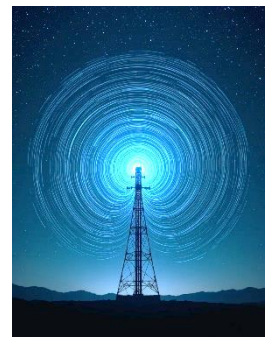
First Prize	Dee Miller, N5UIG	Yaesu FT- DX-10 HF Radio
Second Prize	Andrew Gast, KC5LWY	Yaesu FT-500DR VHF/UHF C4FM Mobile radio
Third Prize	Majid Latif, KJ5IUX	Yaesu FT-70DR VHF/UHF C4FM Handheld radio
Fourth Prize	Kent Anderson	Yaesu FT-5DR VHF/UHF C4FM Handheld radio

73,
N5VCX

Ham Exam Question

What is the far field of an antenna?

- A. The region of the ionosphere where radiated power is not refracted*
- B. The region where radiated power dissipates over a specified time period*
- C. The region where radiated field strengths are constant*
- D. The region where the shape of the antenna pattern is independent of distance*



A New Program for BVARC!

The new year brings a great new exciting adventure for Brazos Valley Amateur Radio club. BVARC will soon be partners with Harris County Precinct 4 for amateur radio education for residents of Pct 4.

Through the hard work of Mark Janzer, K5MGJ, the club will soon be providing support for this endeavor covering a sizable portion of Harris County. If you are not familiar with Harris County Pct 4, it has over 1.2 million people in 406 sq mile area. There are 10 community centers along with 55 parks serving the residents of Pct 4. Hopefully, this will open the doors for a club station to be built at one of the community centers soon.

There will be more in the future on this wonderful opportunity so keep your eyes open on the web site as well as the e-mail reflector. When you see Mark, give him a big thanks for this wonderful opportunity.

MARCH 2025 VE - FCC TESTING SESSIONS RESULTS

For the March 7th and 8th test sessions, at the Greater Houston Hamfest - we had 22 candidates and conducted 33 tests

New Licensee:

Abbott, S. (Technician) KJ5KMM
Markowitz N. (Technician) KJ5KMF
Rodriguez J. (Technician) KJ5KND
Rodriguez, N. (Technician) KJ5KNB
Jeziarski, R. (General) KJ5KNC

Upgraded:

Pendley C. (General) KJ5KGB
Smith, D. (General) KK6MQU
Barnett, N. (General) KJ5KMB
Kempf, W. (General) KE4KQP
Masterson, L. (General) KG5MN
Swenson, A. (General) N5APS
Berlin J. (Extra) KF5RMX
Robles J. (Extra) KJ5IZJ

VEs in attendance – K5GOL, K4USN, K5LJ, NA5D and WX5KR – **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 April 5th, 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 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 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.

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).

Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club Minutes

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

Board Members

President – Mike Hardwick – N5VCK	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 – A quorum was established.
- ❖ Call Meeting to Order – 5:35 p.m.
- ❖ Opening Statement – Thanks for coming after working Hamfest.
- ❖ Emergency Business
 - PayPal/website integration issue
- ❖ Agenda Review - approved
- ❖ Treasurer’s Report – January approved with corrections; February report tabled due to file corruption
- ❖ Secretary’s Report
- ❖ Old Business
 - Greater Houston HamFest a success
 - Next Houston POTA – schedule in the newsletter; big trip to Lake Livingston on November 15th. March 22nd, Sheldon Lake State Park. New homebrew filters ready for testing.
 - Bayland/Duhacsek Park/Eldridge Park – club has lost fee exemption for parks. Bayland must be reserved 45 days in advance. April testing date will include “Ham Radio 101” course, as we have the room for 8 hrs.
 - Houston Christian University Radio Club Alliance
 - Awards will be part of the Ice Cream Social.
 - Public BVARC business documents repository established; needs to be used. Link to be added to website. Jeff to get with Eddie to make link public.
 - Terry’s request – code of conduct/mission statement that states no disparagement of others on the reflector, repeater, etc. Committee established; first meeting this week.
 - Offline meeting will be held to discuss the process for rescheduling (or holding) Board mtgs.
- ❖ Programs
 - March – POTA equipment show & tell
 - April 10 – POTA/Houston POTA with Kori WX5KR
 - May – Museum Ships (and maybe an additional program/presentation)
 - June – Field Day
- ❖ Committees
 - Newsletter – last printed newsletter has been printed.
 - Historical Archives
 - By-Laws
 - Finance
 - Events and Membership
 - Food Team – Stepping back a bit this year; will still do major events.
 - Club Website
 - Parks on the Air

- Elmer/ Subject Matter Experts
- Museum Ships Wknd
- Field Day – Richard
- Winter Field Day
- Greater Houston HamFest
- GHHF Website
- Banquet
- Code of Conduct (New, see above)
- ❖ New Business
 - Belton Hamfest is April 5th
 - Tidelands Hamfest in July
 - Lee WA5LEE made a motion to create a groups.io site for BVARC communications. Motion tabled for future discussion.
- ❖ Next Meetings – Pursuant to Article V Section G #1 of the Club By-Laws
 - Sunday, April 6th, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- ❖ Closing Statement(s) – The president thanked those in attendance for taking the time to join.
- ❖ Meeting Adjournment – 6:35 p.m.

Recorded by: Jeff Greer, W5JEF

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

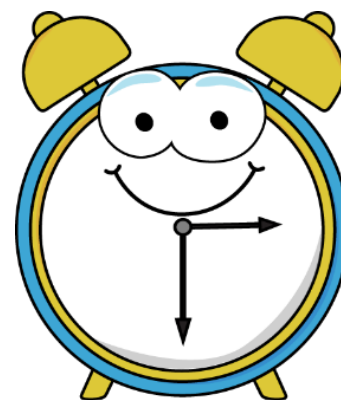
Public Service Net Monday night on 146.94- (167.9) at 8 PM

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

Check www.bvarc.org for current info.

Greater Houston Simplex Net 4th Thursday, propagation net, at 7 PM, on 146.54 MHz simplex and an alternate frequency of 147.54.

See <https://parksontheair.com/> for information about Houston area POTA activations.



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

Ham Exam Answer: D. The far field is the region where the shape of the antenna pattern is independent of distance.

BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

02/19/25, K5LKJ (NCS), K5DBL (Manvel), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), KI5HOC, AA5OA (Pearcy, AR), K5LJ, KA5LPH, WN5A, KI5SKL, W5LIC (Channelview), KI5RLZ (Channelview), N5CHB. (12 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 178, SN = 113, A = 14, K = 1 / Band Rpt: GOOD

02/26/25, K5LKJ (NCS), WW5PA, K5DBL (Manvel), K5LJ, KI5HOC, AA5OA (Pearcy, AR), K5RBC (Lake Jackson), WN5A. (8 Check-Ins)
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 190, SN = 126, A = 8, K = 3 / Band Rpt: GOOD

03/05/25, K5LKJ (NCS), AB5YS (Harrisonburg, LA), K5JPP, K5LJ, AA5OA (Pearcy, AR), KI5HOC, KI5SKL, W5LIC (Channelview), KA5YIX, KA5LPH, WN5A. (11 Check-Ins)
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 150, SN = 147, A = 16, K = 2 / Band Rpt: GOOD

03/12/25, K5LKJ (NCS), KA5LPH, WW5PA Rosenberg, K5JPP, K5LJ, KI5HOC, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), WN5A.
Solar Cycle 25: SFI = 191, SN = 159, A = 6, K = 1 / Band Rpt: POOR

(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

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.

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

2025 Club Officers

President (2024-2025)

Michael Hardwick N5VCX n5vcx@att.net

Vice President (2025-2026)

Kori Rahman WX5KR kori113@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary (2025-2026)

Jeff Greer W5JEF greerjw@hotmail.com

Treasurer (2025-2026)

David Ely N5EKW davidely@prodigy.net

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

Terry Leatherland K5PGF k5pgf@yahoo.com

2 Year At-Large Board Member B (2025-2026)

Kirc Breden N5XJB n5xjb@yahoo.com

1 Year At Large (2025)

Robert Polinski KD5YVQ kd5yvq@arrl.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** 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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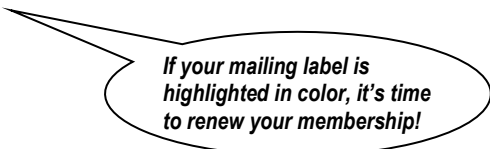
**BRAZOS VALLEY
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 2997
SUGAR LAND, TX 77487-2997**

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Board of Directors Meeting – 5:30 PM Sunday, April 6, 2025, via Zoom

General membership Meeting – 7:30 PM Thursday, April 10, 2025, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston TX 77083



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