



BVARC BEACON

Newsletter of the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

AMATEUR RADIO FOR SOUTHWEST HOUSTON AND FORT BEND COUNTY



VOLUME 49 ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2025

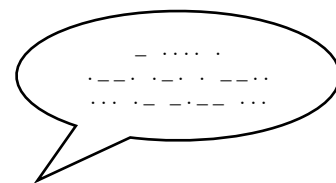
General Membership Meeting Thursday August 14 at 7:30 PM

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

Join us at the August General Meeting for a presentation on Antenna Design, by Bill Crowell N4HPG. And remember the annual Ice Cream Social has been moved to October!

The Prez Says

Richard Bonica, KD5YCU, did a great wrap-up on Field Day. Richard said that things went well, and there were about 400 more contacts made than last year. Richard will publish the submitted scores next month so stay tuned. Thanks again Richard for a great Field Day!



The September meeting is still being planned so check next month's newsletter or the BVARC website.

The October meeting will be a two-fer with both the BVARC annual Ice Cream Social and a Power Point display on antennas from Rick Hiller, W5RH. Make sure you make it for Ice Cream and Rick's great displays.

November will be the annual chili supper and elections. There will be more on the elections in next month's newsletter including a list of open positions on the BVARC Board. If you would like to run for an office, contact anyone on the BOD and let them know. Put your spare time in to help the club and the amateur radio hobby.

As I mentioned last month, this year marks the last year that Bill Cordell, W5VOM and Glenn Anderson, WB5TUF will be supporting Field Day. What this means is that a new home will need to be found for the tower trailer and the field day computer equipment. Ideas are still needed for storage locations and anyone that would like to help support the equipment. If you are interested, please contact anyone on the Board of Directors and let them know.

This equipment has been invaluable over the years and BVARC appreciates the donation of the equipment. I want to thank Bill and Glenn for all their hard work over the years and the effort and expenses they put into the club and Field Day.

The dates have changed for the Greater Houston HamFest. The new dates for 2026 are February 20th and 21st. Check elsewhere in the newsletter for a more detailed list of the schedule. If you would like to help on the hamfest, please contact me at n5vcx@att.net or 713-826-6917. Make sure you mark your calendars with the new dates.



A quick update on the outdoor city fox hunt. The number one hunter found the fox in 45 minutes with the number two and three coming in at the same time of 90 minutes. I will have to have more detailed information on the fox hunt and the hunters in one of the future newsletters.

See you at the meeting on the 14th.

73, N5VCX

Greater Houston HamFest Date Change for 2026

Due to an unexpected change in reservation policy, the Greater Houston HamFest lost the March 6th and 7th, 2026 dates. The new dates will be in February and the new schedule for 2026 will be:

Thursday, February 19, 2026	Vendor Set-up only	1 pm to 5 pm
Friday, February 20, 2026	Vendor Set-up only	8 am to 12 noon
Friday, February 20, 2026	Doors Open	12 noon to 6 pm
Saturday, February 21, 2026	Vendor Set-up only	6:30 am to 8 am
Saturday, February 21, 2026	Doors open	8 am
Saturday, February 21, 2026	Raffle drawing	2 pm
Saturday, February 21, 2026	Doors Close	3 pm
Saturday, February 21, 2026	Facility closes	5 pm

Ticket and tables sales to start sometime in mid-October. A few of the new equipment vendors will be back for 2026 – HRO, ABR, Expert Amps (Main Trading) and Mastrant and many others. So mark your calendar with the new dates!

August 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 S	2	
3	4 P S	5 S T	6 R S	7 S	8 S	9 VE Testing Bayland Park 10:30 AM
10 BVARC Board Mtg 5:30 PM Zoom	11 P S	12 S T	13 R S	14 S BVARC Meeting 7:30 PM	15 S	16
17	18 P S	19 S T	20 R S	21 S	22 S	23
24	25 P S	26 S T	27 R S	28 S	29 S	30
31						

8/9/2025 BVARC VE Testing, 10:30 AM, Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St., Houston TX 77074.

8/9/2025 Shreveport-Bossier Hamfest, 7 AM – 2 PM, Louisiana State Fairgrounds Agriculture Building, 3206 Pershing Blvd, Shreveport, LA 71109. \$10 admission. See <http://www.k5sar.com/sbhamfest/> for more information.

10/3-4/2025 Ham EXPO Fall 2025, The Belton HamFest, Bell County Expo Center (Cadence Bank Center), 301 Loop 121 Belton, TX 76513. Outdoor tailgating Fri afternoon, indoor exhibits Sat, VE testing 10 AM Sat.

10/12-17/2025 RVRN Radio Network Fall Rally, Elmendorf TX, <http://rvradionetwork.com>

10/18/2025 South Texas Hamfest & Electronics Expo, Sinton TX, <http://www.southtexashamfest.org>

9/27/2025 Houston POTA Stephen F. Austin State Park, Park Road 38, San Felipe, TX 77473

11/15/2025 Houston POTA Lake Livingston State Park, 300 Park Road 65, Livingston TX 77351

2/20-21/2026 Greater Houston HamFest 2026, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Rosenberg TX – note the date change!



Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club

Minutes



July 6th, 2025 @ 5:30pm via Video Conference

Board Members

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

Board of Directors Meeting

- ❖ Establish Quorum
- ❖ Call Meeting to Order 5: 34 p.m.
- ❖ Opening Statement – The President thanked those in attendance for coming
- ❖ Emergency Business
 - Hamfest 2026 – Lost 2nd Feb through March dates due to changes on how reservations are being processed. New date wknd of Feb 21st. Will need to pay deposit as soon as date is reserved.
 - Bill Cordell and Glen Anderson are stepping down; need to store computer equipment and trailer; Richard has people lined up to train on replacing the labor, but need to determine storage solution. Canopy-covered storage estimate is around \$200/month (to rent a space). Terry to check on a space at Fort Bend Boat & RV. If anyone else has leads, please contact the board.
 - Terry moved to approve up to \$12,500 for GHF 2026 expenditures (bulk of which would be Fairground reservations). Approved.
- ❖ Agenda Review – Agenda was approved.
- ❖ Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer’s report was approved pending corrections.
- ❖ Secretary’s Report – No update; Secretary needs to send out renewal reminder emails and check the mail.
- ❖ Old Business
- ❖ Programs
 - July general meeting will be Field Day wrap-up with Richard KG5YCU.
 - May get Chuck from ABR to come out for a future meeting.
 - August is normally ice cream social, pending food team.
 - September TBD.
 - October – Rick W5RH
 - November – Board elections and chili supper
 - December – Normally homebrew night
- ❖ Committees
 - Newsletter – Donovan working on newsletter; should go out tomorrow
 - Historical Archives – in progress; lots of material. Still collecting, organizing, and determining what should be public
 - By-Laws – on hold pending direction from Prez.
 - Code of Conduct – Mike to contact Terry tomorrow or ASAP
 - Finance – See New Business, below.
 - Events and Membership
 - Food Team – Still stepping back, but on board for Field Day ’26 and possibly Winter Field Day.
 - Club Website – Was updated for Field Day; now removed. Membership news updated. Newsletter/roster up to date.
 - Parks on the Air – Houston POTA next event is 19th of July at Galveston Island SP.

- Elmer/ Subject Matter Experts – seeking volunteers
- Museum Ships Wknd – Mark Janzer
- Field Day – Richard Bonica reports 115 people (including visitors). ARRL visitors and elected officials stopped by. Preliminary score not yet available, but ~400 more contacts this year. Satellite team was onsite (K5WH and Chris). New software next year thanks to David McCarty.
- Winter Field Day – Richard Bonica and TBD
- Greater Houston HamFest – 2026 planning meeting some time this month.
 - GHHF Website
- Banquet – no plans at this time
- ❖ New Business
 - Terry K5PGF proposed a change in financial procedures.
 - He presented a demonstration of the use of simplifi.quicken.com. Terry has spent hours importing banking/PayPal information back to January 2024. Terry has worked with Eddie and Dave on this information. In this system, categorizing/tagging transactions properly is paramount. With those categorized/tagged properly, we can get useful reports/visualizations of how money comes into/leaves BVARC. Access will need to be controlled to ensure that categories/tags stay accurate.
 - Based on a study by members of the Finance committee over the last few months, Terry proposed that we modify our procedure of financial money handling in 4 ways:
 - 1. Due to numerous administrative errors over the last several years, we should cease routine and random transfers of monies back and forth from checking and savings with no real value to the organization given there is .1% interest or less being realized.
 - 2. We should maintain a minimum checking balance of \$25,000 to cover the average winter/new year lead-up costs of the yearly Ham Fest (~\$25,000) and other radio sport events. We should take the remaining balance in savings and checking and institute 4- or 6-month CDs with Chase Bank (current bank platform) that will realize market rate interest for the club.
 - 3. The Treasurer should institute a modern online tracking and budgeting system for record keeping that can persist through future Treasurer officers and committee in addition to a simple monthly summary "spreadsheet" designed by the committee. This should be put in place no later than January 1, 2026, and carry on until repealed by the Board of Directors.
 - ◆ All transactions should be categorized appropriately in the online tooling to track and establish budget and history. 1
 - ◆ Access to the tooling is to be limited to the President, Treasurer and Finance Committee.
 - 4. The club should utilize the existing but not implemented PayPal credit card and automated online exchange processes for collecting monies for business and events. Paying bills should be limited to checking account checks, draft, and debit card.
 - Robert moved to approve item #3, above. Approved. The remaining items were tabled for further discussion/research. Finance Committee to meet on the 15th at 6 p.m.
- ❖ Next Meetings – Pursuant to Article V Section G #1 of the Club By-Laws
 - Sunday, August 10th, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- ❖ Closing Statement(s) – The President again thanked those in attendance for coming, and thanked Board members for their hard work.
- ❖ Meeting Adjournment 7:22 p.m.

Ham Exam Question

Which of these digital modes has the narrowest bandwidth?

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| A. MFSK16 | B. 170 Hz shift, 45-baud RTTY |
| C. FT8 | D. PACTOR IV |



Amateur Radio Social Gatherings

There are several social gatherings throughout southwest Houston for amateur radio. Some of them are club organized while others are simply a gathering of local hams. They are a great place to meet new people and as well as finding out about new antennas or equipment (as always for hams, they are a great place to hear the latest and greatest tall tale!).



One of the longest running social gatherings is the Wednesday Lunch Bunch. It started in the late 1960's and has been going ever since. They have met at a number of different locations over the years with the latest one at Luby's cafeteria in Stafford. If you get a chance to be in Stafford area on Wednesday at 11 am, drop by to say hi. Anyone is welcome at the Wednesday Lunch Bunch!

One of the other popular gatherings is the BVARC Saturday morning breakfast. It has been held since at least late 1980's and has been in several locations as well. From the Viking's Den to 59 Diner to Kelly's Country Cooking to Otto's BBQ, the BVARC Saturday breakfast is a great place to meet. So if you are near the 59/69 IHOP in the Meadows area around 6:30 on a Saturday, drop by and talk a little radio as well as everything else under the sun – even flat earth information!



There is also Brews for BVARC which is normally held every Tuesday before the general meeting. Organized by Kori, WX5KR he normally posts the location and time information on the BVARC website the Sunday before. So, if you would like to stop by and say hi and have a cold one, check the web site.

Katy Amateur Radio Society, KARS, has their Saturday morning breakfast at Freddy's on the Katy Freeway at Barker Cypress. If you are in the area around 8 am, stop by and say hello to a great group of hams.

POTA in Chile

Día Internacional de los Parques Nacionales
August 23-24

Here's a good chance to make P2P contacts from local parks to parks in Chile. Good POTA DX.

For more information, see
<https://www.potachile.cl/>.

Submitted by Stephen Flowers W2WF.



Waves & Coffee –

C - the speed of light

How is it related to electricity & magnetism?

By Stephen W2WF

Radio operators commonly use a quantity called the speed of light, or “c” for short. We don’t give it much thought and simply “plug-n-chug” it into our equations to get the length of wire that we must cut when building our antennas. Of course, we know that our formula will give the length for a full wavelength dipole or vertical antenna; so, for a halfwave dipole or quarter-wave vertical we’d need to divide the result by 2 or 4 respectively. As we learned when we studied for our technician license, our formula is:

$$\text{Length of full wavelength wire} = \frac{300}{\text{frequency in Megahertz}}$$

Or in abbreviated form, our formula or equation is written as,

$$L = \frac{c}{v}$$

$c = \text{speed of light (in units of } \frac{m}{s} \text{ divided by } 10^6)$

$v = \text{frequency (in units of Hertz multiplied by } 10^6)$

That’s all fine and good, but many of us may have had this question in our minds when we learned this:

“Why are our radio waves using the speed of light?” Well, the stock answer says, “because our RF waves travel *at* the speed of light.”

As newbie Ham operators we’d likely answer:

“Yes I get that, but our radio waves, RF, are electro-magnetic in nature, what does that have to do with the speed of light? Where does this link between electromagnetic waves and the speed of light come from?”

To find out the answers and go deeper into the rabbit hole, please read more about the physics linking electricity, magnetism, and the speed of light by accessing this month’s full article at <https://bvarc.org/home/tech-downloads/>.

BVARC Rag Chew Net

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

07/16/25, K5LKJ (NCS), KI5HOC, K5DBL (Manvel), W5ICR, K5LJ, WN5A, KB5QAP (Evangiline, LA), W2WR (Katy), W5RH, KA5HHD (Broaddus). (8 Check-ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SF1 = 139, SN = 182, A = 23, K = 1, Band Rpt: FAIR

07/23/25, K5LKJ (NCS), K5WRN, K5LJ, KI5HOC, K9ZZK (Fairfield), W5ICR, AI5QE (Dallas), AA5OA (Percy, AR), WW5PA/5, W5VOM, WA5CYI, W5LIC (Channelview), W5RH, K5LPH. (14 Check-Ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SF1 = 145, SN = 85, A = 16, K = 3, Band Rpt: FAIR

07/30/25, K5LKJ (NCS), K5LJ, K5RBC (Lake Jackson), KI5HOC, K5WRN, WW5PA/5, W5VOM, W5ICR, WA5CYI, K5DBL (Manvel), W1BG. (11 Check-ins)

Solar Cycle 25: SF1 = 152, SN = 138, A = 8, K = 2 / 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

Ham Exam Answer: C. FT8, at about 50 Hz bandwidth. MFSK16 is 154 Hz, RTTY 45170 Hz Shift is 270 Hz. PACTOR IV is 300 Hz.

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

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

Have News for the BVARC BEACON?

The newsletter should include the news! What's going on in your Ham world? Want to announce any hamfests or sales, OTA events, other clubs' events, lunch groups in your area, presentations, or kit build sessions?



Applaud a fellow ham's achievements? Share your own homebrew projects, SK announcements, or anything else hams should know. Send submissions to dballi@mail.com.

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.

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2025


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

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Board of Directors Meeting – 5:30 PM Sunday, August 10, 2025, via Zoom

General membership Meeting – 7:30 PM Thursday, August 14, 2025, 16005 Bellaire Blvd, Houston TX 77083



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