Bexar Wire

San Antonio Radio Club
W5SC

2026, No. 04 April 2026

What is the most important thing that you can do as a member of SARC for Radio Fiesta 2026?

ANS: Sign up on the online work assignment form at the meeting or online(https://w5sc.org/rf-vol/) to help Aubrey Mason, WA6DMI Radio Fiesta 2026 Chairperson. You can volunteer for a 2-hour shift, multiple 2-hour shifts, or for the entire period that a job exists. All the help that you as a member can give in any amount will be appreciated.

For new members: **This is it, our annual fundraiser event. No prior experience needed; you just need a willingness to help.**

PS. You also get a FREE admission to radio Fiesta, and one door prize raffle ticket.

The next meeting, April 9, 2026, will be at 7 PM at Blanco BBQ, 13259 Blanco Rd, San Antonio, TX 78216, (210) 251-2602.

Fun Stuff on April First

Jim Neff, WJ4M

When April first rolls around each year, you can bet someone, and at times a manufacturer, will post something radical and outlandish that sounds just a little true. That happened this past April 1, AKA, "April Fools Day." Here are a couple that had us spinning for a short time.

The Icom Inflatable Tower

I think this one originated in England. It was heralded as a great solution to the HOA problem some hams face. Trouble is, as someone wrote, it would be excessively heavy. Besides, we already have pneumatic metal towers that are lighter and easier to set up.

Pay to Play POTA

This one snared a few of us for a short time. It was so far out it seemed believable. Done by Mike, K8MRD on his blog, "Ham Radio Tube," it announced a pay to play and name your own park scheme. Pay $53/month to the POTA organization and you can designate any park, ballpark, parking lot, anything with park in the name, and POTA will assign a park number. Contacts up to 5 are free, 6 to 10 $2.99 each, 11-86, $4.99 eaach, after 86, $0.73. Here's the URL: New! Parks On The Air POTA Platinum I doubt POTA was pleased.

NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
04	R		N5IUT		San Antonio, TX		April 2026
TO							

Hello South Texas,

San Antonio Radio Fiesta 2026

Fifty days after we meet on April 9th at the Blanco BBQ, we will have Radio Fiesta! This year's event will take place at Schertz Civic Center, 1400 Schertz Pkwy, Schertz, TX on May 29 &30, 2026. Admission information is at the URL below.
https://w5sc.org/radio-fiesta-2025-information/

There is an outdoor tailgate area and indoor tables where you can find HF, VHF, and UHF radios, vintage radios, and components. Throughout the day, there are presentations from experts.
If you're thinking about getting your ham license or upgrading, take your exam at the event!

Raffle prizes:
Grand Prize: Yaesu FT-891 100W HF/50MHz All Mode Mobile Transceiver
2nd Prize: Yaesu FT-5DR C4FM/144/430MHz Dual Band Digital Handheld Transceiver
3rd Prize: Talkpod® N39plus Nationwide Virtual HAM Radio (Dual Pack)
4th Prize: Talkpod® N39plus Nationwide Virtual HAM Radio (Dual Pack)

I encourage you to attend or better yet, volunteer. Whether you're interested in emergency communication, seeing old friends, or making new friends, there's something here for you.
Come on out to Radio Fiesta!

Paul Guido, N5IUT, President, SARC

P.S. The BSidesSATX IT Security Conference is happening on Saturday June 13, 2026, volunteers are needed for the Fox Hunt and the Radio Village. Please let me know if you can assist!
73

Bexar Wire

Published monthly by:

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The due date for articles is the **Monday** before the first **Thursday** of the month

San Antonio Radio Club

Meeting Minutes
7:00 PM March 12, 2026
Blanco BBQ, 13259 Blanco Rd., San Antonio, TX 78216

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM//Pledge of Allegiance//Introductions

Presentations: An introduction to LoRa & MeshCore

Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting
There being no additions or changes, the minutes were passed without objection by unanimous consent.

Officer Reports:

President – Paul Guido, N5IUT – Tailgate coming up this weekend at Encino Library, 8 AM – 1 PM.

Vice President – Kelly Randal, WB5MZT – Scouts Council-Wide Camp 3/21/26 will be promoting ham radio, among many other interests. Contact Kelly if interested in volunteering.

Secretary – Jack Bannin, N5JLB – The minutes from club meetings can be found at the w5sc.org website, in the Newsletters section.

Treasurer – Jon April, KI5CSK – All Radio Fiesta and scholarship fund prizes purchased. Banking will switch to RBFCU soon.

Chairman of the Board Report – Bill Craft, KD2KIQ – No report.

Education and Training – Marvin "Marlo" Brown (KJ5BQV) & Travis Buhler (KI5TXG): No report. The new technician question pool has been released.

Emergency Communications – Patricia Colley, Bexar Co. ARES – Absent. Paul Guido provided an overview of the ARES operation at the Emergency Operations Center.

Web Site – Bill Craft, KD2HIQ
Activities for February
1. Web Site- Posted newsletter
2. Groups.io
    a) Updated membership list
    b) Updated calendar
3. Mail chimp- Meeting notice, Zoom Notice
4. Twitter
5. Facebook - Meeting notice

Membership – Bill Craft, KD2HIQ	As of 3/11/2026		
Paid 125	New Members for 2026		
Free / Mil 7	**First**	**Last**	**Call**

Family Members 15	Don	Carmel	**W5ILB**
Free / RF 5	Eric	Meyer	
Free / VE 26	Robert	Becan	**WA5NT**
ARRL Members 96			
Total Membership 178			

POTA: When scheduled, information is published via the club's Groups.IO and Facebook account.

Fox Hunt – Steve Ortiz – KJ5HIH – No report. Paul Guide announced that there will be a foxhunt event at B-Sides.

Newsletter Editor – Jimmie Neff – Newsletter distributed March 11, 2026. Contact Jimmy if you want to contribute an article for publication. Deadline is the Monday before the monthly meeting.

Field Day – Jon April: Work to be done on the trailer and the HF beam antenna. 4th full weekend of June. Stay tuned for more information and opportunities to help.

Finance and Review –Member Dawn Finnamore/N1DEE will be performing the annual review with the Treasurer on 4/9/27.

JOTA – John April: Held in October.

Centennial Committee – Tom O'Brien AB5XZ – Memorabilia for the club's centennial are available.

Radio Fiesta – Aubrey Mason – Tickets available on EventBrite. Search: Bexar County. May 29 & 30 this year. Talkpod (push to talk over cellular) donated about $500 worth of equipment to be handed out as door prizes at the event.

VE Team – Benny Martinez, NU5P

SARC tests are at the Leon Valley library, unless otherwise noted.
6425 Evers Rd
Leon Valley, TX 78238

4/25/26, 12-2 PM
5/30/26, 1:30-3:30 PM, at Radio Fiesta, 1400 Schertz Pkwy, Schertz, TX 78154
6/28/26, 12-2 PM, Field Day, 900 Saddletree Ct., Shavano Park, TX 78231
8/22/26, 12-2 PM
10/24/26, 12-2 PM – At Leon Valley Fire Station
12/19/26, 12-2 PM

Silent Key Committee – Rodney Brown, AA5RB – Some of the best pieces of equipment will be available at the tailgate event, including radios and antennas.

Executive – No report

Election Committee – Paul Guido, N5IUT – No report. Elections will happen in November.

Scholarship Committee – Fundraiser tickets for sale, $25 each, to fund two $1000 scholarships through AARL. Drawing will be at the November 12, 2026 meeting @ 7 PM. Do not need to be present to win. See Jon to purchase tickets.

Old Business (Motions carried over from previous meetings) – None.

New Business – None

Announcements

- Hfsignals.com – Inexpensive 5w radio, analog radio for LARCSet Kit – The 40 meter all analog SSB/CW radio. Assembly required.
- Tuesday 3/24, between 6-7:30 monitor the ARRO repeaters for a neighborhood event to introduce non-hams to radio.
- Bouvet Island DXpedition. Very rare event. Callsign: 3Y0K.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:29 PM.

Field Day Preparation – Beam Antenna

Jon April, KI5CSK

Verifying Beam Antenna Resonance

As part of our Field Day preparation, we performed resonance testing on our tri-band Yagi beam antenna covering **10m, 15m, and 20m**. Ensuring each element is functioning correctly before assembly helps prevent performance issues once the antenna is in the air.

Antenna Overview

Our beam consists of three primary element types:

- **Driven Element**
- **Reflector**
- **Director**

Each element is full-length for **10 meters**, with **traps** that allow operation on **15m and 20m**. In total, we tested **six element halves**:

- Director 1 & 2
- Reflector 1 & 2
- Driven 1 & 2

Test Setup

Ground Plane and Support Structure

To create a consistent test environment, we used:

- A **~25 ft roll of roofing flashing** laid flat as a ground plane (see Figure 2)
- A **PVC support structure** (see Figure 2) o Square base for stability o ~2 ft vertical riser at the center
  - o Used to hold **one half of an element at a time**

This provided a stable and repeatable measurement setup.

Test Method

Testing one half of the element against a ground plane effectively simulates a full element due to image theory, allowing meaningful resonance measurements without assembling the entire antenna.

Each element half was tested individually using the following setup:

- **SO-239 (female) connector** with soldered leads (see Figure 1)

Figure 1

- **Brown wire** connected to the ground plane (see Figure 3)
- **Yellow wire** clamped to the element using a screw/gear clamp (see Figure 3). For these tests, the clamp was set approximately 12” from the base of the element.

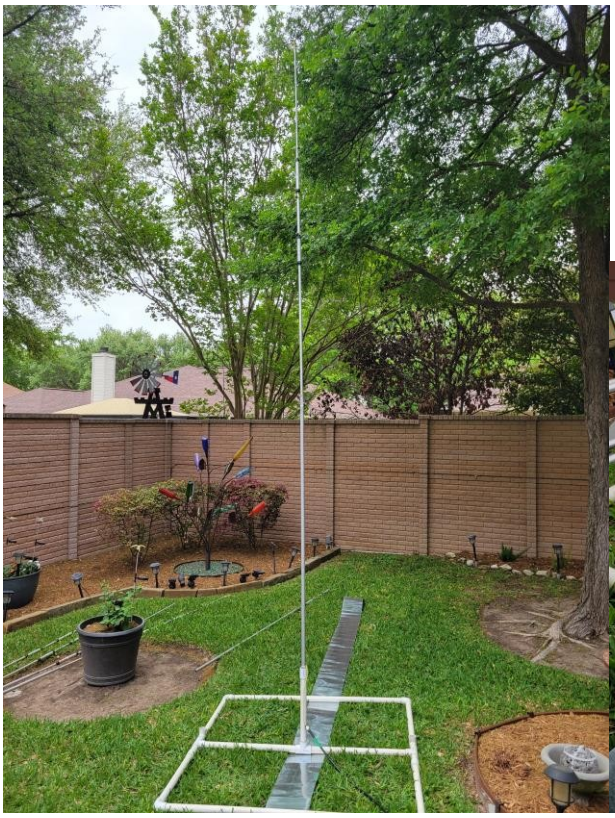

Figure 2 – *flashing and PVC support*

Figure 3 – *SO239 connections*

- **Antenna analyzer** connected via ~10 ft coax (see Figure 4)
- Keep your body and analyzer several feet away from the element during measurement, as proximity can affect resonance readings.

Figure 4 – *Antenna Analyzer*

Procedure

1. Identify the element half under test (e.g., *Director 1*)
2. Mount the element vertically on the PVC support
3. Connect analyzer leads (ground → flashing, element → test wire) 4. Sweep across:
    a. **20m band (~14 MHz)**
    b. **15m band (~21 MHz)**
    c. **10m band (~28 MHz)**

Pro tip:
Always compare element halves to each other rather than relying on absolute frequency readings when using improvised test setups.

5. Record the **lowest SWR (resonant point)** in each band. We are not targeting exact amateur band edges but instead comparing each element half against its counterpart. Because the connection point is not at the true feed point, measured resonance values will be offset but remain useful for relative comparison between element halves.

6. Perform a **tap test**:
    a. Lightly tap the element/trap area with a rubber covered screwdriver handle.
    b. Observe if resonance and/or SWR shifts

Important: If resonance or SWR changes during the tap test, it typically indicates an intermittent electrical connection; most often caused by **loose hardware**, **corrosion**, or **poor trap connections**.

Test Results

Element	10m (MHz)	15m (MHz)	20m (MHz)
Director 1	27.064	20.835	14.472
Director 2	26.961	20.825	14.282
Reflector 1	25.706	19.763	13.201
Reflector 2	29.184*	19.836	13.250
Driven 1	26.833	20.755	13.752
Driven 2*	26.534	20.416	13.914

Issues Found and Corrected

Reflector 2 (10m anomaly)

- Initial reading: **29.184 MHz** (inconsistent compared to Reflector 1 at 10m)
- Investigation revealed a **loose trap coil connection Correction:**

- Re-bent coil lead more securely around the screw
- Tightened connection

This was the picture prior to tightening the wire around the screw (see Figure 5).

Figure 5 – *Loose trap coil connection prior to tightening*

Result after fix:

- Improved to **26.031 MHz** (good), now consistent with expected value as compared to Reflector 1 at 10m

Driven 2 (tap test failure)

- During the tap test, SWR fluctuated significantly (approximately 1:1 to 4:1)
- This indicated an intermittent connection
- Inspection revealed corrosion on a trap coil connection (see Figure 6)

Correction:

- Cleaned connection (scraped corrosion)
- Re-seated and tightened coil wire around screw
- SWR reading stabilized and was no longer affected by the tap test This was the picture prior to cleaning corrosion from the aluminum.

Figure 6 – *Corrosion at trap connection before cleaning*

Key Observations

- Resonance points clustered as expected near the amateur bands, confirming proper trap operation.
- As expected, reflector elements resonated slightly lower in frequency and directors slightly higher, consistent with Yagi design principles.
- Element halves were generally **consistent across bands**, indicating good overall antenna health
- The **tap test proved valuable** in identifying marginal electrical connections
- Most issues traced back to: o Loose mechanical connections o Corrosion at trap interfaces

Takeaways

Poor resonance or faulty traps can significantly reduce gain and front-to-back ratio, even if SWR appears acceptable at the feed point.

This simple test setup allowed us to:

- Validate each element before full assembly
- Identify and correct issues early

- Confirm proper multi-band operation of the trap system

By taking the time to verify resonance ahead of Field Day, we increase our chances of:

- Lower SWR
- Better radiation efficiency
- Stronger contacts across all three bands

Overall, the consistency between matched element halves confirmed that the antenna is electrically sound and ready for Field Day deployment.

Acknowledgment
This activity was conducted with guidance from Richard Elder, WB5ACN, who generously shared his knowledge and experience throughout the process. Like many people in our club, I benefited from his willingness to teach and mentor others. This article is a reflection of that learning experience and is shared in the spirit of passing that knowledge along.

If anyone in the club is interested in helping with antenna testing or learning how to use an analyzer, this is a great hands-on activity; feel free to reach out before our next setup session.

— Jon April, KI5CSK

Volunteer Examiners at Work

From Bennie Martinez, NU5P, VE Coordinator

Next testing session: **April 25, 2026 from 12-2 PM** at at the Leon Valley library,
6425 Evers Rd
Leon Valley, TX 78238

Register at **HamTest@w5sc.org**
Other info at W5SC.org click "Getting Started" then "Testing.

SARC has had a Groups.io. Its name is saradioclub.

If you haven't signed up for group.io, you should. Groups.io is our primary email messaging method to all club members. It is FREE for all members.
Several members have asked where are the notices, schedules and codes for Zoom meetings?

1. The groups.io calendar has a schedule of Zoom meetings and access codes.
2. The calendar can be accessed directly from the club web site https://w5sc.org/events-calendar/ NOTE: it is the same groups.io calendar.

The saradioclub Group.io is being used to publicize SARC business meetings. It can be used for other things like promotion of VEC testing and classes. Members of the saradioclub Group.io can and have asked each other technical questions or sought assistance.

The saradioclub Group.io is a closed group. To become a member, go to saradioclub.groups.io. (You may need to have a Groups.io account.) You will then need to select *Apply for membership in this group*. This generates a message. SARC members can expect approval to join the saradioclub Group.io in probably less than 24 hours.

Reminder: there are two active X (Twitter) accounts for the San Antonio Radio Club. They are @SARadioClub and @ARadioFiesta.

The @SARadioClub is being used to publicize SARC meetings. It can be used for other things like promotion of VEC testing and classes.

When work again commences the @ARadioFiesta will be used.

SARC members are encouraged to follow both Twitter accounts

SARC Facebook

There is a San Antonio Radio Club – SARC (@saradioclub) Facebook Page.

The newsletter editor is making posts about SARC meetings and other activities. Any Officer, Committee Chairperson, or member who believes that they have information that should be posted to this page should contact the newsletter editor using the contact information for the newsletter editor on page 2 of this newsletter.

SARC members are encouraged to follow this Facebook Pa

SARC SLACK

There is a San Antonio Radio Club Slack team – w5sc.slack.com.

Slack teams are meant to foster communication between team members. Paul Guido, N5IUT, has established the w5sc.slack.com team for SARC. He has also established some channels. Think of the channels as topical areas.

To join send an email to Paul Guido, N5IUT, at radioteacher@gmail.com. In actuality, any team member already a part of the w5sc.slack.com can invite you, but Paul is known to be on it.

Radio Fiesta 2026

Radio Fiesta 2026 will be at Schertz Civic Center on June 6-7. Get a table and bring stuff to sell or just come in and browse the deals, listen to the presentations and swap tales. Hope to see you there!

Field Day 2026

Field Day 2026 wil be here before you know it. Start planning for FD 2026, where SARC proves they are an eating group with a radio problem.

License Testing Dates for 2026

SARC does all of its licensing testing as a part of ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) or- ganization so all of the Volunteer Examiners in SARC are duly authorized Volunteer Examiners of ARRL's VEC.
Register at **HamTest@w5sc.org**
Other info at W5SC.org click "Getting Started" then "Testing." If not otherwise noted, testing site is Leon Valley Library, 6425 Evers Rd, Leon Valley, TX 78238

Scheduled for 2026
2/21/26, 12-2 PM
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5/30/26, 1:30-3:30 PM, at Radio Fiesta, 1400 Schertz Pkwy, Schertz, TX 78154
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8/22/26, 12-2 PM
10/24/26, 12-2 PM – At Leon Valley Fire Station
12/19/26, 12-2 PM

Amateur Radio License Classes

For more information, check the club web page, W5SC.org

SARC has a website:

w5sc.org

Webmaster: Bill Craft KD2HIQ

Billc851@gmail.com

Emergency Communications

If you are interested in emergency communications, contact:

JC Smith, N5RXS – 210-849-3404

SARC Meeting Dates for 2025

January 8, 2026
February 12, 2026
March 12, 2026
April 9, 2026
May 14, 2026
June 11, 2026
July 9, 2026
August 13, 2026
September 10, 2026
October 8, 2026
November 12, 2026
December – No meeting

Meetings are normally held at Blanco BBQ, 13259 Blanco Rd, San Antonio, TX 78216 at 7:00 p. m. Room is available at 6:00 p. m. for supper