

The SkyWave Vilas County Amateur Radio Club



VCARC Members Assist With Phelps Triathlon

On August 3rd, the Vilas County Amateur Radio Club helped with radio communications for the 2024 Phelps Twin Triathlon. There were about 25 competitors. This year they had a 5K run only event as an addition to the Triathlon. The VCARC would like to thank the following radio operators for helping with the event.

Kyle Ruesch AB9AX
Scott Ruesch W9JU
Bob Barnum KC9RF
Bill Shillington W9ZCL
KC Ross KG9JP
Kirby Giampa W8DCD
Mike Erstad K9BBN
Dave Schumacher KF7CSV
Tony Campion KC9SZW

The Phelps Twin Triathlon is held the first weekend in August. 2024 was the Triathlon's 10th year.

VCARC SEPTEMBER MEETING

The next VCARC meeting will be held on Wednesday September 11, 2024, starting at 6:00 pm at the Eagle River Fire Station. This will be an in person and Zoom meeting. Zoom Instructions will be sent with the meeting reminder.

The September Meeting Tech Talk will be a Roundtable to discuss Member's recent projects.

VCARC AUGUST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

August 14, 2024, 6:00 PM – Meeting called to order by Kyle Ruesch, all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Our sincere heartfelt condolences, and prayers go out to Ray Bob and his family, as his son passed away on August 10, 2024.

Treasurers Report: July beginning balance: \$6497.75, Dues Paid: \$45.00 Total: \$6542.75. Total Expenses Paid: \$0.00 ending balance is \$6542.75.



(Courtesy of the Phelps Twin Triathlon)

Old Business: A new Hustler G6 antenna was purchased for \$225.00. Bob KC9RF, Kirby W8DCD, and his son Skyler KC9YDW replaced the existing Diamond antenna with the Hustler G6.

Work still needs to be completed on the antenna installation. The Eagle River Repeater will be down until the remaining parts arrive and are installed.

The WIFI discussions with Aspirus were tabled.

There are ongoing issues with the Fire Department's Windows 10 and the sound card causing internet issues.

New Business: What does the Club want for Tech Talks? Building antennas was mentioned.

There will be new fees at the Fire Department for meetings, the fee amount is unknown at this time.

It was discussed that the club could possibly use the Conover Church, which is moving to Eagle River across from the World Snowmobile Headquarters. The location is: 1659N Highway 45N.

Discussions: The Annual Scouting Jamboree-on-the Air (JOTA) is October 18-20, 2024. Possibly an interest in getting involved. Also discussed was inviting Scouts to Field Day 2025.

Motion to Adjourn at 6:45pm.

September 2024

ARRL NEWS

ARRL September VHF Contest

The ARRL September VHF Contest will be held from 1800 UTC on Saturday, September 14 through 0259 UTC on Monday, September 16. All amateur frequencies above 50 MHz may be used.

The objective is for amateurs in the US and Canada (and their possessions) to work as many amateur stations in as many different 2 degrees x 1 degree Maidenhead grid squares as possible using authorized frequencies above 50 MHz. Stations outside the US & Canada (and their possessions) may only work amateur stations in the US (and its possessions) and Canada.

JOTA (Jamboree-on-the Air)

When Scouts want to meet young people from another country, they usually think of attending a World Jamboree. But few people realize that each year more than a million Scouts and Guides "get together" over the airwaves for the annual Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA).

During the 2014 event, worldwide Scouting participation included 1.1 million Boy Scouts and 200,000 Girl Scouts and Girl Guides, for a total participation of over 1.3 million--the largest Scouting event in the world.

Modern technology offers Scouts the exciting opportunity to make friends in other countries without leaving home. JOTA is an annual event in which Boy and Girl Scouts and Guides from all over the world speak to each other by means of Amateur (ham) Radio. Scouting experiences are exchanged and ideas are shared via radio waves.

Since 1958 when the first Jamboree-on-the-Air was held, millions of Scouts have met each other through this event. Many contacts made during JOTA have resulted in pen pals and links between Scout troops that have lasted many years.

With no restrictions on age or on the number of participants, and at little or no expense, JOTA allows Scouts to contact each other by ham radio. The radio stations are operated by licensed amateur radio operators.

Many Scouts and leaders hold licenses and have their own stations, but the majority participate in JOTA through stations operated by local radio clubs and individual radio amateurs. Some operators use television or computer-linked communications.

Jamboree-on-the-Air is held the third weekend in October. For 2024 this will be October 18-20.

A change in policy from previous years, there is no set time for the start or end. Since it isn't a contest, there's no designating starting point. When your station is ready to go, get on the air and make contacts.

For more JOTA information please see the ARRL website.



POTA NEWS (Parks-on-the Air)

During the month of August, Dave N9DBS and Bob KC9RF were at the Bond Falls Scenic Site, Ottawa National Forest, Northern Highland American Legion State Forest and Sylvania/ Ottawa National Forest.

Propagation has been a challenge with solar flares weekly. However, they still activated each park with SSB and digital using FT8.

Seventh Annual Wisconsin State Parks on the Air

Date/time: September 21, 2024, from 11 am to 6 pm local time.

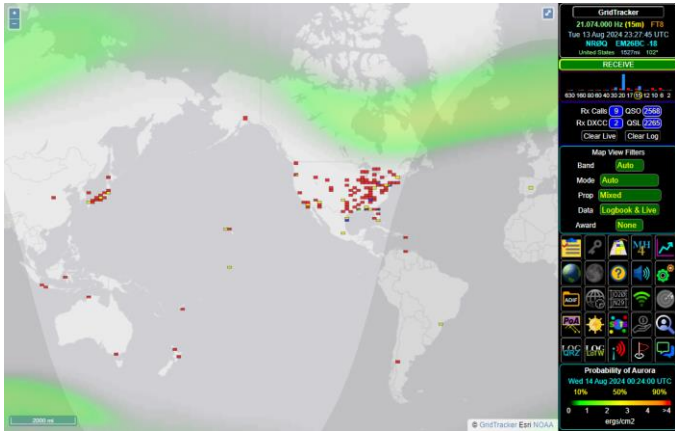
The purpose of the Wisconsin Parks on the Air (WIPOTA) operating contest is to promote public awareness of ham radio within Wisconsin's beautiful state park system.

The objective of WIPOTA is to have competing stations operate from as many Wisconsin parks as possible and work hams in other WI parks, as well as hams not located in a park in any state, province or country.

The Wisconsin Parks on the Air (WIPOTA) is sponsored by the Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club (FCARC) in Appleton, WI. See the WIPOTA website for more information.

TECH TALK

Dave Stott N9DBS gave a very informative talk covering the N1MM logger, GridTracker, and WSJT-X for FT8 with the combination of GridTracker. Dave also talked about Valerie Hotzfeld, from Wisconsin and her antenna farm. Her YouTube Channel is Valerie NV9L.



Eagle River Repeater Update. The antenna work was completed on Friday August 30th. The repeater and Echolink are now back online. Thanks Kirby, Skyler and Bob for your work.

Ham Radio Grounding

After antennas, station grounding is probably the most discussed subject in amateur radio, and it is also the one replete with the most misconceptions. The first thing to know is that there are three functions served by grounding in ham shacks: 1. Electrical Safety 2. Stray RF Suppression (or simply RF Grounding) 3. Lightning Protection.

Each has its own set of requirements, but not all station setups need every kind of ground. In fact, some setups don't use a ground at all! The articles on this page will help clear up some of the myths and mysteries surrounding this popular topic.

Grounding FAQ

1. How important is a ground? Most people say that grounding is all- important, but I have had a few people tell me that grounds aren't necessary.

Grounds fulfill three distinct functions. The best ground for one function isn't necessarily the best for another. The three are:

a. Safety Ground. This protects you from a shock hazard if one of the mains or high voltage power supply wires contacts the chassis due to some kind of fault. The requirements for this ground are spelled out in your state's electrical code. I believe that most

states adopt the National Electrical Code (NEC).

The safety ground conductor in your wall sockets should be connected to ground according to this code, and your rig's chassis should be connected to the safety ground.

b. Lightning Ground. The requirements for a ground for lightning protection are much more stringent than for a safety ground as a lot of energy must be safely dissipated. See the TIS Page on Lightning Protection.

c. RF ground. This is required only for some antennas-- ones which require current flow to ground to complete the antenna circuit.

A quarter-wave vertical is a popular example. One wire of the feedline connects to the base of the antenna, and the other connects to ground.

The connection to ground must have a low RF resistance, or you'll expend too much of your power heating the ground. A few radial wires will provide a moderately low loss connection.

A ground rod will help a little, but the RF resistance will be high, resulting in quite a bit of loss. Chapter 8 of the ARRL Antenna Book shows the approximate trade between resistance and number of radials.

If your antenna is much shorter than $\frac{1}{4}$ wavelength, you'll need many, many radials to get reasonable efficiency. If it's longer, you can get by with fewer.

A $\frac{1}{2}$ wavelength base-fed vertical needs only a very modest ground, and a ground rod is adequate. The requirements for various other end-fed antennas depend on their length.

If you use a "complete" antenna like a dipole or a ground plane (that is, one that doesn't require your feedline to connect to ground), you don't need a RF ground, as long as you keep common-mode currents off your feedline. A "current" or "choke" balun is most used for this.

2. How do mobile HF operators get RF grounds? For obvious reasons, the 8-foot buried pole won't work. In a typical HF setup, the car is capacitively coupled to the ground, so the antenna is something sort of like a cross between a lopsided vertical dipole (with the whip being one side and the car the other) and a vertical with elevated radial system. (From Roy Lewallen, W7EL, ARRL Technical Adviser)

Vilas County Amateur Radio Club

An ARRL Affiliated Organization

VCARC OFFICERS

President	Kyle Ruesch, AB9AX
Vice President	Bob Barnum, KC9RF
Secretary (Interim)	Marie Beckholt, KD9VUB
Treasurer	Ray Bob Heuer, KD9DDE
Board Member	Kirby Giampa W8DCD
Newsletter	Bob Barnum, KC9RF, Ray Protich WB9OCO



CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address:
W9VRC
Vilas County Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 1141
Eagle River, WI 54521

Website: <https://vcarc.net/>

MONTHLY MEETINGS

VCARC Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month. The meetings can be attended in person or via Zoom. The Zoom meeting information is:

Log in to Zoom at www.zoom.us

Join the meeting with meeting # 881 9483 6234.

Password is 328355

MONDAY NIGHT NET INFORMATION

The VCARC operates a weekly Net every Monday night starting at 7:30 PM local time. Net Control is via the VCARC Eagle River repeater on 145.150/ PL 114.8.

VCARC REPEATER INFORMATION

The VCARC operates amateur radio repeaters in Eagle River and Land O' Lakes Wisconsin.

Eagle River Repeater
145.150 PL 114.8
Echolink Node 691369

Land O' Lakes Repeater
145.390 PL 114.8
Wires-X Room 80110 Linked to Yooper net Room
6538

THE SKYWAVE NEWSLETTER

The SkyWave is the Official publication of the Villas County Amateur Radio Club. If you wish contribute articles or other newsworthy items regarding Amateur Radio for publication, please contact Bob KC9RF at

rwb1636@gmail.com or Ray WB9OCO at reliablepwr@aol.com.