

The SkyWave Vilas County Amateur Radio Club



VCARC Repeater Upgrades In Process

The VCARC Eagle River Repeater has been upgraded with a battery backup power system. The battery backup system will provide power to the repeater for approximately 2 days of operation. During battery operation the Yaesu repeater is programmed to automatically reduce power output to 25 watts to further extend battery life.

A special thanks to Tom W9TBZ and Bob KC9RF for implementing the and testing the new battery backup system.

The Land of Lakes repeater is also being updated with a new Hustler G6 270R dual 2 meter/ 70 cm antenna. The new antenna will provide future dual band capability, and its installation is coordinated with the Land of Lakes Municipal water tower railing replacement project. The upgrade should be completed in the next several weeks.

VCARC MONDAY NIGHT 2 METER NET

The VCARC 2 Meter Net meets every Monday night starting at 7:30 PM local time. Net Control is via the W9VRC Eagle River repeater on 145.150/ PL 114.8.

A digital Net immediately follows. Fred KD9CCE, RayBob KD9DDE and Kyle AB9AX are Net Controls

VCARC AUGUST BREAKFAST

A VCARC Breakfast is planned for Saturday August 15, 2026, at 9:00 AM at the Friendship House Restaurant in Eagle River WI. Please contact RayBob KD9DDE via rmh2992@aol.com if you are planning to attend.

VCARC AUGUST BOARD MEETING

The VCARC Board meeting will be held on Wednesday August 12, starting at 6:00 PM local time Via Zoom.

This is an open Board Meeting, and all VCARC Members and Guests are welcome to attend. We value everyone's thoughts and ideas for 2026!



VCARC JULY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

July 08, 2026, 6:00 PM – The Meeting was called to order by Bob KC9RF.

Treasurers Report (July Ending)

Beginning Balance	\$5655.19
Expenses: Battery Power Gate	214.20
Membership Dues	40.00
Donations	0.00
Ending Balance	\$5480.99

Old Business

Kirby W8DCD has been in contact with Vilas County regarding future repeater site locations, waiting for feedback. No new updates to report currently

The Land of Lakes Repeater is still having issues. The Land of lakes Water Department and the Water Tower Contractor will be contacted.

New Business and Announcements

No new business to report.

VCARC Officer and Board Elections

The VCARC Officer and Board Members will remain the same for 2026-2027.

Tech Talk

Bob KC9RF gave an excellent presentation on Radio Wave Propagation

The motion to adjourn was made at 7:05 PM.

VCARC NEWS

Included is the VCARC Meeting and Event Schedule for 2026. Please consider volunteering for one or more of the scheduled events.

VCARC/ Member Activities	Date(s)
August Board Meeting	08/12/26
September Board Meeting	09/09/26
Wisconsin POTA Contest	09/19/26
WI ARES/ RACES Conference	10/10/26
October Member Meeting	10/14/26
November Board Meeting	11/11/26
December Board Meeting	12/09/26
January Member Meeting	01/13/27

VCARC Field Day 2026 Results

The VCARC stations(s) operated 80-meters thru 10-meters with a VHF station operating 6-meters under the call sign W9VRC. Station operators rotated between bands and radios to make contacts.

New for the VCARC Field Day this year was the "Get On The Air" (GOTA) station operated by John KE9ETB. This was John's first experience operating both HF and Field Day. John did a fantastic job, and we hope to see John back again for 2027.

The unofficial tally of W9VRC stations contacted includes the following:

Band	FT8 Contacts	Phone Contacts	Total Contacts
80 Meters	0	0	0
40 Meters	24	96	120
20 Meters	138	571	709
15 Meters	89	139	228
10 Meters	51	3	54
6 Meters	5	0	5
Total	307	809	1116

Total does not include the VCARC GOTA station

Field Day Operators included Bob KC9RF, Tim KC9JCH, KC KG9JP, Kevin N9NAQ, Dave N9DBS, John KE9ETB and Ray WB9OCO.

Kirby W8DCD, and XYL Jeanne N9MUE assisted with Field Day equipment and antenna setup. Kirby and Jeanne were also the Visitor tour guides.

Special Guests and Visitors included Raymond Wildcat, Lac du Flambeau Town Supervisor and Scott W9JU, SATERN Central Territory Coordinator.



The VCARC Field Day Public Information Table.

There was plenty of food and variety at the Potluck dinner awas enjoyed by all. It included fried chicken and Chicago Style Italian beef sandwiches. Marie KD9VUB once again provided a fantastic dessert...just like last year it was big hit.

If you went away hungry from this Potluck dinner it was your own fault!

(Continued in Tech Talk)

VCARC Breakfast Club

VCARC Saturday Breakfast Club at the Friendship House Restaurant in Eagle River July 25, 2026. In attendance were Bob KC9RF, Fred KD9CCE, Greg N9GJ, Jenni N9GCJ, Troy KE9AMI, Mark (Guest).

The VCARC Breakfast Club is a great way to meet and greet other ham radio operators from the area. The Breakfast Club meets monthly every 3rd Saturday morning at 9:00 am.

For more information regarding the VCARC Breakfast Club or to make a reservation please contact RayBob KD9DDE via rmh2992@aol.com.

ARRL NEWS

Fred Johnson, K6FRD, is an amateur radio operator in Riverside, California. Like many hams, he lives in a HOA-controlled neighborhood. For Johnson, finding practical, low-visibility, antenna solutions have become part of the fun over the years.

"For years I struggled to enjoy HF because, like many amateurs in an HOA, towers and conventional outdoor antennas simply aren't an option," said Johnson.

"I tried several radios over the years, but without an effective antenna I rarely heard much activity and had very limited success making contacts".

"A few weeks ago, I decided to stop chasing radios and instead focus on building the best stealth antenna I could."

Johnson said that after returning to HF last year, he enjoyed experimenting with antennas, portable operating, FT8, and station design to see what's possible from a suburban backyard.

The result is a simple 145-foot horizontal loop made from 14 AWG THHN wire, mounted on stainless cup hooks around the top of my backyard fences about six feet above the ground.

The wire is insulated from the hooks with short pieces of clear vinyl tubing and is fed with a 4:1 current balun and approximately 25 feet of RG-8X coax. I also added ferrite chokes at both the antenna and radio ends of the feed line to help minimize common-mode current and noise.

"The results have honestly exceeded my expectations," he said. "My noise floor is typically only S1 to S2, allowing me to hear stations I would have completely missed before."

ARRL Field Day 2026 gave Johnson a chance to operate entirely on battery power using his IC-7300 and his new antenna, making contacts on 10, 15, and 20 meters. Since installing the loop, he has worked 39 states, 24 countries, and stations throughout Japan, Hawaii, Samoa, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, South America, and across North America, all from his HOA backyard!

Johnson went on to say he hopes that sharing his successes, and the occasional lessons learned along the way, encourages other operators, especially those with HOA restrictions, to get on the air and enjoy this amazing hobby.

Thanks to Fred Johnson, K6FRD, for sharing his story, his HOA-proof antenna, and his effort to return to amateur radio and Field Day!

ARRL CONTESTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The following are upcoming ARRL Contests and Special Events in the Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula Michigan Areas.

222 MHz and Up Distance Contest

Objective: Work as many stations as possible on 222 MHz through 241 GHz bands using any allowable mode. A station in a specific grid locator may be contacted from the same location only once on each band, regardless of mode.

Date: August 1-2, 2026

Contest Period: Begins at 1800 UTC on Saturday and ends at 1759 UTC Sunday.

EME Contest

Contest Objective: To work as many amateur stations as possible via the earth-moon-earth path on any authorized amateur frequency above 50 MHz.

Dates: August 8-9, 2026; September 5-6, 2026
For 2.3 GHz & Up.

Dates: October 31-November 1, 2026; November 28-29, 2026, 12for 50 to 1296 MHz.

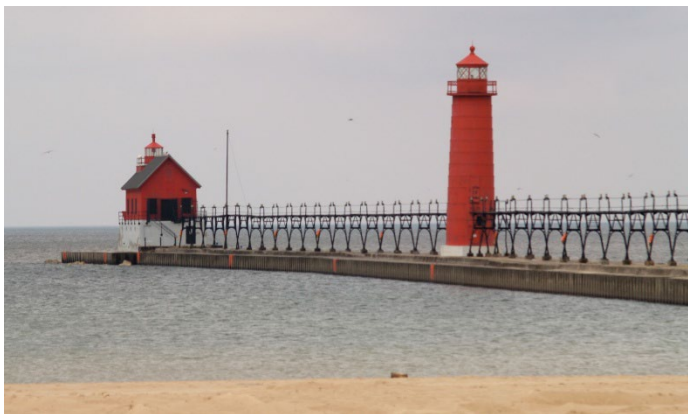
Contest Period: 0000 UTC on Saturday through 2359 UTC Sunday.

NOARC Youth Lighthouse Activation (Special Event)

Aug 8-Aug 9, 1300Z-0200Z, W8CSO, Grand Haven, MI. North Ottawa Amateur Radio Club. 14.060 14.237 7.225 28.320. QSL. NOARC, PO Box 976, Grand Haven, MI 49417. invite all youth interested in participating in this year's ARLHS US National Lighthouse-Lightship Weekend (<https://arlhs.com/>). This youth-only event will be on August 8th, at the inner Grand Haven, Michigan, lighthouses on the Grand Haven South Pier. The on-air activation of the lighthouses will begin at 9am, with plans to operate into the late evening.

This event has been made possible with support of the Grand Haven Lighthouse Conservancy (<https://www.ghlighthouse.com/>). Look for NOARC's club call, W8CSO, on all open HF bands during the event. Informative QSL cards showcasing the beautiful lighthouses and their history will be available upon request to those that make a contact during the event.

See W8CSO's website or QRZ page for more information, or contact the event chairman directly at: CQ.N8GMZ@gmail.com www.W8CSO.org



10 GHz & Up

Contest Objective: For North American amateurs to contact as many amateur stations in as many different locations as possible in North America on bands from 10-GHz through Light. Amateurs are encouraged to operate from more than one location during this event.

Dates: August 15-17, 2026, and September 19-21, 2026.

Contest Period: Begins Saturday 0900 UTC and runs through 0759 UTC Monday. Participation is limited to 42 hours of operating time in each of the two contest weekends.

RTTY Rookie Roundup

Mission: To encourage newly licensed operators ("Rookies") in North America (including territories and possessions) to operate on the HF bands and experience competitive Amateur Radio operating. Experienced operators ("Non-Rookies") are strongly encouraged to participate and help new operators – either on the air or in person.

Objective: Rookies exchange information with as many other stations as possible on the 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter HF bands.

Date: August 16, 2026, using RTTY.

Contest Period: Sunday 1800 to 2359 UTC.

WISCONSIN AREA HAMFEST CALENDER

If you are looking for a new piece of radio equipment or just trying to get rid of that "Old Boat Anchor" a Hamfest is a great way to accomplish both.

The following are the upcoming Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula Michigan Area Hamfests.

Circus City Hamfest

Date: 08/29/2026

Location: Badger Steam & Gas Engine Club Property
S3347 Sand Road Baraboo, WI 53913

Sponsor: Yellow Thunder Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://yellowthunder.org>

CVARC 2026 Hamfest

Date: 08/29/2026

Location: Bloomer Fair Grounds

1609 9th Ave. Bloomer, WI 54724

Sponsor: Chippewa Valley Amateur Radio Club

Website: <https://w9cva.org/hamfest>

20th Annual ORC Fall Swapfest

Date: 09/12/2026

Location: Cedarburg Firemen's Park

W65N796 Washington Ave. Cedarburg, WI 53012

Sponsor: Ozaukee Radio Club, Incorporated

Website: <https://ozaukeeradioclub.org>

Top of Michigan Amateur Radio Club and Thunder Bay Amateur Radio Club Hamfest

Date: 09/26/2026

Location: Knights of Columbus Hall

2573 Wilkinson Rd. Gaylord, MI 49734

Sponsor: Top of Michigan ARC Gaylord and Thunder Bay ARC Alpena

Website: <http://www.nm8rc.org>

Copper Country Hamfest

Date: 10/03/2026

Location: KBIC Senior Center

208 Main Ave. Baraga, MI 49908

Sponsor: Copper Country Radio Clubs: KCRA, CCRAA, BARA

Hidden Valleys Amateur Radio Club

Date: 10/17/2026

Location: Grant county Fair Grounds, Youth and Ag Building 916 East Elm Street (County Road A)

Lancaster, WI 53813

Sponsor: H.V.A.R.C.



TECH TALK

VCARC Field Day 2026 Results



John KE9ETB leading and operating the VCARC "GOTA" station.



KC KG9JP operating 40 meters via Dave's N9DBS "Go Box".



Bob KC9RF outdid himself this year with a 20-meter Moxon antenna on a lift. Height is Might!



Tim KC9JCH operating 15-meters with a Rybakov 25' vertical antenna. The results spoke for themselves.



40-meter, 10-meter and 6-meter antennas operated during Field Day.

Vilas County Amateur Radio Club

An ARRL Affiliated Organization

VCARC OFFICERS and COMMITTEES

President	Bob Barnum, KC9RF
Vice President	Kirby Giampa W8DCD
Secretary	Marie Beckholt, KD9VUB
Treasurer	RayBob Heuer, KD9DDE
Board Member	Ray Protich WB9OCO
W9VRC Trustee	Tom Bahr W9TBZ
Newsletter	Bob Barnum, KC9RF, Ray Protich WB9OCO



CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address:

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

W9VRC

Vilas County Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 1141

Eagle River, WI 54521

MEMBER AND BOARD MEETINGS

VCARC Member and Board Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month starting at 6:00 PM. The Member Meetings can be attended either in person or via Zoom. The Board Meetings are Zoom only. Please check the Member Activity Schedule for the dates each meeting is held. Zoom logins will be sent out to those on the VCARC email list.

VCARC REPEATER INFORMATION

The VCARC operates W9VRC/R amateur radio repeaters in Eagle River and Land O' Lakes Wisconsin. The VCARC operates a weekly Informational Net every Monday night starting at 7:30 PM local time. Net Control is via the Eagle River repeater. A digital Net immediately follows.

Repeater Information	Eagle River Repeater	Land O' Lakes Repeater
Frequency	145.150 (-)	145.390 (-)
PL Tone	114.8	114.8
Operating Modes	Auto C4FM/ Analog	Auto C4FM/ Analog
Echolink	Node 691369	-
Wires X	-	Room 8011
Yooper Net (IRARC)	-	Room 65384
ARES/ RACES	Back up for W9RRA/R	-

THE SKYWAVE NEWSLETTER

The SkyWave is the Official publication of the Vilas County Amateur Radio Club. If you wish to contribute articles or other newsworthy items regarding Amateur Radio for publication, please contact Bob KC9RF or Ray WB9OCO at WB9OCO@gmail.com.