

The SkyWave Vilas County Amateur Radio Club



VCARC Field Day 2026 Over 1150 Contacts!

The VCARC ARRL Field Day 2026 was one of the most successful Field Days to date for the organization with over 1150 contacts made. This was a significant increase to the 730 contacts made during the VCARC ARRL Field Day 2025.

The VCARC Field Day Site operated under the Club call sign W9VRC. The ARRL Field Day category was 4A with a maximum power limit of 100 watts output.

As in recent years the Club operated on 100% battery power making this a true Field Day experience. Solar power was incorporated into the battery systems.

The VCARC also operated a "Get on the Air" (GOTA) and VHF stations. The VCARC August Newsletter will feature a complete summary of Field Day 2026.

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 JULY BREAKFAST

A VCARC Breakfast is planned for Saturday July 18 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 JULY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The next VCARC Membership meeting will be held on Wednesday July 8, 2026, starting at 6:00 pm at God's Gathering Place at 1695 Hwy. 45N Eagle River, WI. The Meeting is also available thru Zoom, contact Bob KC9RF for login instructions. Members or just interested, all are welcome to attend.

The July Meeting Tech Talk will be presented by Bob KC9RF discussing "HF Propagation". Please join us for this interesting and informative presentation.



VCARC JUNE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

June 10, 2026, 6:00 PM – The Meeting was called to order by Bob KC9RF.

Treasurers Report (June Ending)

Beginning Balance	\$6280.11
Expenses: Insurance, AGM battery	624.92
Membership Dues	0.00
Donations	0.00
Ending Balance	5655.19

Old Business

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

The Eagle River repeater will utilize an AGM battery and Mountain Radio Power Gate. The AGM battery will be purchased by Ray WB9OCO, the Power Gate by Bob KC9RF. The AGM battery will be used during the VCARC Field Day before it is installed at the repeater.

New Business and Announcements

No new business to report.

Field Day 2026

Bob KC9RF reviewed plans for the VCARC Field Day 2026. The Club will operate 4A this year with battery power. Looks like lots of different types of antennas will be featured this year including a 40 ft lift for a 20-meter Moxon design antenna. Field Day is shaping up for a successful 2026.

The motion to adjourn was made at 7:00 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)
July Member Meeting	07/08/26
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 Repeater Updates

The Eagle River Repeater will soon be getting an upgrade with backup power. An AGM battery, West Mountain Radio Power Gate and power supply have been purchased and delivered. The purchased AGM battery was used during VCARC Field Day 2026.

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.

If you are interested in assisting with the battery backup installation, please contact Bob KC9RF at rwb1636@gmail.com. This would be a great learning experience for all involved!

The Land of Lakes repeater has recently been experiencing performance issues. The issues have been identified in conjunction with the water tower railing system painting. The issues began just before Field Day. Additional troubleshooting will be required to determine the exact issues with the repeater.

VCARC Developing Facebook Page

The VCARC is in the process of developing a Facebook page to provide information and updates to the Membership and other interested individuals.

The Facebook page will complement The SkyWave newsletter by providing information between the monthly issues.

The Facebook page is in the final stages of development and will be activated within the next several weeks. Thanks to Tom W9TBZ for his efforts!



VCARC Saturday Breakfast Club at the Friendship House Restaurant in Eagle River June 20, 2026.

Pictured are Dave N9DBS, Bob KC9RF, Kyle AB9AX, RayBob KD9DDE, Fred KD9CCE, Troy KE9AMI and Dennis KC9SKA.

ARRL NEWS

New Technician Question Pool Effective July 1

On July 1, 2026, a new Element 2 Technician class question pool will take effect for license examinations. VECs and VEs must have new test designs available for use at exam sessions effective that date.

The newly revised pool, released in December 2025 (updated and re-released on February 19, 2026) by the Question Pool Committee (QPC) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC), must be in use starting July 1. There are 409 questions in this pool, down slightly from 412 in the previous pool. The pool also includes three diagrams used for some of the questions. View all current question pools on the NCVEC website at www.ncvec.org.

ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, advises that the ExamTools examination system will automatically switch to the new pool and exams on July 1. For ARRL-VEC VE teams using online exams at in-person sessions or for remote video-supervised sessions, no action is required.

“VE teams using paper exams must discard all older Technician tests and print new versions from ExamTools,” said Somma. “ARRL-supplied 2022 series Technician exam booklets and exams generated from the old pool are valid only through June 30; after that date, they are no longer valid.”

ARRL CONTESTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

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

IARU HF World Championship (Contest)

Contest Objective: To support amateur self-training in radiocommunications including improving amateur operating skills, conducting technical investigations, and intercommunicating with other amateurs around the world, especially IARU member society headquarters stations, using the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands.

Dates: The second full weekend of July (July 11-12, 2026).

Contest Period: Begins 1200 UTC Saturday and runs through 1159 UTC Sunday. Both Single and Multi-operator stations may operate the entire 24-hour period.

EAA Airventure Airshow (Special Event)

Jul 20-Jul 25, 1300Z-2000Z, W9ZL, Oshkosh, WI. Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club. 7.250 14.275 50.150. Certificate. FCARC W9ZL special event station, PO Box 2346, Appleton, WI 54912. FCARC.Club

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.

WI9SM Hamfest

Date: 07/11/2026
Location: American Legion Post 434
9327 S. Shepard Ave. Oak Creek, WI 53154
Sponsor: South Milwaukee Amateur Radio Club
Website: <http://wi9sm.org>

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.

FCARC Hamfest

Date: 11/08/2026
Location: Sunnyview Exposition Center Parking Lot
500 E. County Rd. Y Oshkosh, WI 54901
Sponsor: Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club W9ZL
Website: <http://fcarc.club>



TECH TALK

Ham Radio Propagation

Radio waves, like light waves and all other forms of electromagnetic radiation, normally travel in straight lines. Obviously, this does not happen all the time, because long-distance communication depends on radio waves traveling beyond the horizon. How radio waves propagate in other than straight-line paths is a complicated subject, but one that need not be a mystery.

The Sun, being the largest engine in our solar system, has a great effect on propagation as its "exhaust" interacts with our Earth's magnetic field. A rudimentary knowledge of sunspots, solar flares and mass ejections will help the amateur take advantage of these effects to enhance station operation.

Here to There: Radio Wave Propagation

This publication presents the principles of amateur radio propagation in an easy-to-understand style. Knowing ionospheric structures, how they form, and which bands they interact with will prepare you for practical operating and help you make the most of your time on the air.

Propagation Know-How

Amateur radio communication depends upon the movement of radio waves, and hams spend a lot of time designing a station that will send those waves in the desired direction. As soon as your transmission leaves your antenna it is subject to the often-misunderstood effects of propagation.

Here to There: Radio Wave Propagation provides practical advice on understanding what's going on in the ionosphere and troposphere, how takeoff angle impacts your transmission, and how far you can really communicate over VHF and UHF.

You'll learn about cutting-edge ionospheric science and how hams are informing contemporary research. Understanding conditions and how to predict them will improve your operating whether you're interested in making contacts from a park bench or driving the legal limit to reach a new DX entity.

Fundamentals of Radio Wave Propagation

A breakdown of the science underpinning your communications.

The Sun and Solar Activity

Understand how the Sun interacts with the ionosphere and what that means for your transmissions.

Sky-Wave, or Ionospheric, Propagation

How radio waves, primarily at HF and below, travel through the ionosphere.

VHF and UHF Non-ionospheric Propagation

Ways in which VHF, UHF, and microwave propagation defies line-of-sight limits.

Propagation Predictions for HF Operation

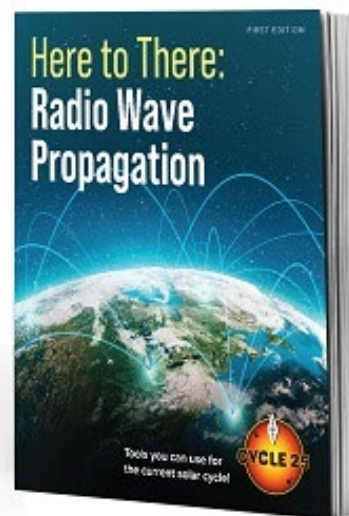
Programs and tools available to assess and plan for propagation in the HF spectrum.

VHF and UHF Mobile Propagation

Whether in a car or at your home station, learn about the terrain and atmospheric effects impacting your transmissions.

Amateur Radio and Ionospheric Science

Ionospheric science uses ham radio observations and data sets. Learn about Traveling Ionospheric Disturbances, eclipses, and other unusual phenomena, and how you can participate in citizen science!



Here to There: Radio Wave Propagation is available thru the ARRL Bookstore for 19.95 (Member price).

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.