

The SkyWave Vilas County Amateur Radio Club



VCARC CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

The VCARC will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary this year in July. Special activities are being planned to commemorate the 10 Years of VCARC Amateur Radio Service in the area.

The VCARC was founded in 2015 by Founding Member Paul N7EKY (SK).

RayBob KD9DDE became VCARC Treasurer shortly after the Club was formed.

Kyle AB9AX recalls that he and his father Scott W9JU were first associated with the VCARC by reading in the local paper about the Club offering ham radio classes and the VEC exam.

Today the VARC has over 40 Members with monthly in person and Zoom meetings including regularly scheduled Tech Talks.

VCARC operates two 2-meter repeaters, one in Eagle River and the other in Land of Lakes. This includes a Weekly Net via the Eagle River repeater.

Members support several Eagle River area events such as the Phelps Triathlon, InSayner Bike Ride, SAE Snowmobile Competition and more.

VCARC Membership is also actively involved with Wisconsin ARES/ RACES, POTA activities and other Wisconsin and ARRL operating events.

The pinnacle of the VCARC activities is Field Day. As in the past, this year's Field Day 2025 will be held at the Sugar Camp Municipal Complex.

Regardless of if you are a VCARC Member or not please join the planned VCARC activities in Celebration of this 10th Anniversary event.

VCARC MAY MEETING

The next VCARC meeting will be held on Wednesday May 14, 2025, starting at 6:00 pm at God's Gathering Place at 1695 Hwy. 45N Eagle River, WI.



The May Tech Talk by Bob KC9RF will discuss a variety of subjects for a successful Field Day 2025.

VCARC APRIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

April 9, 2025, 6:00 PM – Meeting called to order by Kyle AB9AX, all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Treasurers Report

Beginning Balance	\$6441.14
Expenses	0.00
Membership Dues	60.00
Donations	1000.00
Ending Balance	7501.14

The Treasurers Report and Meeting Minutes were moved, seconded, and accepted by all.

Old Business

RayBob KD9DDE updated that the VCARC regarding the hospital internet connection, still moving forward.

New Business and Announcements

This year is the 10th Anniversary of the VCARC.

The SkyWave Newsletter is 1 year old. Any news, technical articles or feedback would be greatly appreciated.

A Nominations Committee Is being formed for the 2025-2026 Officers. If you are interested, please contact Kyle AB9AX.

The Monthly Tech Talk was a video on "Why are Repeaters So Quiet" by KB9VBR Antennas.

The motion to adjourn was made at 6:50 PM

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VCARC EVENTS CALENDAR

The following are the VCARC Member activities and events planned for the remainder of 2025.

VCARC/ Member Activities	Date(s)
VCARC May Meeting	05/14/25
Dayton Hamvention	05/16 - 05/18/25
InSayner Bike Ride Support	06/14/25
VCARC June Meeting	06/11/25
ARRL Field Day	06/28 - 06/29/25
VCARC July Meeting*	07/09/25
Phelps Triathlon Support	08/02/25
VCARC August Meeting	08/13/25
VCARC September Meeting	09/10/25
Wisconsin POTA	09/20/25
VCARC October Meeting	10/08/25
ARES/ RACES Conference	10/11/25
VCARC November Meeting	11/12/25
VCARC December Meeting	12/10/25

* Annual Meeting and Election of Officers July 2025

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.

ARRL NEWS

ARRL welcomes members and all radio amateurs to visit us at the 2025 Dayton Hamvention®, May 16 — 18 in Xenia, Ohio. The event features three days of fun activities, ham radio programming, and plenty of opportunities to engage with ARRL.

Saturday's ARRL Youth Rally will be a fun day of ham radio discovery and friendship for young people aged 11 to 21. Among the team leading the Youth Rally will be volunteers from the ARRL Collegiate Amateur Radio Program (CARP), who are also exhibiting and presenting at Hamvention.

The ARRL Membership Forum is on Saturday along with many other great ARRL forums for you to attend.

You can also visit ARRL's large exhibition area in the Tesla Building. All the great things you expect from ARRL will be there, including a chance to get some ARRL merch and publications, plus your free 2025 ARRL button.

The ARRL VEC will be on site to help hams renew their licenses; you can visit with ARRL leaders face-to-face and learn about how to get involved in your local ham community (and much more).

You asked, we listened: The ever-popular on-site radio emissions testing by the ARRL Lab returns this year. Have your handheld tested to make sure the output is clean. Expert engineers will be on hand to do it right in front of you. See you at the Hamvention!

ARRL CONTESTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The following are upcoming ARRL Contests and Special Events.

NB9QV USS Cobia Museum Ships Weekend

Jun 7-Jun 8, 1400Z-2000Z, NB9QV, Manitowoc, WI. USS Cobia Amateur Radio Club. 7.240 14.240. Certificate. Send contact information to, kc9yl@arrl.net, to receive PDF certificate. <https://www.qrz.com/db/NB9QV>

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 Spring Hamfest is a great way to accomplish both.

The following are the upcoming Wisconsin Area Hamfests.

ARAC Hamfest

Date: 05/03/2025

Location: Head of the Lakes Fairground
4700 Tower Ave. Superior, WI 54880

Website: www.thearac.org

Sponsor: Arrowhead Radio Amateur Club

Green Bay Hamfest

Date: 05/31/2025

Location: Our Savior Lutheran Church
120 South Henry St. Green Bay, WI 54301

Email: toddw9grb@gmail.com

Sponsor: Green Bay Mike & Key Club

LARS Yooper Hamfest

Date: 06/07/2025

Location: Luce County Fairgrounds
11555 County Road 399 Newberry, MI 49868

Website: <http://www.w8nby.org>

Sponsor: Luce Amateur Radio Services



TECH TALK

Many of the Field Day subjects discussed in this Tech Talk apply to ham radio year-round. Safety is the number one subject that can't be emphasized enough when operating a ham radio station.

How to Succeed in Field Day By Really, Really Trying!

Here are some helpful hints that ought to help you plan and set up for your Field Day operation. Although every Field Day setup is different, and everyone has a different way of doing things, these tips should at least point you in the right direction.

Safety Tips

Safety First! Follow the ARRL safety code as you set up. Appoint a "Safety Officer" and charge them with making sure no accidents happen. See elsewhere in this packet for information on the 100-point bonus for a Safety Officer for Class A stations.

Have someone always on hand that is qualified in First Aid and CPR. This is a good idea for any club project. Contact your local American Red Cross chapter for more information on learning these valuable skills.

Electrical Safety

More people are killed by contact with regular 120-VAC line service than by any other voltage. The voltages in many power supplies can be lethal! Don't take any chances!

NEVER use "three-prong" adapters to connect your equipment to your power source.

Remember, the power coming out of your generator is as lethal as the AC plugs in your home! Refer to <http://www.arrl.org/electrical-safety> which provides the latest in grounding practices per OSHA.

Always kill all power circuits completely before opening a piece of equipment and trying to troubleshoot it. Never allow anyone else to switch the power on and off for you while you're working on something.

NEVER try to fix something while you're tired or sleepy. If you're working on older tube-type gear, or an amplifier, always unplug the unit from the AC mains and wait at least 5 minutes before you begin.

When troubleshooting this kind of equipment, always keep one hand in your pocket, as a precaution against accidental shock.

NEVER wear watches or jewelry when you're working on gear.



Tower and Antenna Safety

NEVER climb any tower without the proper equipment: a hard hat and a climbing belt are a must.

NEVER climb an un-guyed tower.

NEVER work on a tower alone.

Always have someone on the ground to watch you.

Always make certain that all mechanical connections are tight and secure before erecting a tower or an antenna. What may be easy to fix on the ground could be dangerous in the air.

When erecting a tower, take your time and be safe! It's far too easy for someone to get caught on something or have fingers or toes in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Make certain any "spectators" are a safe distance away should something happen.

Always make sure your guy wires are securely anchored, and that the guys themselves are sufficiently taut.

Tying flags to guy wires in strategic spots will help prevent people from walking into them (especially visitors!).

Make certain that the tower bases are secure and unlikely to shift in high winds.

Alcohol and towers do not mix! If you drink, don't climb! If you climb, don't drink!

Watch out for overhead power lines! Make certain they are at least twice the height of any antenna's

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height in distance away: For example, an antenna 50' high should be at least 100' from any overhead line, . Ensure that your Field Day station complies with all the FCC RF exposure requirements. See www.arrl.org/rf-exposure for more information.

Erect antennas far enough away from operating positions so there is no possibility of the antenna and structure falling on operators and observers.

Portable Generators

Make certain that your group has enough fire extinguishers, and that everyone knows where they are.

Always keep a multipurpose fire extinguisher with the generator.

NEVER fuel a running generator.

NEVER smoke around a generator.

Keep the fuel in a separate place away from the hot generator.

Charge one or two people with the responsibility of monitoring the generators.

Generators should always be kept outdoors in an area with good air circulation. This will prevent the possibility of exhaust and gas fumes building up.

Check all your extension cords prior to setting up for signs of wear or fraying. Discard any that show even the slightest wear. Guard all outlets from any water.

Make sure the wire sizes are adequate to handle the load.

Weather

Watch out for lightning! Storms can develop and move quickly. At the first sign of a storm, disconnect all antennas from the rigs, shut down the generators, and head for shelter. You don't have to take a direct hit to sustain damage, or electrical shock.

Summer thunderstorms are accompanied by high winds and rain.

Play it safe! Consider having someone designated to monitor weather conditions with the authority to take appropriate actions should dangerous weather threaten your Field Day set-up.

Security

During an overnight operation, make sure that there is adequate security for those involved, including adequate lighting. than one Field Day operation discovered too late that equipment has been permanently "borrowed" from an operating position left unattended during the wee hours of the morning.

Setup and Check Out Your Operating Site Ahead of Time.

Avoid confusion on Field Day by preparing a work plan. You'll want to determine where antenna, power sources, and operating positions should be placed.

Coordinate in advance the order for each task. Make sure that all essential items will be on hand when they are needed.

Don't forget the essential creature comforts, such as trash cans, toilet paper, flashlights, bug spray, first aid kit, etc.

Nothing can kill the Field Day enthusiasm faster than not having sufficient help to set-up and tear-down the site.

Sign up your Volunteers early.

Be proactive in soliciting volunteers. Don't just say "we need help." Personally invite individuals to participate (i.e. "Pete I could really use your help as the 10meter Phone band captain.")



Visitors and Publicity

Always have designated "Tour Guides", that is, people ready to guide any visitors who might happen by your site and show an interest in ham radio.

This is also a good way to drum up interest in a class. Not only is this a chance to show off your hobby in a favorable light, but it is also worth some bonus points!

Set up a table with some handouts about ham radio, your club, and Field Day. Type up a sheet that describes your club, the operation, and include a person to contact for more information.

When giving a tour, make sure not to lapse into "ham speak": try to explain what people do in easy-to-understand language.

Avoid Jargon! If the media comes by, make certain that something is going on. TV, radio and print journalists will be much more impressed to see antennas going up and people making contacts than they will by a group of people sitting around drinking beer.

Make sure you have someone designated to be the guide for any visiting news media or VIPs.

Many clubs "turn out the operators" by combining Field Day with family activities, such as a picnic. Others send a mailing to all their area hams with a map to the FD site along with some information.

Be creative! In your community there are always those who would love the chance to come and participate.

Consider organizing volunteers who would pick up older hams who may not drive at night or might not have a ride. Telephone or Email "lapsed" club members with a personal invitation. What ham can ignore a good, covered dish supper?



Get Everyone Involved

Give everyone something to do. Newer hams can do 2-meter talk-ins, help operate a GOTA station or help assemble antennas – but also spend time with them,

Elmering them through some on-the-air contacts at the main station. The more people are involved, the better time you will all have. This is a great chance to give some of your newer hams some practical experience.

Do what it takes to get the new hams **ON THE AIR** - after all, Field Day is a great opportunity for new hams to learn how to operate!

Keep a handy list of ARRL Section abbreviations at every operating position. This will eliminate possible confusion later. If everyone uses the same abbreviations, you'll save yourself some headaches when it comes time to check over the logs. The full list is included in this packet.

Make sure everyone keeps up the dupe sheets or logging duties. If you have operators who have never used one, sit them down with someone beforehand to show them how it's done.

Consider a club program before Field Day to familiarize your members with logging, duping and operating. There are numerous free computer logging programs for Field Day. Find one, learn it and use it. Trust me, it will simplify your life.

Finally, before the actual start of operating, have a final "participant briefing" so that all involved know the necessary safety and operational information. It's a great way to officially kick off the weekend!

Operating

Keep an ever-constant eye on 10 and 6 meters. If those bands open up, you should have lots of stations to work. If the band is quiet, don't assume that it's dead. Throw out a CQ or try to stir up interest. Everyone else could be listening, too!

Remember: all licensed amateurs have some type of HF-operating privileges on 10-meters, and almost all have 6-meter privileges.

Listen around on the bands the week before the contest. This gives you a good idea of what to expect in the way of propagation during Field Day.

Check your logs from previous years and see if you can spot any trends, i.e. hours when certain bands were open, or had a high level of activity. Certain bands in certain areas can be extremely important in working up a good score.

For example, 40 meters on the East Coast is a bread-and-butter band for Field Day while 6-meters almost always has great openings in late June.

Decide which bands are going to be the most important to your score and try to maximize your effort on them by using the best antennas possible

combined with your best gear and best operators.

Don't ignore one mode for another. Many groups have concentrated on CW only to miss out on some easy Phone contacts, and vice versa. Digital modes, especially MSK144 on VHF, and FT8 on HF and VHF are two of the fastest growing areas of Field Day contacts.

Always keep in mind that every contact counts, no matter what the mode.

Field Day Rules

Read the rules very carefully. Look over the bonus points available. A number of these could be relatively easy to earn.

If your club has any traffic handlers, they could easily help you earn the message bonus. Copy the W1AW bulletin! This is an easy 100 points. W1AW and K6KPH come on the air several times each day to give you an extra chance to copy the message.

Remember! Every 100 bonus points you earn are that many QSOs you wouldn't need to make to have the same score.

On Using Computers and Logging

Check out your software ahead of time. Make certain that it works on all the computers you'll be using. If you're using a software package that allows networking stations (i.e. more than one computer tied together) make sure that they can communicate with each other before Field Day starts.

Have a sheet available with the most commonly used commands.

Consider a meeting where everyone can sit down and become familiar with the computer and software before Field Day.

Also, have a sheet available at each station with a list of the ARRL/RAC Sections for easy reference. And don't forget to have some "emergency" logging and dupe sheets in case of computer failure.

Make sure your computer has the proper date and time set before operating. This will save you many problems in the long run.

For your submission to ARRL you just submit a list of stations worked by band and mode, not a complete log, so Cabrillo is not required.

As edited from ARRL How to Succeed in Field Day By Really, Really Trying! Revised: 3/2022.



Remember....

Field Day is ham radio's open house. Every June, more than 31,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to our communities and our nation.

It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills all in a single event.

Field Day has been an annual event since 1933 and remains the most popular event in ham radio.



Vilas County Amateur Radio Club

An ARRL Affiliated Organization

VCARC OFFICERS and COMMITTEES

President	Kyle Ruesch, AB9AX
Vice President	Bob Barnum, KC9RF
Secretary	Marie Beckholt, KD9VUB
Treasurer	RayBob 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 on 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

Quick Link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88194836234>

MONDAY NIGHT 2 METER 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 65384

THE SKYWAVE NEWSLETTER

The SkyWave is the Official publication of the Vilas 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 WB9OCO@gmail.com.