

The SkyWave Vilas County Amateur Radio Club



2025 ARES Conference VCARC Members Attend

The 27th Annual Wisconsin Section ARES/RACES Conference/ARRL State Convention! was held on Saturday, October 11, 2025. The VCARC was represented by several area Members.

The VCARC Members that attended included Kyle AB9AX, Tony KC9SZW, Joel KD9RBY, and Ray KB9CBL.

The Annual Wisconsin Section ARES/RACES Conference agenda included topics and presentations on the State of the Section, EC of the Year and Don Michalski Leadership Awards, Milwaukee Flood ARES/ RACES Response, ICS Planning Roundtable, WinLink Basics and Weather Basics.

Door prizes were also won by many including VCARC Members.

If you missed this year's ARES/ RACES conference, please plan to attend in 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 is Net Control.

VCARC NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING*

The next VCARC Board meeting will be held on Monday November 10, 2025, starting at 4:00 pm via Zoom. There was a scheduling conflict, please note the change. All Members are welcome to attend!

VCARC NOVEMBER BREAKFAST

A VCARC Breakfast is planned for November at the Friendship House Restaurant in Eagle River. When confirmed, info on the date and time will be sent to all Members via email. Hope to see everyone there!



Showcase Exhibit at the ARES/ RACES Conference

VCARC OCTOBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

October 8, 2025, 6:00 PM – The Member Meeting was called to order by Bob KC9RF.

Treasurers Report (October Update)

Beginning Balance	\$7108.08
Expenses: None	0.00
Membership Dues	0.00
Donations	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00
Ending Balance	\$7108.08

Old Business

Work continues on the Eagle River repeater. Extensive troubleshooting indicates a potential issue with the duplexers. The present system is a 2-cavity arrangement. VCARC is looking to repair or the replace the existing duplexer. If replaced a 3-cavity arrangement would be purchased.

No update on the VCARC repeater site, possible relocation or the hospital internet connection.

New Business and Announcements

No new Business or Announcements

The motion to adjourn was made at 7:15 PM.

VCARC NEWS

Included is the VCARC Meeting and Event Schedule thru April of 2026.

VCARC/ Member Activities	Date(s)
November Board Meeting	11/10/25*
December Board Meeting	12/10/25
January Member Meeting	01/14/26
Winter Field Day	01/24 - 01/25/26
February Board Meeting	02/11/26
March Board Meeting	03/11/26
Wisconsin QSO Party	03/15/26
April Member Meeting	04/15/26

October Meeting Presentation

Bob KC9RF and Dave N9DBS gave an excellent presentation on Parks On The Air (POTA) operating. Different types of portable antennas were also displayed. For more POTA information see Tech Talk.

Bob and Dave are still active weekly in the field most Tuesdays. If you would like some direct operating experience yet this year, consider joining Bob and Dave some Tuesday.

VCARC Saturday Breakfast Enjoyed by All

The Breakfast was held at the Friendship House Restaurant in Eagle River on October 18. It was well attended by Fred KD9CCE, Kyle AB9AX, Scott W9JU, Dave N9DBS, Bob KC9RF, Jim KD9MVD, Greg N9GJ, Jenni N9CGJ, Tim KC9JCH, and Tony KC9SCW.

Eagle River Repeater Update

Echolink is operational. Special Thanks to RayBob KD9DDE and Fred KD9CCE for getting the Eagle River Repeater remote Echolink radio operational again.

The de-sense issue seems to be corrected. A notch filter (duplexer can) was added to the receive side of the repeater. Essentially now 3 duplexer filters (cans) are in line on the receive side giving 100 plus DB of isolation. We will test this add-on for a few weeks to make sure there are no other issues.

VCARC 2026 Membership Dues Being Accepted

VCARC 2026 Membership Renewals are now being accepted. The Annual Membership cost is \$20 per Individual and \$25 for a Family Membership. Please send renewals and new applications to VCARC P.O. Box 1141, Eagle River, WI 54521.

ARRL NEWS

As part of a much larger overhaul focused on deleting almost 400 obsolete wireless regulations, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has announced plans to delete or modify four minor provisions of Part 97.

ARRL's Washington Counsel has reviewed the proposal and agrees that the deletions are to obsolete rules and will have no impact on today's modern Amateur Radio Service.

One of the deletions was suggested by ARRL as part of an earlier FCC request for public input on rules ripe for deletion.

The proposed regulatory changes are to:

1. Delete § 97.27. This provision relates to the FCC's right to modify station licenses. The Commission rationale for deletion is that it duplicates Section 316 of the Communications Act. Its deletion will result in no substantive change to the right of the FCC to modify a station license.
2. Delete § 97.29. This provision specified the procedure to replace paper licenses. The FCC stopped producing paper licenses at the end of 2020, having implemented a system that allows any licensee to download license originals using the password-protected area of the FCC's ULS computer database system that is web-accessible. The ARRL proposed deleting this section in comments filed earlier this year.
3. Delete § 97.315 (b)(2). This provision grandfathered HF amplifiers purchased before April 28, 1978 by an amateur radio operator for use at that operator's station and also grandfathered those manufactured before April 28, 1978 for which a marketing waiver was issued. The applicability of this rule has long passed.
4. Delete § 97.521(b) and Appendix 2. This rule and appendix relate to VEC regions, which were based on the traditional amateur call sign areas. The FCC no longer limits VECs to regions and there is no reason for doing so given the nature of remote exams.

"Direct Final Rule" proceedings such as this are limited to rules that are no longer applicable because they have sunset by operation of law; govern an expired event; regulate an obsolete technology; regulate virtually a null set of FCC licensees; regulate

an outdated market structure; or otherwise, are no longer used in practice or otherwise in the public interest.

The deletions will become effective 60 days after publication in the Federal Register unless the Commission finds that adverse comments filed within 20 days of publication raise significant issues that merit additional consideration.

ARRL will continue to engage with the FCC in the regulatory and rulemaking process as part of our mission to promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and to develop the next generation of radio amateurs.

ARRL CONTESTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The following are upcoming ARRL Contests and Special Events in the Wisconsin area.

November Sweepstakes (Contest)

Contest Objective: To support amateur self-training in radiocommunications, including improving amateur operating skills, conducting technical investigations, and intercommunicating with other amateurs. Stations in the United States and Canada (including territories and possessions) exchange information with as many other US and Canadian stations as possible on the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands.

CW: November 1-3, 2025.

Phone: November 15-17, 2025.

Contest Period: Begins 2100 UTC Saturday and runs through 0259 UTC Monday.

EME Contest

Contest Objective: To work as many amateur stations as possible via the earth-moon-earth path on any authorized amateur frequency from 50 MHz to 1296 MHz.

Dates: November 8-9, 2025; Begins 0000 UTC on Saturday through 2359 UTC Sunday.

Operation Able Archer '83 (Special Event)

Nov 1-Nov 14, 0001Z-2359Z, K9NBH, Salem, WI. Great Lakes Radio Club. 7.225 14.250. Certificate. Great Lakes Radio Club, General Delivery, Salem, WI 53168. Commemorating the 1983 Cold War Able Archer Exercise. See K9NBH QRZ page for additional event details. A Digital certificate is available. <https://www.qrz.com/db/K9NBH>

50th Anniversary, Sinking of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald

Nov 2-Nov 15, 0000Z-2359Z, W8F, Livonia, MI. Livonia Amateur Radio Club. 14.260 7.260 7.050 14.050. Certificate. e-certificate, e-QSL only, See website for, details 48151. Nov. 2-15 LARC club members signing as W8F on all bands/modes - watch spotting sites. Sat. Nov. 8 only, 1530-2030 UTC W8F SES will operate at Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Belle Isle Park, Detroit, MI. (POTA K-1487). QSL cert.- electronic ONLY via club website. livoniaarc.com

Remembering the Edmund Fitzgerald

Nov 3-Nov 12, 0000Z-2359Z, N8F, Howell, MI. Livingston Amateur Radio Klub. 14.260 7.260. Certificate. Livingston Amateur Radio Klub, P. O Box 283, Howell, MI 48844. The Livingston Amateur Radio Klub, Remembering the 50th Anniversary of the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald off of Whitefish Point, Mi. on November 10th, 1975. Operating mostly SSB, and FT8 on 80, 40 and 20 meters. Check <https://www.w8lrk.org/>.

NB9QV USS Cobia Veteran's Day (Special Event)

Nov 8-Nov 9, 1500Z-2100Z, NB9QV, Manitowoc, WI. USS Cobia Amateur Radio Club. 7.240 14.240. Certificate. E-certificate only, email QSL information to, kc9yl@arrl.net. <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 Fall Hamfest is a great way to accomplish both.

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

FCARC Annual Hamfest

Date: 11/02/2025

Location: Sunnyview Exposition Center

500 E. County Rd. Y Oshkosh, WI 54901

Website: <https://fcarc.club/>

Sponsor: Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club



TECH TALK

Parks on the Air (POTA)

Parks on the Air, simply known as POTA, had its beginning with ARRL's year-long National Parks on the Air activity in 2016. The event was so popular, many hams didn't want it to end.

Several enterprising amateurs responded by creating POTA and launching it with a website at parksontheair.com. They also established a large collection of attractive awards. To say that POTA took off like a rocket would be an understatement. As of 2021, more than 8,000 hams have been registered on the POTA website, and over 2 million contacts have been logged.

There are thousands of POTA-eligible parks, wildlife areas, and historic sites throughout the world. POTA assigns unique numbers to each destination, with US parks and other sites carrying designations that begin with the prefix (US), such as US-4489. The website has a list of POTA parks, as well as a sophisticated map that shows their locations.

You'll quickly see that regardless of where you live, there is at least one POTA park within a reasonable driving distance. Some hams live in areas where they are virtually surrounded by eligible parks. Here's how you can get in on the fun.

The Activators

The hams who take their equipment to the parks are called activators. They typically set up portable HF stations within the park boundaries and operate for the day, or perhaps only for an hour or two. In many instances, the activators use mobile stations, and they simply operate from the park's parking lot.

The goal is to make as many contacts as possible; at least 10 contacts are required to for the visit to qualify as an activation. When they are finished, hams upload their logs to the POTA website, and their exploits are added to the competition leaderboards.

It's also common to see activators posting photos of their adventures on the popular POTA group on Facebook (facebook.com/groups/parksontheair/).

POTA activators come from all walks of life and all ages, but they all love the outdoors, and they love amateur radio. POTA gives them the best of both worlds.



The Hunters

Not all POTA participants are found in parks. In fact, the activators are in the minority when it comes to POTA enthusiasts. Instead, the vast majority of POTA people are hunters — ordinary hams operating from their homes. Some may never set foot in a park!

Hunters hunt the airwaves for POTA activators every day of the week. Most check the “spotting” page on the POTA website, where activators (and hunters) post announcements (or spots) of current activations. You'll also see POTA activations pop up on general spotting websites such as dxwatch.com and dxsummit.fi.

The Fun of a POTA Pileup

The hunters tune to the activator's frequencies and, if they can hear them, they join the crowd of stations — called a pileup — that are trying to contact the station that's in a park.

Sometimes the pileups can be pretty wild, with a dozen stations calling at once, but that's part of the excitement.

If a hunter doesn't get through on the first call, persistence pays off — chances are, the activator will eventually hear them. The activators depend on hunters for successful operations of 10 contacts or more, so they do everything they can to contact as many stations as possible in the pileups.

When you're listening to a POTA pileup, you may occasionally hear someone call out, “Park to park!” That's an activator who has decided to become a hunter from his or her park, making contact with an activator in another park. Park-to-park contacts count as bonus points for activators, so they are always eager to make those contacts.

Typical POTA Bands and Modes

Most POTA activations take place using SSB, but you'll also run into activators operating CW.

Activators also operate on digital modes such as FT8. Activators seem to prefer the 20- and 40-meter bands, with a few popping up on 30 and 17 meters.

As conditions improve with the new solar cycle — Cycle 25 — look for POTA activity on higher bands, including 10 meters.

You'll notice that most POTA operators usually end at their local sunset times. That's because most parks and other sites close to the public at sundown.

There is what is called the night shift which starts at 00:00 GMT and some of the night shift operators will usually be found on 40 and 20 meters for those camping on site

Getting Started

If you want to join the ranks of the POTA hunters, you just need an HF station at your home. If you don't currently hold a General or Amateur Extra license, consider upgrading, so that you can use the frequency bands where POTA activators tend to congregate.

Fire up your equipment in the late morning and check the POTA website spotting page for activations. POTA activations are more numerous on weekends, but you'll hear them on other days as well. If you hear an activator, toss out your call sign and see if you can make contact.

Most contacts are brief — just a signal report and your location, although some activators may chat for a bit if they aren't buried in callers.

You can help the activators by posting a spot on the POTA website (if someone hasn't done so recently). If you have access to a DX spotting site on the internet, post a spot there as well and add "POTA" to the comment text.

Hunters who register on the POTA website (registration is free) are eligible for awards based on the number of parks they've contacted, the number of states they have contacted, and much more.

Hunters do not have to upload logs to the POTA website. All that's necessary for a hunter to receive credit for a POTA contact is for their call sign to appear in an activator's log.



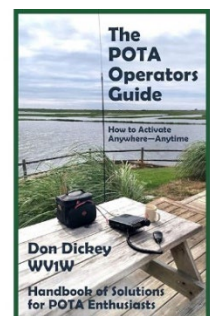
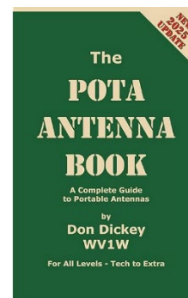
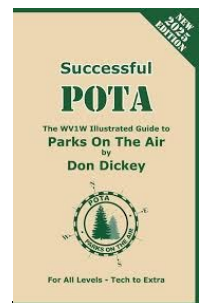
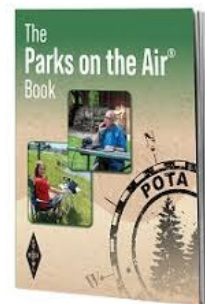
To become an activator, you'll need HF equipment you can operate using batteries or solar power, and an antenna that you can set up and take down easily.

As mentioned before, the alternative is to operate from your vehicle, although not all parks have parking lots.

Parks on the Air is great fun, and it's a friendly community. Turn on your radio at home and start hunting — or head to a park and become the hunted.

From ARRL Parks on the Air (As Edited)

Additional Reference Materials



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
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/>

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.

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 Yoooper 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.