

The SkyWave Vilas County Amateur Radio Club



VCARC Members Participate in WI POTA

Dave N9DBS and Bob KC9RF setup their portable stations at US-4333 Thunder Lake Wildlife Area just north of Three Lakes, WI.

On September 21st starting at 11am. Dave's used a Yaesu FT891 and Wolf River coil antenna.

Bob operated from his van with a Yaesu FT-710 and 66ft end feed antenna. Power was 100 Watts for both radios and our stations were battery powered.

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, national and wildlife areas.

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.

Our operating time was about Three and half hours out of seven possible. Contacts were made with 12 WI POTA operators and about 70 more park to park contacts were made. Our total contact count was around 280 contacts for the 20 meter and 40 meter bands.

We certainly had a good time and look forward to operating next year!



Dave N9DBS operating 40 meters



Bob KC9RF operating 20 meters



VCARC OCTOBER MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

The next VCARC meeting will be held on Wednesday October 9, 2024, starting at 6:00 pm at a church called God's Gathering Place at 1695 Hwy. 45N Eagle River, WI across from the snowmobile derby track.

This will be an in person and Zoom meeting. Zoom Instructions will be sent with the meeting reminder.

VCARC SEPTEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

September 11, 2024, 6:00 PM – Meeting called to order by Kyle Ruesch, all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting participate introductions were made. Zoom was not available due to the Eagle River internet outage and related issues.

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

Treasurers Report

Beginning Balance for August	\$6542.75
Expenses for new ER repeater antenna	\$290.34
Membership Dues	\$0.00
Ending Balance for August	\$6252.41

Old Business

The VCARC monthly meetings will move to God's Gathering Place. The relocation was due to the recent Eagle River Frie Department decision to charge the VCARC for the meeting space.

The new location meetings will begin with the October Meeting. The meeting location will be at 1695 Hwy. 45N Eagle River, WI across from the snowmobile derby track.

Aspirus was contacted several times through emails and phone messages, no response has been received to date. The VCARC would like to install a new repeater router.

Building antennas was mentioned as a possible future meeting presentation.

There was a motion to pay Skylar KC9YDW for his antenna work. The proposed amount was \$300.00

New Business

The Eagle River repeater was working on August 30, thanks to Bob Barnum, Kirby and Skylar Giampa. Thank you for a job well done!

Discussions

Have in person Winter Meetings instead of Zoom only. Zoom would continue to be used as present.

Meet with EMA and possibly move repeater and Echo Link elsewhere.

Possibly hold meetings at the Sheriffs department.

Motion to adjourn was accepted at 6:45 pm.

ARRL NEWS

26th Annual Wisconsin ARES/ RACES Conference/ ARRL WI State Convention 2024

This year's ARES/ RACES and the Wisconsin State Convention will be held on Saturday November 2, 2024, in Wisconsin Rapids, WI. For registration information please see the ARRL WI Section website.

Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA)

Will be held on October 18-20, 2024, starting Friday evening. See the JOTA website for more information.

National Preparedness Month

September is celebrated as National Preparedness Month, and ARRL is working to help radio amateurs have a plan for family resilience. Many hams enjoy public service as part of their operating. Being ready to activate for a served agency through the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) involves not only being licensed and trained, but also prepared and equipped.

ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, suggests that hams and their families have a "go-bag". He says there are a few things to consider: "You need to be able to function while activated, so that means you need a kit for your needs and a kit for your radio needs. If your family is impacted by the situation, they also need to have some gear at the ready."

On the ARRL website, there's an Emergency Prep Kit Checklist. It lists the common items such as food and water for several days, a first aid kit, medications, chargers for your devices and other useful items.

Having a kit for your radio is useful as well. "Go kits will vary based on function and need for the field," said Johnston. "Most kits should include a dual band HT and/or mobile radio with antenna, a power supply and all necessary cables and connectors.

Every kit should include note pad or paper of some type as well as pens or pencils. You should have a power source and power cables. If you are working HF then you will need an HF radio and antenna, and if you want digital capabilities, then a computer with software preloaded will be desired."

Other things you may want will include tape and tools, spare batteries, headphones, flashlights of some sort, cell phone chargers, and a multimeter. Other items that won't fit in a bag but may be needed include a generator, a working surface like a small folding table, a chair, and some type of shelter.

TECH TALK

As the ARRL continues the September series on National Preparedness Month, we turn to a critical element for radio amateurs and especially Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) volunteers: their station.

Many hams have a home station from which we operate on a regular basis. Is your station set up to operate or could operate off the grid or on alternate power sources?

There are many ways to set this up to run on battery power and could even be done temporarily if you don't have a permanent battery backup situation.

ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, says it is easier than ever to have a backup.

"With the new batteries out there, and solar technology both improving in quality and decreasing in price, building a resilient station is no longer difficult or expensive," he said.

Johnston encourages ham radio operators to think about powering more than just the radio on an alternate power source.

"Do you have lights that could run off the battery source? Do you have an alternate power source for your computer? What about your internet connection? Is there a backup for it?" he asked.

Johnston says backup generators are great but sometimes are only fed to certain circuits in your home. Amateurs should test their ham station to ensure that it is powered by the generator.

If the whole house system does not power the station, a portable generator could be an option. The key is to test the system under blue sky conditions to ensure it works, check for RF noise, and potential power drop.

Having backup antennas is also crucial. "Especially if we are dealing with storms, it may be useful to have alternate antennas on hand, especially for HF and VHF," said Johnston.

Grounding Requirements for Portable Generators (Part 1)

Portable generator grounding is important for operational safety and proper equipment operation. The following are OSHA recommendations when operating and grounding portable generators.

Portable generators are internal combustion engines used to generate electricity. They are useful when temporary or remote power is needed and are commonly used during cleanup and recovery efforts following disasters.

Safe Work Practices

Maintain and operate portable generators in accordance with the manufacturer's use and safety instructions.

Never attach a portable generator directly to the electrical system of a structure (home, office or trailer) unless the generator has a properly installed open transition transfer switch.

Always plug electrical appliances and tools directly into the generator, using the appliance manufacturer's supplied cords. Use heavy-duty extension cords that contain a grounding conductor (3-wire flexible cord and 3-pronged cord connectors).

Proper grounding and bonding are a means to prevent shocks and electrocutions.

Use ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Do not connect a generator to a structure unless the generator has a properly installed transfer switch.

Visually inspect the equipment before use; remove defective equipment from service; mark or tag it as unsafe for use.

Practices for Portable Tools (Can also apply to radio equipment)

Do not use underrated cords—replace them with appropriately rated cords that use heavier gauge wires.

Never use electrical tools or appliances with frayed cords, missing grounding prongs, or damaged or cracked housings.

Use double-insulated tools and equipment distinctively marked as such, where possible.

Use battery-operated tools, where possible.

(From ARRL/ OSHA Fact Sheet)

Note: Grounding Requirements for Portable Generators (Part 2) will be continued in the VCARC November Newsletter.

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

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

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 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 reliablepwr@aol.com.