The SkyWave
Vilas County Amateur Radio Club

2026 ARES Conference & WI State Convention

This year's event will be held on Saturday, October 10, 2026, at the McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, and we want you to attend! What better way to get updates from last year, reconnect with fellow hams, obtain some awesome new information, and have a chance at winning some great prizes. The Conference and State Convention starts at 9:00 AM.

A big thank you to WeComm, Ltd! We could not do this without our continued partnership with them. WeComm has been supporting Wisconsin ARES/RACES and this Conference for well over 20 years. We have another great conference in store for our attendees this year.

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 OCTOBER BREAKFAST

A VCARC Breakfast is planned for Saturday October 17, 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 OCTOBER MEMBER MEETING

The next VCARC Membership meeting will be held on Wednesday October 14, 2026, starting at 6:00 pm at God's Gathering Place at 1695 Hwy. 45N Eagle River, WI. The Meeting is also available through Zoom, contact Bob KC9RF for login instructions. Members or just interested, all are welcome to attend.

The October Meeting Tech Talk will be presented by Kirby W8DCD on How to Properly Install Coax Connectors. Please join us for this informative and "Hands On" presentation.



VCARC SEPTEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

September 8, 2026, 6:00 PM – The Meeting was called to order by Bob KC9RF.

Treasurers Report (September Ending)

Beginning Balance	$4834.59
Expenses: None	0.00
Membership Dues	20.00
Donations	0.00
Ending Balance	$4854.59

Old Business

Bob KC9RF will be arranging October 14, 2026, "In Person" meeting Tech Talk.

No new activity with the new repeater location.

New Business and Announcements

KC9RF reported that the new Land of Lakes repeater antenna is working well. Mobile coverage is approximately a 20-mile to 25-mile radius from the Land of Lakes repeater site.

It's proposed to add a 100 watt or so amplifier to the Land of Lakes repeater for additional coverage and forest signal penetration. Testing will commence shortly.

VCARC Membership renewal activities will begin in November. 2027 Dues will be accepted at the October Member Meeting.

The motion to adjourn was made at 6:50 PM.

VCARC NEWS

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

VCARC/ Member Activities	Date(s)
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**
Winter Field Day	01/23 - 01/24/27



VCARC Breakfast Club

The VCARC Saturday Breakfast Club met at the Friendship House Restaurant in Eagle River, on September 19, 2026. In attendance were Fred KD9CCE, RayBob KD9DDE, Dennis KC9SKA, Smokey (Guest), Scott W9JU, Kyle AB9AX, Tom N9HR, Lori (Guest) Greg N9GJ, and Jenni N9GCJ.

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.

The Wisconsin Association of Repeaters will become The Wisconsin Repeater Alliance

The Wisconsin Association of Repeaters (WAR) has begun the formal process of winding up its affairs and proceeding toward dissolution in accordance with Wisconsin law and its governing documents.

To ensure the continued availability of repeater coordination services and the preservation of coordination records for Wisconsin's amateur radio community, operational responsibilities, approved digital assets, and historical records are being transitioned to Wisconsin Repeater Alliance, Inc. (WRA).

Wisconsin Repeater Alliance has been established as a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting repeater coordination, maintaining coordination records, preserving historical information, and serving the long-term interests of amateur radio operators throughout Wisconsin.

The new organization has been created with a modern governance structure, sustainable operational framework, and a commitment to transparency, accountability, and community service.

As this transition progresses, repeater owners, clubs, and stakeholders are encouraged to begin utilizing Wisconsin Repeater Alliance as their primary coordination contact and source for organizational updates.

Effective immediately, all repeater owners, coordinators, clubs, and interested stakeholders should visit Wisconsin Repeater Alliance for coordination services, organizational information, and future updates via https://wi-ra.org.

The Wisconsin Association of Repeaters extends its sincere appreciation to the many volunteers, repeater owners, clubs, coordinators, and amateur radio operators who have supported repeater coordination efforts throughout Wisconsin over the years.

We are confident that Wisconsin Repeater Alliance will continue this important work while building a strong foundation for the future of amateur radio repeater coordination in Wisconsin.

WeComm Website Being Rebuilt

Some of you may have noticed that the WeComm website has been down for a month+. The official word is that the website was hacked and is in the process of being rebuilt with new software. No timeframe has been given when the website will be up and running again. The WeComm Facebook page is still operational.

ARRL NEWS

ARRL Annual Report Published

ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® has published its 2025 Annual Report, which includes a summary of the year's program activities, along with the 2025 and 2024 financial statements and an independent auditor's report.

The report shares accomplishments across education, advocacy, emergency communications, publications, technology, and member services, while recognizing members, volunteers, and the generosity of donors who make ARRL's mission possible. This year's theme, Developing the Next Generation of Radio Amateurs, reflects ARRL's growing investment to inspire and educate young people.

The Annual Report also includes a Report to America, highlighting the impact of Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) volunteers and the wider amateur radio community in serving their communities during disasters, emergencies, and public service events. Read the full report to learn more about ARRL's impact in 2025. ARRL's 2025 IRS Form 990 is also available.

Get Ready for Jamboree on the Air

"We've got scouts, we've got a special event call sign, and we'd love as many hams as possible — near and far — to come find us on the air." That's how Sal Mancuso, W6SAL, is promoting Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) 2026 on behalf of the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America (formerly Boy Scouts of America). JOTA is an annual worldwide event, on the air and on the internet (as JOTI), with the goal of promoting friendship and global citizenship via amateur radio and the internet. This year's event will be held from October 16-18 and now is a good time for radio clubs and individual hams to reach out to local scout units to set up JOTA experiences.

For Mancuso, it has meant getting a special event call sign — K6S — and setting up a public demonstration station on October 17 for scouts from throughout the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council. The council serves 10,000 youth across Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties in California. "We'll have approximately seven licensed operators of varying license classes (Technician through Extra) on hand, running HF, VHF, and UHF simultaneously, all signing K6S," explains Mancuso. "Scouts will be hands-on at the mic and keyboard the whole time — this is their event, not just something they're watching. We'll be active on HF SSB and FT8, with packet possible as well." Planned HF SSB frequencies are 7.090, 14.290, 18.140, and 28.990 MHz, but Mancuso noted that "We'll also be posting our actual live frequencies on Spotted Hams as the day goes, since real-world band conditions may shift our plan a bit."

More information on setting up a JOTA/JOTI operation may be found at www.jotajoti.info. ARRL has resources to assist volunteers who are working with scouts, including a flyer promoting Radio Communications for Scouts (PDF) and the ARRL Radio and Wireless Technology Patch Program. For additional ideas, visit www.arrl.org/amateur-radio-and-scouting.

ARRL CONTESTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

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

Wisconsin ARES Conference and State Convention

The 28th annual Wisconsin ARES/RACES Conference is scheduled for October 10, 2026, 9:00 AM at the McMillan Memorial Library located at 490 E. Grand Ave. in Wisconsin Rapids, WI.

For additional information please contact Myron Oestreich KB9STB via kb9stb@arrl.org or our local ARES/ RACES EC Ray Mark KB9CBL via kb9cbl@yahoo.com.

Jamboree on the Air (JOTA)

Jamboree-on-the-Air, or JOTA, is the largest Scouting event in the world. It is held annually on the third full weekend in October. JOTA uses amateur radio to link Scouts and hams around the world, around the nation, and in your own community. For more information, go to: www.jotajoti.info

Dates: October 16 - October 18, 2026

Jamboree Period: Starts on Friday evening and ends Sunday evening, no set period.

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

Dates: October 31-November 1, 2026; and November 28-29, 2026.

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

51st Anniversary, Sinking of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald (Special Event)
Nov 1-Nov 14, 0000Z-2359Z, W8F, Livonia, MI. Livonia Amateur Radio Club. 14.260 7.260 7.050 14.050,145.350 MHz,. Certificate. Electronic Only See QRZ page, Livonia, MI 48151. https://livoniaarc.com.


Edmund Fitzgerald Bell at the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum

ARRL 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.

Dates CW: Saturday November 7 through Monday, November 9.

Dates Phone: Saturday, November 21 through Monday, November 23

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

USS Cobia Veterans Day (Special Event)
Nov 14-Nov 15, 1420Z-1420Z, NB9QV, Manitowoc, WI. NB9QV Cobia Club. 7.240 14.240. Certificate. E-certificate only, kc9yl@arrl.net, Manitowoc, WI 54220. Send contact information to kc9yl@arrl.net to receive PDF certificate via email. 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 Hamfest is a great way to accomplish both.

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

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

VHF and UHF SSB Nets in the Upper Midwest

Most modern ham radio multimode HF transceivers have been including 6 meters as a standard feature for years. Now several of the newer generation ham radio multimode HF transceivers are also including the 2 meter and 70 CM bands.

This has given rise to a resurgence of 2 meter and 70 CM activity and SSB Nets. These Nets generally meet weekly. Many VHF/ UHF Nets are incorporating NetLogger to assist in tracking Net Check-ins.

Since most VHF and UHF antennas are often high gain and highly directive checking into a Net can sometimes be a time-consuming task especially when the stations are geographically diverse.

NetLogger easily identifies the location of participant Check-ins and allows the Net Control Operator to easily align their antennas with Check-in's locations. Relays from other Net stations are often used as well.

The following is a partial list of VHF and UHF SSB Nets operating throughout the Upper Midwest.

Day	Time	Freq.	Net Name or Control	Net Location
Sun	19:30	144.230	Sidewinders	SW Mich
Sun	20:30	50.175	K0SIX	Central MN
Sun	20:30	144.265	DRAC	Eastern IA
Sun	21:00	144.260	KA0PQW	SW MN
Mon	20:00	432.110	AB9QH	Chicago
Tue	20:00	50.130	SMCC	Chicago
Wed	20:00	144.240	WB9LYH	Central WI
Thu	20:00	144.220	Q5 2M Net	Chicago
Thu	19:00	144.200	KG9AP	St Louis

All times listed are Central Time

Many of the above listed 2-meter Nets will also operate 70 CM concurrently to check propagation.

For 2 meter and 70 CM tropospheric propagation utilizing a modest amount of power such as 50 watts to 100 watts into a good gain Yagi antenna will provide several hundred miles+ of coverage.

Tropospheric ducting (or "Tropo") is a weather-driven atmospheric phenomenon that bends and traps VHF, UHF, and microwave radio signals, allowing them to travel hundreds of miles beyond their normal line-of-sight. See https://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo.html for Tropospheric forecasts.

The following is a partial listing of transceivers In Production and Legacy that support 2 meter and 70 CM SSB communication modes.

Transceivers In Production

Manf.	Model	Bands
ICOM	IC 705 (QRP)	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
ICOM	IC 905	2M, 70CM, 1296 +
ICOM	IC 7100	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
ICOM	IC 9700	2M, 70CM, 1296, Sat.
Yaesu	FTX-1 (QRP)	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
Yaesu	FTX-1 Optima	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
Yaesu	FT 991A	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM

Transceivers Legacy

Manf.	Model	Bands
ICOM	IC 706	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
ICOM	IC 7000	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
Kenwood	TS 2000	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM +
Yaesu	FT 726R	6M -1296 w/ modules
Yaesu	FT 736R	6M -1296 w/ modules
Yaesu	FT 817 (QRP)	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM
Yaesu	FT 818 (QRP)	HF, 6M, 2M, 70CM

There are lots of 2 meter and 70 CM antennas available. The sizes and gains range from modest to large. Generally, a 2-meter antenna with a gain of around 12.0 dBi and a 70 CM antenna of 14.0 dBi should provide satisfactory communication results.

Stacking two smaller antennas is a good way to increase gain with a shorter boom space. This requires proper horizontal spacing and a phasing harness. This arrangement provides almost a 3 dBi gain compared to a single Yagi antenna.

Antennas in Production

Manf.	Model	Band	Elements	Gain dBi
Diamond	A144S10	2M	10	11.6
EAntenna	17740.08	2M	8	13.3
EAntenna	17744.11	70CM	11	15.2
M2	2M7	2M	7	12.3
M2	2M9	2M	9	14.1
M2	440-11X	70CM	11	13.4
M2	432-6WL	70CM	21	18.0

Remember 2-meter, 70 CM and corresponding SSB and FT 8 communications utilize horizontal polarized antennas. Utilizing a vertically polarized antenna can result in a signal loss of up to 20 db.

Good DXing on the 2 meter and 70 CM bands!

October 2026

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:
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. 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. Access can also be requested thru Bob KC9RFat rwb1636@gmail.com.

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 at rwb1636@gmail.com or Ray WB9OCO at WB9OCO@gmail.com.