

VCARC / Radio Club Newsletter

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National Guard / Air National Guard Patriot Exercise 2016

by Paul (N7EKY)

This year the Salvation Army (SA) was asked to participate in the PATRIOT north training exercise. PATRIOT was designed to increase effectiveness between civilian, local, state and federal government agencies. This years' scenario was that super cell storms and severe weather have devastated Wisconsin with widespread damage from heavy rain, high winds and flooding. Local civilian authorities are overwhelmed with damage including collapsed structures, contaminated areas, impacted infrastructure, inoperable communications, mass casualties, and the need for mass care and evacuation.

SATERN members belonging to the Vilas County Amateur Radio Club, Inc. were invited to participate, however I was the only member, other than Bill Shillington (W9ZCL), who was able to commit the necessary time. All told, there were some 36 Salvation Army members participating from several states. These folks were either employees or volunteers of the SA, each with their specialty. The Army was tasked to provide hydration and meals for many of those participating in the exercise. With Bill (W9ZCL) in charge of SATERN, the following licensed amateur radio operators participated to support the Salvation Army: Donald Prosser (KB9IAR), Tom and Duana Bremer (AC9LG & AC9UVK), Paul Clay (N7EKY), Cliff Mackey (KB0TXE), Dale Douglas (KD0WVD), Leroy Garman (KD0SXQ), and Ilene VanLent (KE0EQY).

In addition the Salvation Army brought four mobile canteens, three off-road utility vehicles, an emergency communications trailer, and a refrigerated truck with over 5,000 pounds of ice. Members took on the task of making hundreds of bag lunches each day for exercise participants. They worked like a well-oiled machine and it was obvious that they could have easily provided many more meals if needed. Mobile canteens traveled to pre-designated locations to provide cold beverages to participants who were experiencing very hot, humid, weather.

Volk field was a very interesting place during the exercise. The Air National Guard (ANG) had erected a complete mobile hospital and often flew Blackhawk and other medivac helicopters into the field adjacent to the hospital. As Volk field is an active ANG base, it was common to see F-16s, KC-135 refuelers, C17, and various other aircraft. The ANG even had a mobile kitchen setup with two air conditioned tents as dining facilities. This is where we ate our breakfast and dinner meals.

I was assigned as the "shadow" for Terri Leece, the Salvation Army IC, overall in charge of the Salvation Army effort. We



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This newsletter
uses only 100%
recycled electrons.

Club Membership

The Vilas County
Amateur Radio
Club, Inc. now
can count **92**
members!

National Guard / Air National Guard Patriot Exercise 2016 — *continued*



traveled to various locations and buildings and it was very humbling when troops routinely approached us to thank us for the work the Salvation Army was doing to support them.

In addition to the IC, SATERN operators were assigned to the Army's kitchen area, a Salvation Army Communications Command Center setup in a building on high ground at Volk field, and with each of four mobile canteens at Volk Field and Ft McCoy.

The SATERN operators from Nebraska, who also supported the exercise, were stationed at "Baghdad" at Ft McCoy. This was a training location set up to mimic a city in Iraq, used for training Army and police personnel. The Nebraska group came with their communications trailer, complete with portable towers, air conditioning, and all the necessary radios to communicate on VHF, UHF and HF. Their mission was to support the troops with hydration and meals at Ft McCoy and they also had a mobile canteen to keep food and beverages cold.

Was this a perfect exercise from a SATERN perspective? I would say no as in many cases individual operators could not communicate with each other but had to pass all their traffic through net control. Although this may have been good training, it was not what the Salvation Army Incident Commander (IC) desired. I believe that this was due to the equipment several SATERN operators brought with them and had installed in the canteens and kitchen. I'm sure this will be discussed and that changes will be considered for future exercises.



My overall impression of the Salvation Army after experiencing this is that they are a great organization fully capable of providing support to a local community or a large geographical area. Their people are impressive. They know their jobs and it was fun and humbling to be a small part of their organization during this exercise.



W9VRC Plans their first APRS Digipeater / iGate

by Paul (N7EKY)

Those members who use APRS in the Northwoods know the importance of being able to reach an iGate. An APRS iGate receives your packet and transfers the information to a server on the Internet, thus the name iGate. VCARC members approved the use of a two-meter transceiver, antenna, feedline and power supply currently unused in the club's storage room to be used as part of a club digipeater and iGate.

Tony (KC9SZW) has committed space on the Phelps Fire Station tower for the two-meter antenna to be used for the iGate. The club's IC-2100 will be used as the transceiver on the frequency 144.390 MHz. Paul (N7EKY) will donate a Raspberry Pi and Advanced Repeater Systems sound interface adapter to the project. Paul already has the program configured that will act as the iGate and Digipeater, which is named DireWolf. The Raspberry Pi runs a version of Linux called Debian Jesse.

If you are interested in being a part of this fun project then contact either Tony (KC9SZW) or Paul (N7EKY).

W9VRC-R is Up and Running on EchoLink

by Paul (N7EKY)

Those members who are out of the Northwoods or who do not have good access to the W9VRC repeater can now get on the repeater through EchoLink. Just look for our call sign, W9VRC-R to connect.

The equipment is located in the Eagle River Fire Station which includes a PC donated by Dave (KC9ZJO), plus the equipment purchased by the club. This includes a USB Signalink, a small roll up two-meter antenna, and a Baofeng radio.

The system appears to be working well but will probably require an occasional tune to get the audio just right. Please address your comments or questions to Paul (N7EKY) pplay@nnex.net.

From Your Club Treasurer.....

by RayBob (KD9DDE)

The end of July finds our club finances in fairly good shape. Currently we have \$1,742.85 available for club use. Expenditures have primarily been used for our repeater and EchoLink setup and insurance. All bills have been paid and accounts payable are current and up to date.

Please be sure to get club/staff approval before purchasing any items for club use. As members, always be on the "lookout" for donors or new members as contributions and dues are always welcome. Participation in club activities also helps in generating revenues for the club.

Your membership support is appreciated. I hope to see you all at our next meeting in September.

73s

fldigi on the Raspberry Pi

by Tom (KC9UDA)

Those who were interested in installing and running fldigi on the Raspberry Pi gathered at the classroom on Saturday, 23 July after the ham breakfast. This was a continuation of the last presentation at the Raspberry Pi Special Interest Group. At that meeting the selection of a Pi and the selection, installation and upgrade of an operating system was presented.

This presentation assumed that attendees had the basic knowledge to get to a point where fldigi could be installed. Paul presented Tight VNC Server, a free program which allows a GUI desktop connection to the Pi from a Personal Computer. Tight VNCServer was installed on the Pi and a representative connection was made from a Windows 7 Laptop.

The installation of fldigi was what most came to see, so Paul did just that. The following commands were used to install and run Tight VNCServer and fldigi:

```
sudo apt-get install tightvncserver
```

```
tightvncserver
```

```
sudo apt-get install fldigi
```

After opening a terminal window, the command fldigi was executed. It started the configuration startup session to setup initial settings for fldigi. At this point Bob (KC9RF) took over, demonstrating how to configure and customize fldigi.

Make sure that you select the correct audio adapter. If you are using the USB Signalink, then it will be identified as a USB Audio Codec. Fortunately the fldigi program handles the selection of the audio ports. Some other applications, like DireWolf require the editing of configuration files in Jessie.

Although several stations were received on fldigi doing PSK31, Bob was not able to conduct a QSO. Who knows, the problem may have been a brand new home-brew 20 meter dipole or some other issue. Perhaps just the poor conditions.



Northland Pines High School Amateur Radio Club

by John (KD9DQZ)

At the July school board meeting the Northland Pines Amateur Radio Club received board recognition. The importance of this action is that now the club will have its own school account so income and expenses will be handled through the district and not the VCARC, students or club advisors.

Plans are being made by the advisors as to how to inform students about the club, meeting organization, projects and activities to be made available to the students. The first meeting with students is tentatively set for the third week of school. Look for the next report in October.

For Sale

Yaesu FTDX3000D HF + 50 MHZ

Purchased from HRO for \$2,599.95 -- Excellent condition, smoke free environment, very low hours.

Yaesu 300 Hz Narrow Crystal (\$184.95) was added after purchase.

If you have any questions, call Bill (KG9RH) at 715-356-5692.

Reason for selling: Want to get the newest SDR FLEX 6500 with Maestro Control Console Bundle.

Sell for \$1550

Our Supporters for 2016

by Paul N7EKY

These fine businesses have decided to support the Vilas County Amateur Radio Club, Inc. for 2016:



Eagle River Tire
126 E Division Street
Eagle River, WI 54521
715-479-8820
www.ertire.com



Boat Sport Marina
3624 WI 70
Eagle River, WI 54521
www.boatsport.com

**Stateline Accounting
& Tax Service LLC**
4366 County Road B
Land O Lakes, WI 54540
715-547-6212



American Board of Surgical Assistants
Paul F. Weeks MD, CEO
(Northland Pines HS Club)

Mrs. Karen Schluter
Minocqua, WI



Mr. Craig Farrell
State Farm Insurance
9429 County Road J
P.O. Box 1150
Minocqua, WI 54548-9318

Eagle River Roasters



Eagle River Roasters
339 W. Pine St.
Eagle River, WI 54521
715-479-7995
800-285-8806
www.eagleriverroasters.com

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