

VCARC / Radio Club Newsletter

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VCARC Supports Phelps Twin Triathlon

by Paul (N7EKY)

Club members gathered to support the Phelps Twin Triathlon on Saturday, August 29. The race started with an eight-kilometer kayak segment on North Twin Lake, after which participants started the first bicycle portion through the woods of the national forest south of Phelps.

VCARC members Andy (N9NBC) and Roger (KD9EPX) were net control and stationed in the Phelps Chamber of Commerce office. The antenna was a J-Pole on the Northwoods ARES portable tower. Tony (KC9SZW) obtained a special 1x1 call for the event, W9P, which actually shortened communications somewhat. Although communications through the repeater generally were very good, there were some areas which required the use of Simplex 145.520 MHz. This was not a problem for net control which handled the traffic very efficiently.

Bob (KC9RF), Dave (KC9ZJO), Dick (W9RGV), Scott (WA9STI), Tony (KC9SZW), Bob (N9HSQ), and Dave (KD9DRG) handled five checkpoints around the course, including the very busy point where riders left their bicycles to compete in the run portion of the race, before picking up their bikes for the final race segment. Vince (KA8FFM), the president of the Iron Range Amateur Radio Club (also a member of VCARC), came over to support us during this important event and also helped occupy a checkpoint.

Lorin (KD9CXC) and Paul (N7EKY) helped the race start after which Paul drove the race sweeper around the course to make sure that everyone still in the race was okay.

Celeste, the chamber director, thanked the club for the support provided and invited the club to come back next year for the 2017 Phelps Twin Triathlon. This was very good training for all and provides members with experience that they will be able to put to good use for the next event.



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Club Membership

The Vilas County Amateur Radio Club, Inc. now can count **94** members!



This newsletter uses only 100% recycled electrons.



Front row, left to right:
Scott Hanley (WA9STI), Dave McMaster (KC9ZJO), Tony Campion (KC9SZW), Celeste Hendrickson, Phelps chamber director, Andy Falkenstern (N9NBC) and Bob Barnum (KC9RF)

Back row, left to right:
Bob Parsons (N9HSQ), Dave Stott (KD9DRG), Roger Schutt (KD9EPX), Lorin Johnson (KD9CXC), Vince Tarnowski (KA8FFM), and Dick Volland (W9RGV)

W9VRC Repeater Report

by Paul (N7EKY)

If you have been paying attention to the club's repeater on 145.150 MHz, commonly referred to as the Ministry Repeater as it is physically located at Ministry Eagle River hospital, you know that the club has experienced some major challenges.

The club had received a donation of a Henry repeater amplifier, capable of amplifying the five-watt output of the DRIX Yaesu repeater to over 100 watts. The repeater is normally set at 20 watts when it is not connected to an amplifier. The problem the club experienced was extreme de-sense on the receive side when the amplifier was active. The problem was so bad that the re-transmitted signal was frequently inaudible.

Jeffrey (KD9FYU) and Roger (KD9EPX) removed the amplifier to Jeffrey's lab and, using Paul's (N7EKY) power supply, conducted a number of tests using different radios for input. Using Jeffrey's very well equipped lab, they discovered harmful interference emitted by the amplifier.



Two-meter harmonic filter on the left and the variable gain low.

The solution to this problem could have been much more difficult, except that Jeffrey just happens to design and build high quality RF amplifiers. So he proceeded to design a band pass filter to allow the repeater input frequency of 144.550 MHz while rejecting the interfering harmonics.

In other developments, Tony (KC9SZW) donated a four-can duplexer to the club (thanks Tony). It was tuned to a commercial frequency but Jeffrey tuned it to our repeater frequency 145.150 / 144.550 MHz. Jeffrey reported that the duplexer is solid with much lower loss figures than the original Sinclair duplexer.

On September 6, Jeffrey, Roger and Paul met at the Ministry garage to install the Henry amplifier, Jeffrey's band pass filter, and the donated four-can duplexer. Tests were con-

ducted to try to determine if the de-sensing problem was completely eliminated. Signal reports were very good so the team decided to keep the equipment in place to see how the repeater works over the next few days.

The other "issue" was that all the equipment in the garage was grounded together at the lightning arrestors for each feedline connection. This was taken together to a single ground rod outside of the building. The club repeater was isolated from the other equipment and the team will work towards installing a separate ground in back of the building for the VCARC equipment.

So, as of the afternoon of the 6th, everything appears to be working properly. Cross your fingers!



Jeffrey (KD9FYU) and Roger (KD9EPX) working on the club repeater.

Amateur Radio in the Classroom

by Paul N7EKY

Northland Pines Amateur Radio Club started their first semester with no radio equipment. Advisors from the Vilas County club had to bring in equipment for demonstrations and experiments. This was difficult as it meant that local hams had to disassemble their own station in some cases to bring it to the high school.

Some local residents have graciously donated radio equipment to the club. George (NV9T) and Sue (N9KPO) both Maritime Mobile Amateur Radio operators from 1981 to 2004, decided that they would help by donating equipment they no longer use. They said that they feel strongly that young people are essential to the hobby of ham radio and that their primary reason for donating "is to train others to handle the very last method of communication, 'when all else fails'." Jim Joyce of St Germain donated his father's old radio receiver.

The equipment will help the Northland Pines High School club. However we are still looking for funding to purchase items that will be needed in demonstrations and experiments planned for club meetings. Items needed include a laptop computer, Raspberry Pis, antennas, electronic components and digital mode capable radio equipment. Digital mode capable equipment will allow club members to communicate using popular digital modes, and to communicate through the International Space Station and amateur satellites.

In an attempt to gain the interest of new freshmen, advisors Andy (N9NBC), Roger (KD9EPX) and Paul (N7EKY) participated in the school Open House, where many school clubs attempted to entice freshmen. Roger can be seen with some of the club's

new equipment received from generous donors. The radio is an ICOM IC 706 MkII and matching power supply, donated by George (NV9T) and Sue (N9KPO).

Northland Pines Amateur Radio Club News

The club met for the second time on Tuesday, September 20, in Mrs. Price's room. Due to the tight schedule the students have, advisors have very little time to cover material but books were issued and Paul (N7EKY) and Roger (KD9EPX) conducted a brief presentation on repeaters. This included a live on-the-air opportunity for the students to talk to Dave (KC9ZJO) who was portable in his garden at the time.

The club members seemed to enjoy the opportunity to go live on the air and thanked the advisors. Turnout for the club has been limited due to other demands on students, but advisors have been told by Mrs. Price that others are interested in joining the club.

Paul is looking into developing by-laws and a constitution so that the club can obtain their own call sign.

Fundraising has gone well with a donation from the Eagle River chapter of Rotary for \$250 as well as equipment donations that were previously announced. Paul is following up on leads for additional equipment donations.



High School Open House: Northland Pines Amateur Radio Club advisors Roger (KD9EPX), Andy (N9NBC) and Bill (W9ZCL).

VCARC Members Receive Certificates of Appreciation

by Paul (N7EKY)

Club members Scott Hanley (WA9STI), Lorin Johnson (KD9CXC), Richard Volland (W9RGV), Robert Parsons (N9HSQ), Bob Barnum (KC9RF), Paul Clay (N7EKY), Vince Tarnowski (KA8FFM), Dave McMaster (KC9ZJO), Andrew Falkenstern (N9NBC), Dave Stott (KD9DRG), Roger Schutt (KD9EPX) and Anthony Campion (KC9SZW) were awarded Certificates of Appreciation at the September 2016 Monthly Meeting for their support of the Phelps Twin Triathlon on August 27.

A total of 12 club members supported the event and, according to the Celeste Hendrickson of the Phelps Chamber of Commerce, club members did an outstanding job and have been invited back to help out again next year. Great job all!



*Front: Andrew Falkenstern (N9NBC)
Next left to right: Paul Clay (N7EKY), Vince Tarnowski (KA8FFM), Dave McMaster (KC9ZJO), Dave Stott (KD9DRG), Roger Schutt (KD9EPX), Anthony Campion (KC9SZW). Not present Scott Hanley (WA9STI), Lorin Johnson (KD9CXC), Richard Volland (W9RGV), Robert Parsons (N9HSQ), Bon Barnum (KC9RF).*

VCARC Invited to Help with 2017 Races

by Paul (N7EKY)

Adam Kicker of Iron River, Michigan attended the club's September meeting in Eagle River. Adam was familiar to several club members as he helped run the Fat Bike Races in Iron River last January and later delivered certificates and thank-you gifts to those who participated.

Adam has assumed greater responsibility this year as he and his wife are now in charge of both the Iron Line Sled Dog and Fat Bike Races, which will take place January 27 and 28, Friday night and Saturday, 2017.

Adam was on a mission to request our club's support again. Several members who were at the last two-day event agreed that they not only would help, but that they looked forward to the races as they enjoyed their participation last January.

This is another great opportunity to help a local community (Iron County, Michigan) and have fun at the same time. I've been informed that the Hotel Windsor Center will again be available for our members not wishing to travel back home Friday evening. Please contact Paul (N7EKY) if you would like to help with this important event.

Annual Wisconsin ARES/RACES Conference

The 18th Annual Wisconsin ARES/RACES Conference will be held Saturday, October 22, in Wisconsin Rapids. This is a one-day event open to all amateurs, but of particular benefit to anyone interested in ARES, Public Service, APRS, and how they can all work together. There is no charge to attend the conference. To reserve lunch, a \$12 registration needs to be completed online before October 12. Everyone available is encouraged to attend and enjoy the lunch.

Here is a link to the announcement:

[http://www.wi-aresraces.org/2016_conf/2016%20ARES-RACES%20Conference%20Announce\).pdf](http://www.wi-aresraces.org/2016_conf/2016%20ARES-RACES%20Conference%20Announce).pdf)

Here is a link to the itinerary: [Wisconsin ARES/RACES](#)

VCARC Nets 3.925 HF Net and SSTV

Tom (KC9UDA)

The VCARC nets are going well. Thanks to Ray (KB9CBL), Andy (N9NBC), Roger (KD9EPX) and Paul (N7EKY) for stepping up as net controls.

We average 15 check-ins each week. The net runs about 30 minutes. To make sure you're not doubling with someone wait a good two seconds then key up.

The 3.925 HF net started last Thursday thanks to Joe (KD9CJX) for setting it up and running the nets until next month. There were seven check-ins from Milwaukee up to the UP. The HF net is Thursdays at 8 pm around 3.925 (alternate 3.921).

A Facebook page has been set up for the 3925 HF Net please "Like" the page and check for information: <https://www.facebook.com/3925northwoods>

The SSTV net started in September of this year. It meets Tuesdays at 7 pm on the Ministry repeater and has had a good turnout. Everyone is welcome to join in and have a good time.

If there are any questions please feel free to email Tom at kc9uda@yahoo.com.

Eagle River Area Repeaters and IGates

W9VRC-9 145.150 - MHz PL 114.8 Hz - Location Ministry Eagle River Memorial Hospital, WI

W9VRC-10 APRS IGate 144.390 MHz - Location Watersmeet, MI (temporary, to be located in Phelps)

N8LVQ-10 APRS IGate 144.390 MHz - Location Iron River, MI

Instructors and Volunteer Examiners Upgrade One and License Six

by Paul (N7EKY)

VCARC members concluded an exhaustive two days of work focused on helping students achieve their "ticket". Club members Andy (N9NBC), Roger (KD9EPX), Tony (KC9SZW), Debbie (KD9DYL), and Paul (N7EKY) taught the two-day Technician class, focusing on everything from Basic Electricity to Modulation Theory and Rules and Regulations.

Five students, John Hunt of Neenah, WI, Victor Verdev of Conover, WI, Steven Davidson of Columbus, WI, Justin Brownell of Ironwood, MI, and Michael Brownell of Bessemer, MI passed their Technician examination. The Volunteer Examiners, who are authorized to administer the examination leading to licensure, were Paul (N7EKY), Andy (N9NBC) and Debbie (KD9DYL).

Two additional people who did not attend the class also took an examination for their license. Donald Luusua of Woodruff passed his Technician examination and our own David Stott (KD9DRG) passed the examination for upgrade to Extra Class. The club picked up two new members when Michael and Justin Brownell joined the Vilas County Amateur Radio Club, Inc. and Victor Verdev was already a member. This put our membership at 94! Congratulations to all for a great two days of class and examinations!

For more information about future classes, please contact Paul Clay at pclay@nnex.net or (715) 891-0157



A Vilas County Amateur Radio Club, Inc. Volunteer Examiner (right photo) instructs students interested in attaining their Technician Class license.

From Your Club Treasurer.....

by RayBob (KD9DDE)

Club treasurer Robert (RayBob) Heuer (KD9DDE) has been on a quest to garner the resources so that he can move forward with an application for non-profit 501c(3) status for the club. If this is achieved, it could possibly open up new revenue donation opportunities because donors could claim the donation on their tax returns. This can require some effort and could cost over \$400 in filing fees. RayBob has sent out dozens of requests for financial assistance and has been able to obtain \$125 from two donors.

This message is a request that you, our members, consider offering a financial donation to this cause.

If this is something you would like to do please send your check made payable to the Vilas County Amateur Radio Club, Inc., Attn: Robert Heuer, 8172 Shackeford Road, Three Lakes, WI. 54562.

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



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

George (NV9T) and Sue (N9KPQ)
(Northland Pines Amateur Radio Club)

**Jim Joyce (Northland Pines Amateur
Radio Club)**

Jeffrey Kitz (KD9FYU)

Paul Clay (N7EKY)

Watercraft Sales, Inc. , Three Lakes,

Debbie Wendorf (KD9DYL)

Mike Hamman (W9BHL)

Dick Albrecht (KC9FKH)

Andrew F. Davis, CPA
1451 N Stevens St
Rhinelander, WI 715-362-5131
111 W Genesee St
Iron River, MI 906-265-9946

D&B Auto Radio, Inc.

Triangle Motel, Three Lakes, WI

Chain O Lakes Resort and Campground

Rotary International, Eagle River, WI Chapter
(Northland Pines Amateur Radio Club)