



The Blue Ridge Echo .. Echo .. Echo..



Official Transmitter of the Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club - W4YK -

MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER, 2022

The October 4th meeting of the *Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club (BRARC)* was held in person and streamed online via Zoom, and began at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes from the September meeting were approved by the membership.

ATTENDANCE

24 Members attended (18 in person and 6 online via Zoom), with 7 guests.

TREASURER’S REPORT

September 1 – September 30, 2022

Balance as of 08/31/22		\$ 6,506.01
<u>Plus:</u> Dep: (<i>No income during September 2022</i>)	\$ 0.00	
	Total Income	\$ 0.00
	Sub-Total	\$ 6,506.01
<u>Less:</u> Net Control map for Tour d’Apple bike ride	\$ 10.57	
Liability Insurance	<u>200.00</u>	
	Total Expenses	\$ 210.57
	BALANCE AS OF 09/30/22	\$ 6,295.44

BUSINESS

Upcoming Events

Carl Stover [KW4EO] shared that several people had asked him about continuing his series of informal “**Evening-in-the-Shack**” classes on electronics and radio. He is now planning a class to explore the differences in HF and VHF communications, with an emphasis on what it takes to put together a simple but successful HF station and how to avoid disappointments along the way. The class will take two evenings to complete, on **Thursdays October 13th and 20th** from 6:30-8:30pm in the BRARC Shack in Jackson Park. At the first class the possibility can be discussed of offering a second session on two different days to accommodate everyone's schedule. The class will be informal, questions at any time, no charge, and no Amateur Radio License is required. Preregistration is not required, and Carl would love to see a large crowd in the shack. (See the end of the *Echo* for the detailed information emailed following the meeting.)



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

Ronnie Parham [K2SST] has scheduled a club visit for **Wednesday, November 9th** to **PARI**, the **Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute** in Rosman. The club has visited in the past and it's well worth the time. (See <https://www.pari.edu/> for more info on PARI.) A decision was made at the Steering Committee meeting that the club will pay the cost of the tour for paid club members. It will be \$15 for each non-member. The tour will be from 10:00am-Noon, and those wishing to carpool can meet at the parking lot of the shack at 8:00am. (Ronnie asks that those carpooling please wear masks, as they will be in close quarters with each other for two hours, round-trip.) Contact Ronnie at ronk2sst@bellsouth.net to get on the list.

Danny Rector [NA4X] shared that the **Hendersonville Christmas Parade** this year will be **Saturday, December 3rd** and for the first time will kick off at **6:00pm**. He says there's lots of excitement in the city about changing to an evening parade, including having lights on the floats. Danny will ask at the next meeting for volunteers to help, as well as via email. You can help even if you don't have a 2-meter radio, as the club has some to use for events like this.

The **BRARC December meeting** traditionally has been a dinner at an area restaurant. The past few years we've had it at Twin Dragons in Brevard. If we decide to eat there this year, we'll once again have to change the date, as they aren't open on Tuesdays. Last year we had it the evening before our usual first Tuesday meeting. Add your vote as to date and location!

Reports / Notices

Tonight, Zach Thompson [KM4BLG] shared a new audio-visual setup for the club to try during the meeting. It was a combination of a lapel microphone for our speaker and a room microphone which can focus on individuals with noise cancellation, as well as a different web camera. Those on Zoom said the setup worked very well.

Club Officers for 2023 – Proposed Slate. The club elects officers for 2023 at the November 1st meeting. All current BRARC officers are willing to continue in their present positions, if re-elected. Per the By-Laws, the Steering Committee tonight proposed the following slate of nominees for the vote in November: President – Bill Gunn [KB2GUN]; Vice-President – James Reed [KK4JFO]; Treasurer – Susann Swan [K9FMZ]; Secretary – Steve Smith [KC5F].

PRESENTATION

Marty Young [W4MY], the Chairperson of the North Carolina QSO Party, spoke to us in person, travelling from his home near Fayetteville! He started by congratulating the BRARC on its 2022 First Place win in the Multi-Operator In-State Mixed Low Power category.

In the NC QSO Party, North Carolina operators are called by stations all over the world, including other North Carolina hams. Marty asked whether the BRARC would be interested in being a future Bonus Station. Those stations provide extra points and/or prize qualifications for calling stations, and so are quite popular. The QSO Party organizers ask high-scorers to be bonus stations for that reason, even though it means they themselves are not eligible for plaques or prizes. Those present at the meeting said yes, we would be willing to be a bonus station.

The QSO Party is a fun event, always trying to get all 100 NC counties activated, but that's only been done twice in the last ten years. Western counties are particularly needed, such as Cherokee, Graham, etc. It can be done by fixed or mobile stations.

2022 was the 52nd year of the NC QSO Party. The 2023 event will be Sunday, February 26th from 10:00am-8:00pm. The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society administers it with a committee of



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

six hams who plan it and process the results. (See the available handout for details.) They get the results out very quickly, impressing the coordinators of other states' QSO parties. They issue a total of 23 category first-place award plaques, for which sponsors pay \$50, as well as 23 category second-place certificates. (The BRARC is a plaque sponsor, but also has received plaques which you can see in the club shack!)

Log submission is done online, sending the data to an online "Logbot" program written by a RARS volunteer. It checks log formatting and basic validity and then sends the submitter an email either thanking them for the submission or rejecting it. (Rejected logs can be sent to any committee member and they will help find the formatting or other errors.) If accepted, the log is scored and a report created. A copy of the log and report are then sent to the team inbox and a "Livelog" spreadsheet. All committee members have real-time access to the data. A copy of the spreadsheet goes to one member to reorganize the scores to the format shown on the website. (The original received log is never altered.)

Committee members then take the top three submissions in each category and audit them by hand. If they look good, they calculate some scores by hand to double-check. There is no log cross-checking done. Some logs are checked to see if most of the stations contacted have submitted logs, but they don't do individual QSO matching. If some hams are cheating in their submissions, they figure it's on those hams. The QSO Party is done for fun. They have found some problems in the past, and they were dealt with.

When they are satisfied, they announce the results and order the plaques and certificates.

Spotting is done on Facebook Groups and via the QSO Party email reflector. A current project is to program a spotting page to have on the website. For now, for the most current information you should subscribe to the email reflector.

In 2013, the first NC QSO Party coordinated by RARS, they received 210 logs. They considered 500 logs a faraway goal. This year they received 598 logs. Categories have changed over the years, too, with many additions.

Marty shared that the BRARC 2022 log was the most scrutinized ever, along with Cape Fear's log. They had ten more QSOs than we did, but we had four more multipliers than they did, giving us several thousand more points. Both logs were looked at closely by all six committee members. Cape Fear had won this category for the past seven years, so they were not happy we beat them. They thought the score was too close, but it was checked and rechecked. If we are a Bonus Station next year, we won't be in competition with them, but if not then be prepared for a real battle for the category win!

Going forward, FT8 is the biggest challenge. It is not now included, as there is no county in the standard exchange, just a Grid Square which is not precise enough. Expeditions are getting more popular and are encouraged, and may have additional categories in the future. Another thing to look forward to is the first station to contact all 100 counties in one QSO Party. Marty himself is sponsoring a very special plaque for this, but all counties need to be activated, first.

The NC QSO Party committee has an open spot. Four members are RARS members, and the other three can be from other NC areas. The open spot is for a Western NC Representative, to replace Bill Turner [W4WNT], SK. That person needs to demonstrate interest and have participated in the QSO Party for a certain number of years. If you're interested or know someone who might be, contact Marty at w4my@reagan.com for more info.



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

MEETING ENDED

The meeting adjourned at about 8:10pm.

Minutes submitted respectfully by Steve Smith (KC5F), Secretary.

NOVEMBER MEETING

The guest speaker for our November 1st club meeting is Craig Vogler, the Director of Satellite Engineering at Iridium, a global satellite communications company.

Iridium is a constellation of 66 inter-connected low earth orbit satellites operating at an altitude of 780 km that provides 100% Earth coverage for critical communications.

The system offers a low to medium bandwidth service and operates in the L-band Spectrum (our allocation is 1616 – 1626.5 MHz).

Potential Topics of discussion:

- Brief History of Iridium
- Iridium concept of operations; products and uses
- Similarities and differences between Iridium and terrestrial mobile phones.
- Advantages and disadvantages of L-band frequency spectrum

If there are other items that you would like Craig to include or if you have any questions you'd like answered, please email them to Club Treasurer, Susann Swan susann93@use.startmail.com by Tuesday night, October 18th so that she can forward them to the speaker to incorporate into his presentation.

Craig Vogler lives in Virginia and will be presenting to us via Zoom.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Description
Sat, Oct 15	Informal Breakfast Get-Together – 9am, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Sat, Oct 15	License Exams – 9am by reservation, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Thu, Oct 27	BRARC Steering Committee Meeting – 7pm
Mon, Oct 24	Henderson County Ares/AUXCOMM – 6:30pm. Mountain Area Healthcare Preparedness Coalition warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock.
Tue, Nov 1	BRARC Meeting - In person in Jackson Park. In addition, you can still attend virtually. Latest instructions to login are on the BRARC website.
Wed, Nov 9	PARI Visit – 10am-Noon. Club visit to PARI, in Rosman. To carpool meet at 8am at Jackson Park. Brownbag lunch or eat after the tour.
Sat, Dec 3	Hendersonville Christmas Parade – 6pm. First evening Christmas parade!
Mon, Dec 5?	BRARC Dinner – 6pm. Final date and location to be decided at Nov. meeting.

CLUB CALENDAR

The BRARC Club Calendar is on the BRARC website at <http://radioclub.org/> “Club Calendar”.



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

AREA HAM RADIO NETS

FM NETS - 2 METERS		
BRARC Net (W4YK)	146.640 MHz / T91.5 H'ville	Sunday 8:00pm
Slow Scan TV Net	146.640 MHz / T91.5 H'ville	Sunday 7:00pm
Henderson County ARES Net	146.640 MHz / T91.5 H'ville	Wednesday 9:00pm
Anderson Radio Club Net	146.790 MHz Pickens SC	Daily 8:30pm
Blue Ridge Traffic (SC)	146.610 MHz Caesars Head SC	Daily 9:00pm
Good Morning Net	146.910 MHz Asheville	M-W-F 9:00am
WCARS Information Net	146.910 MHz/ T91.5 Asheville	Monday 9:00pm
WCARS Simplex Net	147.525 MHz	Tuesday 8:30pm
Buncombe ARES Net	146.910 MHz / T91.5 Asheville	Wednesday 9:00pm
Transylvania ARC Net	147.135 MHz Brevard	Thursday 8:00pm
6600 Net	145.190 MHz Mt Mitchell	Saturday 9:00pm
Slow Scan TV Net	146.790 MHz (no tone)	Saturday 9:15pm
Oasis Shrine Net	145.190 MHz Mt Mitchell	Sunday 9:00pm
FM NETS - 6 METERS		
6 Meter Net	53.130 MHz / T100 H'ville	Friday 9:00pm
FM NETS - 220 MHz		
Mount Mitchell 220 Net	224.540 MHz Mt Mitchell	Monday 8:00pm
Mount Pisgah 220 Thurs Net	224.260 MHz Mt Pisgah	Thursday 8:00pm

HF NETS		
NC Morning Net	3.927 MHz	Daily 7:45am
SATERN Net	14.265 MHz	Daily 10:00am
NC Evening Net	3.923 MHz	Daily 6:30pm
Tarheel ARES Net	3.923 MHz	Daily 7:30pm
K4UUQ Morning Net	7.228 MHz	M-Sa 7:00am/Sun 8:00
80 Meter Simplex Net	3.843 MHz	Thursday 9:30pm
Get Up and Go Net	28.350/28.360 MHz	Sunday 9:00pm

DIGITAL MOBILE RADIO NETS		
DMR Net	WNC Local Talk Group	Monday 7:30pm
DMR PRN Net	PRN Local Talk Group	Tuesday 8:00pm
WNC Net	WNC System Fusion YS24157	Wednesday 9:00pm
DMR Net	WNC Net Talk Group	Thursday 8:30pm



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

BLUE RIDGE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB OFFICERS

Title	Name	Call Sign	Phone	Email
PRESIDENT	Bill Gunn	KB2GUN	704-934-1950	kb2gunb@yahoo.com
VICE-PRESIDENT	James Reed	KK4JFO	828-698-3609	jshreed@bellsouth.net
TREASURER	Susann Swan	K9FMZ	828-747-2250	susann93@use.startmail.com
SECRETARY	Steve Smith	KC5F	828-489-6637	kc5f@arrl.net



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

"Evening-in-the Shack" October Class

Greetings!

The Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club will be offering an "*Evening-in-the Shack*" class for anyone wanting to explore the differences in HF and VHF communications. Emphasis will be on what it takes to put together a simple but successful HF station and how to avoid disappointments along the way.

The class will take **two evenings to complete:**

Thursday October 13, 6:30->8:30pm, BRARC Shack in Jackson Park.

Thursday October 20, 6:30->8:30pm, BRARC Shack in Jackson Park.

At the first evening we can discuss the possibility of offering a second session on two different days to accommodate everyone's schedule.

The Shack will be open at 6pm and you are welcome to bring your dinner or munchies. The class will be informal, questions at any time, no charge, and no particular Amateur Radio License is required.

The class will be in-person only, It's not practical to do this on Zoom.

Many modes of operation will be discussed and a batch of used (nothing for sale) personal equipment brought in for demonstration. No particular manufacturer or mode of operation will be stressed.

VERY ROUGH outline:

what do we mean - HF VHF

brief history from hf to vhf

- what technology permitted 'at-the-time'

- Build-it-yourself & convert military/commercial equipment

- grows up / heyday

- Along comes the internet & computers & cell phones

- Low cost equipment appears

Radio waves and atmospheric propagation

- Straight line

- Bounce, Bounce, Bounce.

- Fun stuff happens!

- Atmospheric & background noise

Antennas, antennas, antennas

- a bazillion choices

- free to \$\$\$\$

- (more later - we will revisit this topic)

So, Why HF or perhaps why not

- Bandwidth

- Crowding

- reliability

- competition

- cost

- antennas

- technology

- available space



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

and more reasons
downright fun (my reason)

Next week: Getting started in the HF world, what you will need

#1 type of operation you think you want to do.

mobile

base

portable (SOTA, POTA)

some special mode

#2 Now, equipment you may need. (keep #1 in mind)

Proper ground rod & ground cable.

Safety

makes up for less than perfect antenna

reduces noise and interference

Antenna (almost anything will do!)

Dipole/long wire

single vs multiband

space to put it up

feedline to handle your transmitter power

Vertical / Multiband vertical

"fancy" antennas (yagi, etc)

Lightening protection & Balun

Antenna Tuner

What it does

Why needed

is it always needed

manual vs automatic

Radio (rig)

Used vs new

where to buy it - and where to be careful!

Why not "Borrow" one to get started?

What's the major differences in radios

Can radio be "expanded/enhanced"

Will radio do modes of interest?

How long will it last

resale value?

and lots more to discuss depending on interest

Power Supply

may or may not be needed

What type - does it really matter?

HELP

Yes, you will need help (ELMER or two or three).

Carl Stover, KW4EO

404-872-3969 (cell)