



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



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

### MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 2, 2024

The December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the *Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club (BRARC)* was held in person and streamed online via Zoom, and began at about 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### ATTENDANCE

27 Members attended (19 in person and 8 online), plus 1 guest in person and 6 online.

#### TREASURER’S REPORT

December 1 – December 31, 2023

Balance as of 11/30/23		<b>\$ 6,022.71</b>
<b>Plus:</b> Deposits: Dues 2024	\$240.00	
	Total Income	<b>\$ 240.00</b>
	Sub-Total	<b>\$ 6,422.71</b>
<b>Less:</b> Expenses: 6 gift cards for outside speakers	\$ 190.86	
NC QSO Party CW Plaque Sponsorship	50.00	
	Total Expenses	<b>\$ 240.86</b>
	<b>BALANCE AS OF 12/31/23</b>	<b>\$ 6,021.85</b>

#### BUSINESS

##### *Upcoming Events*

At the **BRARC Meeting** on **February 6<sup>th</sup>**, our new Public Relations person Cati Harris [KQ4GKF] will speak about some exciting new public relations initiatives the BRARC might want to undertake. As well, Jay Martin [N2NVY] will speak about the Winlink Wednesday Net that happens each week, including its interesting history and the opportunities it offers for every type of Winlink operation, to see if we can increase participation from the area in Winlnk ops.

**Henderson County ARES/AUXCOMM** meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday each month at 6:30pm at the State Medical Assistance Team (SMAT) warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock.

##### *Meeting Minutes*

President Bill Gunn [KB2GUN] invited guests to introduce themselves.



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Our new Treasurer Paul Nice [KQ4ALD] told us a bit about himself. He is a CPA, and has helped our previous Treasurer, Susann Swan [K9FMZ], who recommended Paul for the position. Susann is dedicating her time to exam testing and follow-up with new hams to get them active.

Carl Stover [KW4EO] shared that following his career in electrical instrumentation, he has a large electronics shop at home with capability of working on equipment up to 1200 MHz, and he has a huge amount of parts. He will make the shop available to others, but will not do repairs, himself. He may, however, give you required parts if he has them.

## PRESENTATION

Our presentation this month was an introduction to the activities of the Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club. First up, Danny Rector [NA4X] spoke about the main events the club supports as a *public service*:

Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> - The **WNC Flyer Bike Ride**. This bike ride of four routes from 25 km to 100 miles supports the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, and we support it with hams at the command center, six rest stops and in several SAG (support) vehicles. We need about 30 hams to help.

Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup> – The **Hendersonville Independence Day Parade** in downtown Hendersonville, sponsored by the Hendersonville Merchants and Business Association. This is a small parade, requiring 10-12 hams with HTs.

Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> – The **Tour d’Apple**. This cycling event of four routes from 25 to 100 miles through apple orchards and mountains benefits the Hendersonville Four Seasons Rotary Club. We need about 15 hams for this activity to support the command center, four rest stops and 2-3 SAG (support) vehicles.

Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup> – **Henderson County Hunger Coalition Hunger Walk**. We supported this low-key event many times in the past, but they just used cell phones for communication in 2023, and may not need us this year, either.

Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> – The **Hendersonville Christmas Parade** in downtown Hendersonville, hosted by the Hendersonville Merchants and Business Association. This is a big event for us, and we did a great job in 2023, getting everyone to their correct staging area ahead of time and then out on time to keep the evening parade moving smoothly. We need over 30 hams plus some family members to help support this one.

Next, James Reed [KK4JFO] spoke about the *detailed support* the BRARC provides for events:

*Bike Rides* – Helping at Rest Stops is a major part of supporting bike rides. At some you can use an HT with a good antenna, while further-out ones can require a rig and external antenna. We relay word on reported breakdowns and problems on the routes to Net Control at the command center, which will dispatch a support vehicle, if required. We also report supply needs and other concerns of the folks running the rest stop. Net Control has APRS (Automatic Packet Reporting System) to track where the SAG vehicles and others are at any time. (You can use an APRS app on your phone to report your position and movements if your radio does not have APRS.) Hams in SAG vehicles need external antennas and, for some routes, up to 75-100w output. You need to provide your own battery rather than relying on the SAG vehicle battery. You’ll be reporting what you see and handling requests from Net Control, such as looking for specific riders.



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*Parades* – An HT (even a Baofeng) can be enough to help at a parade. You need to have a charged battery plus a spare to be safe. You need to know how to operate your HT. James reminded us (from experience...) that you may drop your HT and damage it, so it can help to have a spare radio, too. For parades, we need lots of people to help, whatever your experience level. Parades are fun, but we also need to be efficient to pass messages and information quickly, with so many folks on at the same time. This helps us learn how to operate later in more difficult situations.

## *In-Person Activities:*

The *BRARC meeting* is the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm in Jackson Park, also streamed on Zoom. As well, we have an *informal meeting* on the third Saturday of each month at 9:00am at the Ingles on Spartanburg Highway across from Harris Teeter and McDonalds. It has a monthly amateur radio exam testing session and a question-and-answer period with several “Elmers” on hand to help. Plus, fellowship and food!

*Emergency Services* – Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES). Danny Rector shared that many club members take part in ARES, which meets the fourth Monday of each month at 6:30pm at the State Medical Assistance (SMAT) Warehouse at 518 South Allen Rd, off of Upward Road behind Subway and Boon Choo. The warehouse is one of two serving North Carolina, both of which can quickly set up portable hospitals during emergencies. ARES does emergency exercises with Henderson County Emergency Management. The meetings combine discussions and exercises. ARES has a very quick net each Wednesday night at 9pm on the 146.64 repeater. Some members go on deployments for hurricane and other relief efforts. There is also a 2-3 day exercise at DuPont State Forest, along with others in this area in Charlotte and Marion. For more information, go to <http://nc4hc.us>

*Repeater Maintenance* – Martin Harris [W4FOT] has several repeaters on Bearwallow Mountain that he makes available to all. Occasional work parties are announced in advance on the Sunday Net, and all are welcome and needed to help. It’s fun, too!

## *On-The-Air Activities:*

*The BRARC Sunday Night Net* – Sid Hendricks [W4IOE] runs a tight ship as Net Control for the BRARC Net on the 146.40 repeater on Sundays at 8:00pm. He runs it using W4YK, the club call sign. The net usually has 35-40 check-ins from North and South Carolina. Sid is also Net Control for a *6m Net* Fridays at 9:00pm on 53.130 MHz with -1MHz offset and a 100Hz tone. Sid is a great ambassador for the BRARC!

*Field Day* – This is the biggest event of the year for the club and most of ham radio in the US. This year it’s June 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, with some setup on Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, as well. It’s lots of fun, and we need *lots* of folks to help! We operate for 24 hours with stations in tents using temporary antennas and portable power sources including a generator, batteries and solar power. Setup is Friday evening and Saturday morning, with the event itself from 2pm Saturday through 2pm Sunday. Teardown on Sunday is usually done by 4pm. We operate SSB and CW on all HF bands, and try to get on Digital and VHF, as well. We may also have a “Get-On-The-Air” station for new hams which even non-hams can run with a ham present. Families are more than welcome, especially at the big dinner we always have on Saturday evening. You can sign up for time slots as an operator or



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logger, or you can just watch the fun and learn. There are lots of ways for the club to earn Bonus Points, as well. Getting on the air is the best, though. The fun is contagious!

*Contests* – The club takes part as W4YK in multiple contests during the year. They teach you how to operate your radio and computer, how propagation affects the bands and times you operate, how to deal with congested bands and noise, etc. We try to operate from the club shack during the North American QSO Party (SSB: Jan 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2024), North Carolina QSO Party (Feb 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 10am-8pm), the ARRL November Sweepstakes (SSB: Nov 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2024) and often others, as well. We sponsor an award each year for the NC QSO Party, and we usually score well, too. Join us for any and help make calls, log contacts, or just watch, learn and have fun.

*Fun Operating Activities* – Parks On The Air (POTA), Summits On The Air (SOTA), Youth On The Air (YOTA), etc. All help you learn your equipment and how propagation affects radio communications. These aren't club-specific activities, but many members take an active part in them as "Hunters" and "Activators". Any of us would be glad to walk you through either or both! Another fun event is the "13 Colonies Event" held from July 1<sup>st</sup> 9am Eastern through July 7<sup>th</sup> Midnight Eastern. It uses all HF bands and modes, and you try to work special event stations K2A-K2M in each of the original 13 colonies plus GB13COL in Great Britain, TM13COL in France and WM3PEN in Philadelphia.

One last activity is the monthly *Steering Committee* meeting on Zoom. The Steering Committee comprises the club officers plus At-Large members appointed by them. They discuss the agenda for upcoming regular meetings and events, and other club business that comes up. If you have ideas for club meeting programs and/or speakers (who can present in person or remotely via Zoom) or other ideas for the club, please let any officer (listed below) know.

## MEETING ENDED

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Minutes submitted respectfully by Steve Smith (KC5F)

## DUES FOR 2024

Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club annual dues are up for renewal. They remain \$20.00 per year for Full (licensed) and Associate (unlicensed) members. Dues for additional related members in the same household as a Full or Associate member shall be one-half the regular rate. Dues for full-time students in an accredited school will be one-half the regular rate. Send checks made payable to *Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club* (or *BRARC*) to the BRARC Treasurer:

Paul Nice – KQ4ALD, PO Box 234, Hendersonville, NC 28793-0234.

## ITEMS FOR SALE

Elecraft KPA 500 Amplifier. Asking \$1750 OBO. 500 watt solid state HF amp. Excellent condition, low mileage. Includes interface cable for Icom, printed and bound manual and original box. See specs at [elecraft.com](http://elecraft.com). Buyer pays shipping, or I can deliver to you anywhere within 180 miles of Hendersonville, NC. Got to downsize my shack.

Contact Bob Felt - [W4RYF@arrl.net](mailto:W4RYF@arrl.net)

Phone 828-696-4103, Mobile 703-915-2796



## FROM CARL STOVER [KW4EO]

#1 The Thursday night WNC DMR net is NOT on THURSDAY, but has been moved to WEDNESDAY nights at 8:30pm.

#2 We still do not have a new address for the WNC DMR last heard list. The C-Bridge is fully functional, but the DNS server changes to get the address straightened out are about as clear as mud creek this week! We're trying!

#3 Many folks have given me electronics parts along the years and I am pleased to pass these out to anyone who needs particular ones for a project. Electronics, antenna parts....you know, stuff for the ham experimenter or to repair equipment. So, before putting in that \$\$ order to the parts house, call me to see if I have what you want. (404-872-3989)

## NEW MEMBERS' CORNER

from Susann Swan (K9FMV)



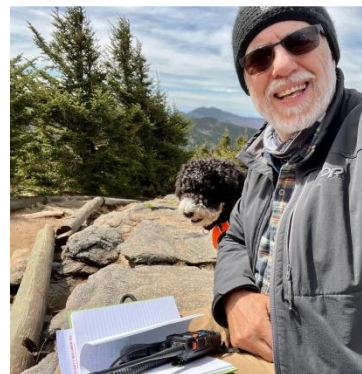
Welcome, Joe Wolfe, KQ4MBO!

Joe is a new ham who came to Ingles last month to take his General Class license exam. He passed the test and the VEs offered the Extra exam to him, a common practice, so he could see the types of questions on it, should he decide to upgrade his license later on. To his own surprise, and the VEs, too, Joe passed the extra exam that morning and joins BRARC as an Extra class member. Joe lives in Sylva and wanted to get his radio license to have another form of communication available when he is doing outdoor recreation and cell service isn't consistent.



Welcome, Marsha Arrington, KQ4HYH!

BRARC members come from all walks of life. Marsha is a disabled Army veteran who lives in Marshall. She is the only ham in her family and chose to become an amateur radio operator to help her family and community in case of emergency or disasters. Marsha joins BRARC as an Extra class ham.



Welcome back, Jeff Sibley, N4XEG!

(pictured with a friend, atop Mt. Mitchell)

“My interest in Amateur Radio began when we were planning to spend the summer in Alaska. We planned to pull our 5<sup>th</sup> wheel through Canada to Alaska with a lot of off-grid camping. HAM was a way to stay in communication and call for the cavalry if necessary. I purchased a few hand-held radios and an Icom 7300 for HF. I adopted my uncle's call sign; he had unsuccessfully tried to get me interested when I was in college.

“I first got involved in the Blue Ridge Club while we were traveling full-time in our RV. We have since purchased a home in Baton Rouge but kept the RV and plan to travel 3-6 months a year. Since I like SOTA and plan to add CW to my skillset, I look forward to being back in the mountains of North Carolina.”



## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Description
Sat, January 20	Informal Breakfast Get-Together – 9am, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Sat, January 20	License Exams – 9am by reservation, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Mon, January 22	Henderson County ARES/AUXCOMM – 6:30pm. Mountain Area Healthcare Preparedness Coalition warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock.
Thu, January 27	BRARC Steering Committee Meeting – 7pm via Zoom.
Tue, February 6	BRARC Meeting - In person in Jackson Park. Also streamed via Zoom.
Sat, February 17	Informal Breakfast Get-Together – 9am, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Sat, February 17	License Exams – 9am by reservation, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Thu, February 22	BRARC Steering Committee Meeting – 7pm via Zoom.
Mon, February 26	Henderson County ARES/AUXCOMM – 6:30pm. Mountain Area Healthcare Preparedness Coalition warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock.
Tue, March 5	BRARC Meeting - In person in Jackson Park. Also streamed via Zoom.

## CLUB CALENDAR

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

## AREA HAM RADIO NETS

<b>FM NETS - 2 METERS</b>		
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
<b>FM NETS - 6 METERS</b>		
6 Meter Net	53.130 MHz / T100 H'ville	Friday 9:00pm



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<b>HF NETS</b>		
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

<b>DIGITAL MOBILE RADIO NETS</b>		
WNC Local DMR Net	WNC Local Talk Group (UHF)	Monday 7:30pm
High Country DMR Net	PRN Local Talk Group	Tuesday 8:00pm
WNC Net	WNC System Fusion YS24157	Wednesday 9:00pm
WNC DMR Net	WNC Talk Group (VHF/UHF)	Wednesday 8:30pm

## BLUE RIDGE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB OFFICERS

Title	Name	Call Sign	Phone	Email
PRESIDENT	Bill Gunn	KB2GUN	704-934-1950	<a href="mailto:kb2gunb@yahoo.com">kb2gunb@yahoo.com</a>
VICE-PRESIDENT	James Reed	KK4JFO	828-698-3609	<a href="mailto:jshreed@bellsouth.net">jshreed@bellsouth.net</a>
TREASURER	Paul Nice	KQ4ALD	703-657-9783	<a href="mailto:paul.nice@verizon.net">paul.nice@verizon.net</a>
SECRETARY	Steve Smith	KC5F	828-489-6637	<a href="mailto:kc5f@arrl.net">kc5f@arrl.net</a>