



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



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

MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 6, 2024

The February 6th 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

33 Members attended (17 in person and 16 online), plus 2 guests in person and 1 online.

TREASURER’S REPORT

January 1 – January 31, 2024

Balance as of 12/31/23		\$ 6,192.71
Plus: Deposits: Dues 2024	\$460.00	
	Total Income	\$ 460.00
	Sub-Total	\$ 6,652.71
Less: Expenses: Shell Gift Card	\$ 25.00	
NC QSO Party CW Plaque	50.00	
Gigaparts Gift Cards	108.53	
Reimburse Carl Stover (supplies)	24.39	
Reimburse Susann Swan (Baofeng and gift cards)	<u>65.01</u>	
	Total Expenses	\$ 272.93
	BALANCE AS OF 01/31/24	\$ 6,379.78

BUSINESS

Upcoming Events

The **North Carolina QSO Party** is Saturday, February 24th from 10:00am to 8:00pm. The club will be taking part from the shack as W4YK, and all are welcome to come and operate or log. Marty Wood [N4AMW] will be operating from the Carl Sandburg Home hikers’ parking lot as one of the six Bonus Stations. Marty invites all to stop by there, as well. <https://ncqsoparty.org/>

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



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Meeting Minutes

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

Radios for New Licensees: Treasurer Paul Nice [KQ4ALD] spoke about the club's approval of a request to provide 2-meter handheld radios to some new licensees at the 3rd Saturday testing sessions in Hendersonville. Susann Swann [K9FMZ] now dedicates her time to exam testing and follow-up with new hams to get them active. She will find out each month who among the new licensees is local and needs a radio. They will be given a Baofeng UV-5R, programmed for local operation, provided by the BRARC.

Temporary Members: Starting last May, those earning their first amateur radio licenses at the 3rd Saturday exams in Hendersonville are given a temporary BRARC membership through the end of the current year. (This really goes through at least April of the following year, as we usually purge non-renewing memberships in May.) Since these are non-voting memberships, we have added a column to the BRARC Roster showing membership type, to aid in determining a quota for votes at BRARC meetings. F=Full Member (paid and licensed, voting), A=Associate Member (paid but not licensed, non-voting), and T=Temporary Member (non-voting).

50/50 Raffle: In the past we have had a "50/50 Raffle" at our monthly meetings, where folks can buy \$1 tickets and one stub is drawn during the meeting. The winner receives 50% of the cash, and the rest goes to the club. We hadn't been doing this recently, and those present agreed that we should start doing this again, starting at the March meeting.

PRESENTATION

We had two presentations this month: BRARC Public Relations Officer **Cati Harris** [KQ4GKF], speaking on PR opportunities for the club, and **Jay Martin** [N2NVY], speaking on the WinLink Wednesday Net.

Cati Harris defined Public Relations, shared that it can help the BRARC and amateur radio in general, and had suggestions for what to do next to make use of public relations:

Media: Opportunities include media contact; social media with local content; information about community events; Field Day marketing and acquiring donations.

Social Media: Event schedules; creating content from member topics; updating our Facebook Group; live coverage of events; having a club presence on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok; social media feeds and updated content on the club website.

Community Events: Event booths at community events, prepper and gun shows, farmers markets; parades, including entries in the parades as well as assisting with logistics; hosting events at the shack or in Jackson Park, including Family Fun Day and Club Appreciation Days.

Field Day: Press releases, on-air coverage by television, radio, social media and print media.

During Q&A following her presentation, Cati said that, as with all Steering Committee positions, this is a volunteer job. She is confident about being able to help, and has been pushing this idea for about four years, always seeing opportunities. Responding to a concern about working with the prepper community, Cati said that if someone is going to buy a Baofeng radio anyway, they need to know how the radio and ham radio work, and should join us to learn in advance how to make use of them. She said there are many who will respect and appreciate the rules.



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In the second presentation of the evening, **Jay Martin** spoke about the “Winlink Wednesday Net”, a weekly over-the-air training event. Its purpose is to encourage regular use of the Winlink system, and expand the use and training in various modes, as well. It serves the need to learn a core competency of getting information out via ham radio without using the internet. It helps us stay sharp on a skill set for real-world scenarios, with timely, useful communications in emergencies.

The Net originated in Virginia, but is now in most states and dozens of countries. It is tracked on their website and social media, and has experienced massive growth. Lately there have been about 1,000 check-ins every week. It’s not like a regular net, where all check in at once. You prepare your Winlink Express message in advance, and send it any time on Wednesday, Eastern time. It’s a simple format, including your call, name, city, county, state and mode. On the 1st Wednesday of the month, you also include a formatted weather report. On the 3rd Wednesday of the month, the report is sent in ICS-213 format for Incident Command System (ICS) training. HF nodes are available if local VHF nodes are not available or are down. Check-in maps can be viewed online, and show 3-4 regular check-ins from hams in Henderson County. There are also statistics and recognitions, with interactive maps and spreadsheets at <https://winlinkwednesday.net/>.

Jay said he’d be happy to answer any questions. You can email Jay at jay@n2nvy.com

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.

DMR TALK GROUPS

If you are programming your DMR radio, a listing of Talk Groups available on local repeaters is helpful. Michael, AI4GR, with copious assistance from several BRARC members, has compiled a one-page list of TGs available on repeaters atop Bearwallow Mountain. If you would like a copy, email him (AI4GR@arrl.net) for a pdf file.

ITEMS FOR SALE

Complete basic HF station. Yaesu FT840 xcvr w/Astron P/S, MFJ941E tuner/SWR meter, MFJ407D keyer, 12AVQ antenna, Vibrokeyer, misc cables, and small desk. All in top condition. \$450 for all: no partials. Pickup in Hendersonville. Contact Al Lockwood N6QN mossbloomstudio@gmail.com Phone 828-513-1380, Mobile 828-620-8980.

Icom SP-38 speaker. Matches 7300 & 9700. \$140. Dave - W2CGG. 828-230-9333.



VE REPORT

from Susann Swan (K9FMZ)

In January, 10 people tested for their tech licenses or license upgrades. 5 passed their Technician exam, 2 upgraded to General, and 1 upgraded to Extra class.

4 hams will be joining the Hendersonville Volunteer Examiners team this month: George Bond, KZ4BN; Phil Drake, K4UOK; Kathleen Parente, AJ4FV; and Michael Parente, AI4GR.

They will be joining fellow VE hams: Debbie Hicks, AD2H, Team Leader; Eric Ahlers, WW4H; Gary DePalma, AC4NE; Bill Gunn, KB2GUN; Susann Swan, K9FMZ; Darrell Warren, KF4TZC; and Charles Webb, KN4KWA.

NEW MEMBERS' CORNER

from Susann Swan (K9FMZ)



Welcome, Richard Paradise, KQ4NIH!

Richard says, "I first got into HAM RADIO years ago. My Dad was a Navy radio operator in the 60s, and I remember him doing Morse code. So, it's in my blood, and I am into outdoor wilderness activities. Having a radio in the wilderness can be a life saver. I am learning more about the radio world. It's a slow process, but I enjoy it. I am using the classic Baofeng UV-5R. My favorite is my Yaesu HT. Someday down the road, I will get a base station."



Welcome, Wayne Fisher, KQ4GIK!

Wayne became a ham last year and hopes to become active in our club. He says: "I've always been interested in radio, I guess. I was an RTO in the Army but not schooled for it. I was just a grunt and was assigned to carry the platoon radio. No hams in my family that I'm aware of. I have a few HTs with Yagi and J-pole antenna. I just got a rig to try out HF with and built the EFHW antenna kit from ARRL."



Welcome, Cynthia Vardiman, KQ4NYW!

Cynthia says, "At our cabin in Madison County (which sits on over 400 acres), there is spotty to no cell service. Also, my husband and I may go all day and never see each other as one of us will be out in the woods and the other at the cabin. Sometimes you just want someone to talk to (who is not a pet).... Ham Radio! I love to meet and talk to new folks because everyone knows something that I do not! I am very excited to learn about this stuff – especially because right now I don't know what all I don't know!"



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Welcome, Robin Dukes, KQ4NGZ!

Robin tested for her Tech and General class license in December and returned in January to pass her Extra class license exam. Robin's husband is also a ham.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Description
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.
Sat, February 24	SC QSO Party – 10am-9pm.
Sun, February 25	NC QSO Party – 10am-8pm. BRARC/W4YK operating at the shack.
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.
Sat, March 16	Informal Breakfast Get-Together – 9am, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Sat, March 16	License Exams – 9am by reservation, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy.
Mon, March 25	Henderson County ARES/AUXCOMM – 6:30pm. Mountain Area Healthcare Preparedness Coalition warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock.
Thu, March 28	BRARC Steering Committee Meeting – 7pm via Zoom.
Tue, April 2	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

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



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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

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		
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	kb2gunb@yahoo.com
VICE-PRESIDENT	James Reed	KK4JFO	828-698-3609	jshreed@bellsouth.net
TREASURER	Paul Nice	KQ4ALD	703-657-9783	paul.nice@verizon.net
SECRETARY	Steve Smith	KC5F	828-489-6637	kc5f@arrl.net