



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



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

MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 5, 2024

The October 1st 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.

ATTENDANCE

23 Members attended (14 in person and 9 online), plus 2 guests in person and 6 online.

TREASURER’S REPORT

October 1 – October 31, 2024

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Balance as of 09/30/24 | | \$ 6,325.17 |
| Plus: Deposits: Dues 2024 | \$ 20.00 | |
| | Total Income | \$ 20.00 |
| | Sub-Total | \$ 6,345.17 |
| Less: Expenses: New member expense reimbursement | \$ 6.75 | |
| | Total Expenses | \$ 6.75 |
| | BALANCE AS OF 10/31/24 | \$ 6,338.42 |

BUSINESS

Upcoming Events

The **BRARC Christmas Dinner** will be held Tuesday, **December 3rd** at **6:00pm** at the Golden Corral on US-64 in Hendersonville. We will have a separate room reserved, as we did last year. This dinner takes the place of a December meeting.

The **Hendersonville Christmas Parade** will kick off Saturday, **December 7th** at **6:00pm**. We still need volunteers to assist us in getting the entries lined up. Please contact Danny Rector if you are interested at rectordl@bellsouth.net. You do not have to be experienced. We can also use people who do not have their ham license so feel free to enlist a friend and sign them up.

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. (* **ARES does not meet in December.**)



Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

Meeting Minutes

Tower at the Shack – The Henderson County Parks and Recreation Department had asked the club to remove the disassembled tower and rotator laying at the east side of the shack building. The tower had been used when we had our shack at the Whitmire Building and later at the Stony Mountain Activity Center. Carl Stover (KW4EO) offered to buy the tower for \$200 after losing his antennas and a tower during Helene. The Steering Committee accepted Carl's offer, but due to Carl's contributions to the BRARC and his value as a member said they would offer it to him for free. (Carl appreciated the suggestion, but said he would still donate the amount to the club.)

Christmas Parade – Danny Rector (NA4X) mentioned the long-time service we have provided to the community by supporting the annual Hendersonville Merchants and Business Association Christmas Parade, this year scheduled for Saturday, December 7th and kicking off at 6:00pm. This year's parade is limited to 112 entries, with the deadline for applications November 15th. This will give us more time to prepare our lineups and positioning.

Our primary function is to check parade entries in and put them in line as published. We use two locations: The Hendersonville High School parking lot and along Oakland St, with spots assigned and marked in advance for parade entries. Each location will have its own 2-meter frequency (146.55 and 146.58 MHz) and net control. Be sure to set up your frequencies and lock your HT keypad in advance. Earbuds will help, too, as the locations can be noisy.

Other jobs we perform: We need 3-4 people at the end to help disburse the entries and get them off the street to keep the parade flowing. We need people to man the barricades. (This is a spot where you can bring a chair and sit!) The police set up the barricades and ask that they not be moved. We need about 6 non-hams to help check cars in at Oakland and the HS parking lot and give them their entry numbers, and to help direct people to keep traffic moving.

We need folks to be at the High School and Oakland St by 1:30pm, as cars come in early. This year the Merchants Association will have the lineup and number assignments on their website for entrants to check, so they should know their numbers.

If you do not have a 2-meter radio, Carl Stover (KW4EO) will be bringing 9 Baofeng radios the club has for foxhunts and other events. They will be programmed and ready to go. The event is good training for radio operation and working with a net control.

Election of 2025 BRARC Officers – To have our election we required a quorum of 18 Full Members, and had 13 present in person and 7 online. After the Steering Committee's proposed slate of officers and nominations received from the floor, those present in person and online voted in the following for 2025 – President: James Reed (KK4JFO), Vice-President: Bill Gunn (KB2GUN), Treasurer: Paul Nice (KQ4ALD). There were no nominees or volunteers for Secretary, and we will have a vote for Secretary at the Christmas Dinner. (Many of the functions the current Secretary has been doing will be picked up by others, so the job in 2025 will entail taking Minutes, handling correspondence and sending out the *Echo* newsletter via email.

PRESENTATION

Paul Nice (KQ4ALD) moderated a discussion of "*Radio Issues during Helene*". Repeaters are the mainstay of local and area communications during any disaster situation. The Mount Mitchell 145.19 repeater stayed on, helped by a propane refill, and carried much health and welfare traffic, but the Bearwallow 146.64 repeater batteries only lasted three days.



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The Steering Committee, including Martin Harris (W4FOT) had a recent discussion with good ideas about the present and future of our area repeaters. 146.64 MHz repeater lasted about 3 days on batteries, but that wasn't long enough. It requires 10-15 amps on transmit and 5 on receive. It has no option to switch to low power when on battery power. We could build an option to disconnect the amplifier when needed to extend battery life, but we need a repeater with a better front end. Martin said he would like to get the previous repeater back online.

There is no generator to keep power on for the 146.64 repeater or the 6-meter repeater at the same site. Martin has a 3.5 Kw Onan generator that would work, but it hasn't been run in 25-30 years. With a big enough propane tank and autostart, it would run the amateur repeaters as well as the commercial equipment in the same building. (They pay the rent for the amateur repeaters to be there.) Martin would be able to control the system from his house. He noted that those who maintain the system aren't getting any younger.

WB4YAO is the owner of the site, but his son owns the business. Not just anyone can maintain the mix of equipment, and how long will the ones who can be around? An option would be for the BRARC to lease a spot on the mountain and put up a new shipping-container building and tower with the current equipment, paying a commercial radio shop to work on it. But it would probably cost over \$20,000 as well as involve ongoing lease and upkeep costs.

We would need long-term dedicated technical people who need to grow with the system. The equipment there now is due to Martin's technical skills. With most hams now just buying their equipment and not building or repairing anything, who's going to do the technical work? At least with a private repeater there are no arguments such as those which happen in clubs with their own repeaters. It's a big commitment, and Martin and Carl are spending lots of their own money every year to keep the repeaters running that the club uses.

The club doesn't have to be "all things to all people". We need to look at alternatives. We have shown we are good at public service and communications activities. When we can do HF Winlink, do we need to rely on club repeaters? What's the best way to go?

It was suggested we as a club could put our emphasis on public service, not on trying to provide emergency communications. ARES and other groups exist for that purpose. Coming up with over \$20,000 plus additional recurring costs to have a club repeater is not maintainable right now. We need to discuss what we want the club to be. What's your desire for the club?

MEETING ENDED

The meeting adjourned at about 8:30pm.

Minutes submitted respectfully by Steve Smith (KC5F)

DUES FOR 2025

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 are one-half the regular rate. Dues for full-time students in an accredited school are 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.



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ITEMS FOR SALE OR WANTED

FREE - Heathkit Oscilloscope, Model 10-4105. Contact Michael, AI4GR@arrl.net

Icom 718 Transceiver w/DSP \$395, Icom SM-6 desk mic \$25. Dave W2CGG 828-230-9333

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

| Date | Description |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Sat, Nov 16 | Informal Breakfast Get-Together – 9am, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy. |
| Sat, Nov 16 | License Exams – 9am by reservation, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy. |
| Thu, Nov 28 14 | BRARC Steering Committee Meeting – 7pm via Zoom. |
| Mon, Nov 25 | Henderson County ARES/AUXCOMM – 6:30pm. Mountain Area Healthcare Preparedness Coalition warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock. |
| Tue, Dec 3 | BRARC Annual Christmas Dinner – No regular meeting - 6pm, Golden Corral |
| Sat, Dec 21 | Informal Breakfast Get-Together – 9am, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy. |
| Sat, Dec 21 | License Exams – 9am by reservation, Ingles 625 Spartanburg Hwy. |
| <i>(No ARES Meeting in December)</i> | Henderson County ARES/AUXCOMM – 6:30pm. Mountain Area Healthcare Preparedness Coalition warehouse at 518 S Allen Rd, Flat Rock. |
| Thu, Dec 26 | BRARC Steering Committee Meeting – 7pm via Zoom. |
| Tue, Jan 7 | BRARC Meeting - In person in Jackson Park. Also streamed via Zoom. |

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 |
| WCARS Simplex Net | 147.525 MHz | Tuesday 8:30pm |
| Buncombe ARES Net | 146.910 MHz / T91.5 Asheville | Wednesday 9:00pm |
| 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 |



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| 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 |
| HCARC 10m Net | 28.400 MHz | Monday 8:00pm |
| 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 2024 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 |