

The Blue Ridge Echo

W4YK - OFFICIAL TRANSMITTER OF THE BLUE RIDGE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



FOR SALE

ITEM(S) FOR SALE

Our club members occasionally have a variety of items for sale, including ham radios, accessories, and computer equipment. Whether you're looking for an upgrade or just starting out, you'll find great deals on gear that's been well-maintained and loved by fellow hobbyists. Here is the current listing of items members have for sale or even Free! Find the "For Sale" Section on page 3 of this months ECHO Newsletter

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Our Member Spotlight features a member of our amateur radio club. Each spotlight is an opportunity to share a personal glimpse about the member. It's an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the unique stories and experiences of our members, fostering a sense of connection and inspiration within our club. Currently, the member being featured is selected by random draw. If you would like to be featured in the spotlight, please send an email to: catiballard@gmail.com Find our member spotlight on page 4 of this months ECHO Newsletter

Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club

Club Officers



BRARC CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2025

President: James Reed (KK4JFO)
 Vice - President: Bill Gunn (KB2GUN)
 Secretary: Cati Harris (KQ4GKF)
 Treasurer: Paul Nice (KQ4ALD)
 At Large Member: Martin Harris (W4FOT)
 At Large Member: Steve Smith (KC5F)

The BRARC Club Officers/Steering committee provides direction, oversight and planning for BRARC. The Club Officers/Steering Committee work together to guide the planning, decision-making, and implementation of various activities, education, and events. We are dedicated to ensuring goals are aligned with the club objectives and bi-laws, planning events, resolving issues, and making decisions to keep the club moving forward in a positive manner.

TREASURER REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2025

FEBRUARY 1, 2025 - FEBRUARY 28, 2025

Balance as of 01/31/2025: \$7198.52

Deposits:

Total Income for January 2025: \$245.00

Subtotal: \$7443.52

Expenses:

Check# 577 - Ralieggh ARS - \$50.00

Check#579 - Susan Smith - \$133.40

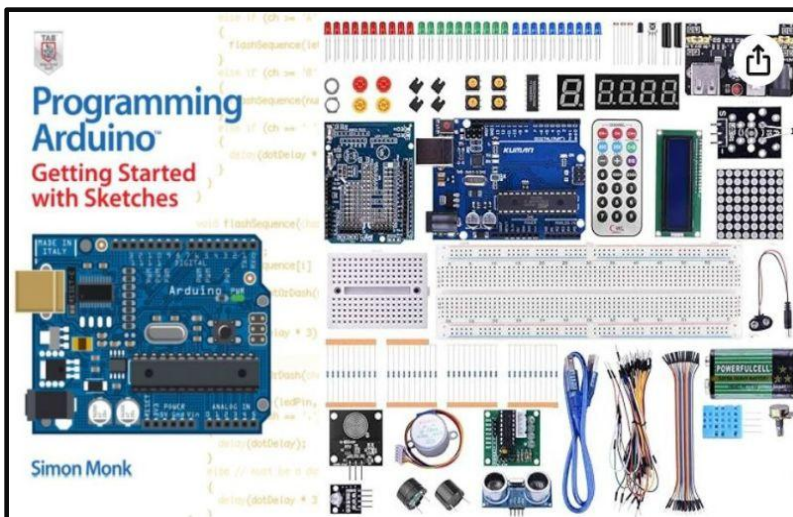
Total Expenses for January 2025: \$183.40

Balance as of February 28, 2025: \$7260.12

Report provided by Treasurer - Paul Nice (KQ4ALD)

FOR SALE

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FREE: Kuman Kits "Arduino Start Kit" with lots of parts included in the case, as shown in the photo. Unused gift. Manual available online. Plus "Programming Arduino - Getting Starter with Sketches" book by Simon Monk. **CONTACT:** Steve, KC5F, kc5f@arrl.net



FREE: Dell LCD monitors. One 1907FPT 19-inch and one 1707FP 17-inch. 5:4 Aspect Ratio, 1280x1024 resolution, DVI and VGA inputs. Steve, KC5F, kc5f@arrl.net



MARCH 2025:

Paul Nice, Treasurer
KQ4ALD

How did you first get interested in Ham Radio?

I first got interested in ham radio when I moved here three years ago on the recommendation of Susann Swan, my girlfriend's aunt. She said it was a great way to meet people, contribute to the community, and have a new lifetime hobby.

What is your favorite aspect of the ham radio hobby?

Meeting people, contributing to the community, and its complexity and evolving technology.

Do you have a memorable or interesting contact you have made?

My most memorable contact was my first HF contact after passing the General test. It was a very friendly Ham in Florida.

What type of equipment do you use, and do you have any recommendations for beginners?

I try to stick with Icom as the user experience is relatively similar. This includes handhelds as well as my base station of Icom 9700 and 7610.

Are there any specific frequencies or modes you enjoy operating on?

I enjoy the regional VHF / UHF nets and the surprises found on HF.

Have you participated in any contest or special events?

I'm not much of a contest guy, but that is a great way to learn with an experience Ham next to you.

What advice would you give to someone new in the community?

My advice to new Hams is to not be shy about asking questions. Most Hams take pride in their ability to mentor new Hams.

Do you have any other hobbies or interest that you enjoy?

My other hobbies include golf, guns and beer. Not in that order.

How has being a part of the ham radio club impacted your experience with the hobby?

The BRARC has been what keeps me going in the hobby. Making new friends and getting sound advice is priceless.

Is there a particular project or goal you're currently working on or would like to achieve in ham radio?

My next project is to get more experience with POTA / SOTA. Learning Morse Code could also open some new doors.



BRARC Meeting Minutes February 4, 2025

Meeting Date: February 04, 2025

Meeting Location: 758 Glover Street, Hendersonville NC (Jackson Park)

Meeting was held in person and streamed online via Zoom

Attendance: 31 Members Attended (23 in person, 8 online)

Meeting Start Time: 7:00pm

Opening of Meeting by James Reed - President followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

Treasurer Report provided by Paul Nice - Treasurer

(Refer to March Echo for full treasures report)

- Paul advised BRARC reimbursed Susann Swan for the purchase of 10 Baefong Radios being provided to newly Hams in need of a radio to get on air.
- James welcomed new BRARC members and opened the floor for any new members in attendance to introduce themselves.
 - Michael Chapman (W8PCS) - Introduced himself. Works with National Park service at various locations including Carl Sandburg House, Mills River, and Green River. Thanked everyone for the use of the frequencies to assist in emergencies etc and looking forward to being a part of the club.
- Russell provided information on an upcoming Emergency Prep event hosted by his church Church of Christ - Latter Day Saints on June 14, 2025. Cover wide range of emergency prep topics.
- Danny and James participated in the NC and SC QSO PARTY. They were able to make 307 contacts.
- Presentation by "The Wireman"

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00pm

**Please note: The meeting minutes may be missing pieces of information due to the recording missing parts of the various conversations.



Upcoming Events

These events are great opportunities to meet fellow ham radio enthusiasts, participate in forums, and explore exhibits and flea markets. Are you planning to attend any of these events?

HAM FEST:

RARSfest, ARRL North Carolina State Convention

When: 04/05/2025

Location: Jim Graham Building, NC State Fairgrounds - 4285 Trinity Drive, Raleigh, NC 27601

Website: <https://www.rarsfest.org>

Sponsor: Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

Talk-In: W4DW, 146.64MHz, -0.6 MHz offset, No tone

Contact: Nancy Torborg, KB2TNR

Email: ntorborg@mac.com

WCARS Hamfest

When: 07/26/2025

Location: Smokey Mountain Event Center - 758 Crabtree Rd, Waynesville NC 28785

Website: <http://wcars-club.org>

Talk-In: 147.39 + PL 94.8

Contact: Randy Harris, KI4VLW

Email: wcars.nc.hamfest@gmail.com

SHELBY HAMFEST

When: 08/29/2025 thru 08/30/2025

Location: Cleveland County Fair Grounds - 1751 E Marion St, Shelby, NC 28152

Website: <https://shelbyhamfest.com>

Sponsor: Shelby Amateur Radio Club

Talk-In: 146.880 (-), 67.0 Hz Tone Repeater

Contact: (980) 295-5151 or chairman@shelbyhamfest.org

Email: chairman@shelbyhamfest.org

To search for Ham Fest, please visit: <https://www.arrl.org/hamfests/search>



In Search Of / Help Wanted

In this section of The Echo you will find items/supplies fellow Hams are in search of to purchase, borrow, or for free.. There is also a "Help Wanted" area for members who are in need of help with Ham Radio or Ham Radio projects. If you have information for this section, please email: catiballard@gmail.com

IN SEARCH OF:

VHF/UHF Dual Band Radio Mobile (Preferably ICOM 2730a or something similar)

Information: Newly licensed Ham in search of the above radio equipment to help him get on air until he finishes out his goal of a building a shack with HF/MF capability. His goal with the mobile is to simplex to his brother in Denver CO. Anyone interested in selling this type radio, please contact him directly via email listed below.

Contact: rcpace16@gmail.com

HELP WANTED:

Russell Pace: He currently passed his tech license and is studying for the general now. He is planning on joining BRARC. He welcomes any advice on getting started in the craft of amateur radio. At this time he has 2 BT GT 5R pros HT for getting started and his goal is to invest in a base station at some point throughout this year with guidance. If you are interested in speaking/helping Russell, please contact him directly through email: rcpace16@gmail.com

BEARWALLOW MTN - Maintenance Volunteers: We are currently looking for a group of volunteers to assist with maintain the Bearwallow Mtn Equipment. Martin Harris will continue to maintain but will require assistance to do so. Please email catiballard@gmail.com with any questions or to express your interest in volunteering.

INFORMATION:

If you are interested in a copy of the presentation given by Gary DePalma entitled "Wire and Stealth Antennas, Design and Build Your Own" please email: catiballard@gmail.com to request a copy of the presentation.



UPCOMING BRARC EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

April 2025: NA4X (Danny) UTC Time

May 2025: N2NVY (Jay) APRS

June 2025: KK4JFO (James) Field Day prep

October 2025: N2NVY (Jay) Scouts Jamboree and Youth involvement

October 18th Scouts Jamboree - shack open 10:00-2:00 to receive Scout contacts

November 2025 - NA4X (Danny) discuss Christmas Parade,

December 2025: Club Family Dinner Golden Corral.

Pending Education Presentation: Michael Chapman (W8PCS) - Pisgah Forest Safety communications for hikers and horseback riders

If you have a request for an educational topic or would like to present a topic, please email: Cati Harris (KQ4GKF) at catiballard@gmail.com



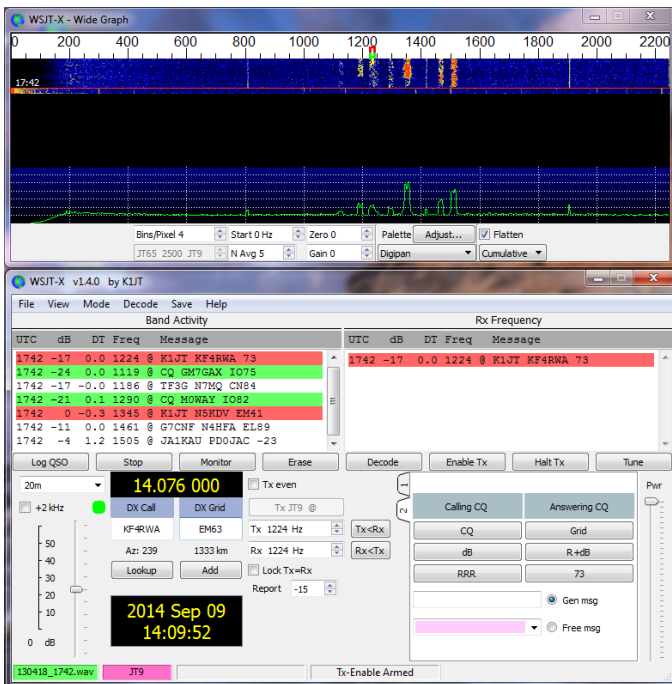
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Join the Waves: Your
Voice, Our Airwaves.
Together, We Make
Radio Magic!"

Area Ham Radio Nets

FM NETS - 2 METERS		
BRARC Net (W4YK)	146.640 MHz/T91.5 - Hendersonville	Sunday 8:00pm
Slow Scan TV Net	146.640 MHz/T91.5 - Hendersonville	Sunday 7:00pm
Henderson County ARES Net	146.640 MHz/T91.5 - Hendersonville	Wednesday 9:00pm
Anderson Radio Club Net	146.790 MHz - Pickens SC	Daily 8:30pm
Blue Ridge Traffic (SC)	146.610 MHz - Ceasars 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 - Hendersonville	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	Mon-Sat 7:00am/Sun 8:00a
HCARC 10m Net	28.400MHz	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 County 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



Exploring FT8: The Digital Mode Taking Ham Radio by Storm

If you've been on the HF bands lately, you've likely heard the rapid-fire chirps of FT8, a digital mode that's become a favorite among hams worldwide. Introduced in 2017 by Joe Taylor, K1JT, and Steve Franke, K9AN, as part of the WSJT-X software suite, FT8 is designed for weak-signal communication, making it perfect for low-power operators and challenging band conditions.

FT8 operates on a 15-second transmit/receive cycle, exchanging minimal data like call signs, grid squares, and signal reports. Its efficiency comes from a highly structured format and advanced error correction, allowing contacts even at signal levels below the noise floor—sometimes as low as -24 dB. All you need is a rig, a computer, an interface (like a Signalink), and the free WSJT-X software to get started.

Why the popularity? FT8 thrives in today's solar minimum, letting operators work DX with modest setups. It's also a boon for award chasers, with many logging hundreds of countries in short order. Critics say it lacks the personal touch of CW or SSB, but its precision and accessibility are hard to beat.

For our club, FT8 opens doors to experiment with antennas and QRP setups. Whether you're a seasoned op or a newbie, FT8 is a mode worth exploring. Download WSJT-X, pick a band (20m and 40m are hot spots), and give it a try. See you on the waterfall!

If you're interested in exploring and learning more about FT8, please send an email to catiballard@gmail.com. We are considering hosting an education session on FT8.



ARRL - The National Association for Amateur Radio

AARL WEBSITE: WWW.AARL.ORG

BRARC Club

Website: <https://radioclub.org/>

Monthly Meeting Zoom Information:

First time ZOOM Users:

1. Go to <https://zoom.us/> and click Join A Meeting at the top
2. Enter Meeting ID **898 4099 5655** and Click Join
3. Enter Meeting Passcode **brarc** and Click Join Meeting
4. When prompted, SAVE the download, then click RUN
5. Click JOIN MEETING

The first time you use Zoom, the Zoom application will be saved to your computer, and on subsequent meetings do the following:

Returning Zoom Users:

1. Select and run ZOOM from your computer's list of applications and Click Join a Meeting
2. Enter meeting ID **898 4099 5655** and Click Join
3. Enter Meeting Passcode **brarc** and Click Join Meeting

Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Club 2025 Officers - Contact Information

President: James Reed (KK4JFO) - 828-698-3609 - jshreed@bellsouth.net

Vice-President: Bill Gunn (KB2GUN) - 704-934-1950 - kb2gunb@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Paul Nice (KQ4ALD) - 703-657-9783 - paul.nice@verizon.net

Secretary: Cati Harris (KQ4GKF) - 828-595-1332 - catiballard@gmail.com