



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

Volume 75, Issue 2 February, 2026

[click here to go to web site](#)

FEBRUARY CLUB HAPPENINGS

Meeting 7pm at new building
February 10, 2026 7:00 pm

Location:

Hickory Grove Community
Center
2600 S Sunnyslope Road Rm
310
New Berlin

February 10th 2025 Meeting

New Berlin Emergency Management

Presented by Jim Burns KD9CIV



Sendik's Community Grill

Dates

**Saturday May 16, 2026 &
Saturday September 12,
2026**

NUT NET
3.985mhz
Monday-Saturday
8:15am CT

WARAC 4th Tuesday
Breakfast
At the Forum
Layton & Hyw 100 at
8:30am

The Milwaukee-Florida
Net time is:
7:15 - 8:00AM Central
8:15 - 9:00AM Eastern
Mon through Sat



**Premeeting dinner at 5:15pm
Senor Luna's on Calhoun, just south of
Greenfield Ave**

<https://senorluna.com/contact-senor-luna/>

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WARAC 4th Tuesday Breakfast

NOTE NEW LOCATION

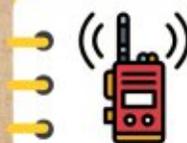
Several years ago there was talk among Nut Net members that we should get to meet each other. A breakfast get together idea was started. It was open to all hams, XYL/partners and anyone who wanted to learn about amateur radio. Even visiting OM/XYL couples joined us.

So, on the fourth Tuesday each month at 8:30 am we meet at [The Forum Restaurant](#), corner of HWY 100 and Layton, Greenfield, WI. Looking forward to seeing you, mark your calendar.

Phil, W9NAW

WARAC Find Us On The Air

VHF Simplex 146.55 Mhz & AllStar #63584



Looking for a Club Member to chat with? Fire up the VHF rig and give a shout out on the VHF Simplex Frequency 146.55 / Allstar 63584. You'll be surprised how often someone is listening. Hit the PTT and say "Hello"

DMR - BM TG 3155 WI State



The WI State 3155 TG is available on all the local DMR Repeaters AND via your HotSpot. Put yourself monitoring and come find a Club Member

Nut Net - Mon to Sat on 3.985 Mhz @ 8:15 AM



Join The Nut Net on 80 Mtr SSB from 8:15 to 9:00 AM Mondays thru Saturdays. Check-ins are from all over WI. You'll be a Nut Netter regular in no time. This is a general discussion net that gets your day started out right.

Milw - Florida Net - Mon to Sat 14.290 Mhz 7:00 AM



Join Tom, K9BTQ, for this early morning Check In Net, Mon thru Sat on 20M from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM. Get the news to get your day started out just right.

A Proper Winter!!



So I went up north a couple weeks ago. The word was out that the winter of '26 is the first "Proper Winter" we've had in quite a while. Having acquired and restored an old fashioned valve amplifier, my shack is all set to chug out the heat on those cold winter mornings when the dog gets let out for a quick tour of the backyard and the DX rolls in on 15

meters crisp and clear. Indeed it is turning out to be a Proper Winter. A great time for the February club meeting.

This past week, we had our quarterly Board Meeting. Really nice to welcome Jerry, K9HOG aboard as our new Treasurer. All sorts of good activities are heading our way: WI QSO Party in March, Sendik's Grill, Field Day and our unique Trunk 2 Trunk swap event. We will have updates at the meeting.

This month's presentation will be New Berlin Emergency Director Jim Burns talking about the latest developments at the City. He will be giving us some real life details from the horrendous storms from last August. I am absolutely looking forward to his presentation.

For those looking to burn the ether with a little RF this weekend, the MN QSO Party is this Saturday, Feb 7th. That kicks off the State QSO Party year and the MNQP is a great way to get warmed up for next months WI QSO Party.

Finally, stop by the pre-meeting dinner at Senor Luna's. It may not be Pizza Ranch, but the enchiladas are killer. The dinner starts at 5:15 or so. Lots of room, come on by.

WARAC Social - January 13, 2026

Machine Shed 6:30 - 9pm
N14 W24145 Tower Place
(I-94 & WIS 164 Exit 294)
Pewaukee, WI 53072

Attendance: 27

Everyone enjoyed visiting, the good food.

Respectfully Submitted
Bill Dargis KD9BJZ
Secretary WARAC, January 13, 2026

WARAC Board Meeting Minutes - February 2, 2026

Board meeting called to order by Mike Johnson, WO9B @ 7PM.

Present: Mike Johnson WO9B, Pierre Porter KD9SSY, Bill Dargis KD9BJZ, Jerry Roeder K9HOG, Feroz Ghouse WU9N, Bill Reed N9KPH.

Board Members Communications: Remains the same, Gmail & Google Docs. Google Drive share experiment is on hold. Will stay with ftp.

Pre-meeting Dinner location: Senor Luna's (Calhoun & Greenfield).

Meeting Room permit, TV donation: The current permit runs through April 2026. We need to talk to New Berlin about renewing our permit. Once the meeting room permit is renewed. We will then know if there is a cost. Then we can approach New Berlin/Community Center to find out what the rules & standards are, and what we can do with the room. And then we can talk to them about donating a larger TV for the meeting room.

Club Archives: Bill Reed, Tom Macon, Scott Sherer - will work on organizing and digitizes the clubs paper documents that need archiving to the ftp. Plus contact the DLARC (Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications) about uploading the club's public history & Hamtrix.

Treasurers report - Jerry Roeder: Checking \$7,281.43, CD \$5,663.72, Scholarship savings \$604.23, Schwab Scholarship account \$14,428.91. Total \$27,978.29.

Membership renewals: Dues are coming in.

2026 Membership Directory - Bill D.: Bill will start working on the directory this month.

Committee Reports and Chairman:

Hamtrix - Frank Humpal

Sendik's Grill - Frank Humpal: Frank will contact Sendik's and pick the dates.

Field Day - Dave Garnier: Site is Valley View Park New Berlin.

WIQP (3-15-26) - Chuck Dellis: Everything is on schedule.
Scholarship: The Arrl fund earned enough to fund the full \$3,000 scholarship during 2025.
Publicity - Pierre Porter: Will email out WIQP reminder.
Symposium: Nothing new.

Club Priorities for 2026: Mike will send out an updated club Business Plan for Board review and discussion.

Meeting Programs:

February - EMCOM - August flood.
March - WIQP, Heathkit -YouTube.
April - Cubic Quad.
May - Polar Modulation, Trunk-to Trunk.
June - Field Day, WIQP wrap up.
August - Pizza in the Park.

2026 Tentative Board Meeting schedule

Monday Feb 2
Monday April 27
Monday July 27
Monday Oct 5

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30PM.
Respectfully Submitted
Bill Dargis KD9BJZ



Equipment for Sale

Arrow II satellite antenna, never used

MFJ Versa V induction tuner used very little

Chimney antenna mount, never used

Heathkit Warrior amplifier

Heathkit RX-1 Mohawk receiver

Heathkit TX-1 Apache transmitter

Note, Mohawk and Apache may need re-capping. All Heathkit very well built. Do plan to bring a buddy when you come get it all. Amplifier is heavy and located in a downstairs shack. Was originally planned for a "boat anchor" shack, but will not happen now for me. As a member of WARAC, I would ask \$350 obo for the lot. Of that, \$100 will be donated to the WARAC scholarship fund. Thank you for considering. Tom KD9FPC

Email kd9fpc@yahoo.com or Cell 414.254.7845.

**MFJ Versa V
induction tuner**



**Heathkit Warrior
amplifier**

**Heathkit
RX-1
Mohawk
receiver**



**Heathkit TX-1
Apache
transmitter**

WARAC Group.IO info

The WARAC Group.IO is up and running with some activity. At this writing we have 19 WARAC members signed up as members.

If you are a WARAC member and want to sign up send me a note at KA9FZR@gmail.com and I will send you an invitation.

Editorial

Another month another Hamtrix. We had a real winter in the last weeks. So outdoor activities are limited. Even winter field day seemed lighter then normal.

I don't have much to report. Still practicing my CW sending with my Morse code reader app on my phone. The instant feed back seems to help one get the rhythm of sending code and prevents me from telling myself I'm doing a great job HI HI

The January dinner went over well. I found the food good. For a little history on the dinner. At one time we had a formal dinner with awards etc. Due to declining attendance and increasing prices we let that expire.

We were still doing the swapfest at that time and we started just getting together instead of having a formal meeting. Since then we have lost the swap fest but still have the dinner for the January Meeting

Frank KA9FZR





Contest Corner and DX Report
Michael Falk, AA9RK

February is the shortest month but its four weekends are jam-packed with great ham radio events.

February 6th through 8th bring the Vermont, Minnesota, and British Columbia QSO parties, along with the four hour long CW Sprint on Saturday night. I enjoy Sprint events - I got on the SSB Sprint last weekend for 25 QSOs or so and had fun, though my station is not built for SSB - so I highly recommend trying it out. The Sprint exchange is long (both call signs, serial number, name, and state), and there is the special QSY rule (basically, after you call CQ and make a contact, you give up your frequency to the station that called you). Sprints are never boring. There is also the Mexico RTTY International Contest for 36 hours if you need a RTTY fix sooner than the other contests.

The ARRL School Club Roundup runs through the week of February 9th through 13th. Valentine's Day weekend brings a bunch of events, no matter your mode. The CQ Worldwide RTTY WPX contest is Friday night on the 13th through Sunday night on the 15th, and RTTY activity is never really higher. If RTTY isn't your thing, why not? But anyway, there is a PODXS 070 Valentine Sprint on Valentine's Day UTC, using the PSK31 mode on 160, 80, and 40 meters. There is also an OMISS SSB QSO Party running for 24 hours on the HF bands, if SSB is your mode.

The big event on the weekend of the 20th through 22nd is the ARRL International DX Contest, CW. It's 48 hours and all, I mean all, of the big guns are on the air. The speeds tend to be fast, but they want your QSO so they will make it happen. It is the best way I know of to add DX countries to your log on CW. If you prefer SSB, there is a Classic Exchange phone contest, which encourages hams to use vintage and classic gear on the air.

On the weekend of the 27th through March 1, one favorite event of mine is the North American QSO Party, RTTY edition (running concurrently with the NA Collegiate Championship). It's mostly American and Canadian stations, for just 12 hours on Saturday, but activity is high, signals are strong, and it's friendly and fun.

How's DX? Well...

3Y0K: The famous Bouvet Island DXpedition is on its way to sea. Their website reminds you that Bouvet is the most remote uninhabited island on Earth, and also contains a great primer on working split. (If you don't know how to work split, you won't work Bouvet. They plan to stay on Bouvet for 3 weeks but the dates are still a little bit up-in-the-air for travel reasons. Check 3y0k.com for updates. Bouvet is south and a little west of South Africa, about halfway to Antarctica.

AU7RS: The Lakshadweep Islands are to be activated from February 10-16 (though this timeline may also slip), especially on 160, 80, 40, 12, and 10 meter bands on CW. (They will be active on all modes 160-6 meters, but they are especially focusing on those bands toward North America.) The Lakshadweep Islands are about 200 miles off of the Indian state of Kerala, in the southwest of India.

S0S: What a strange call, eh? This is a mobile operation, February 3-8, using the QO-100 satellite, from Western Sahara. They are covering 8 different grid squares in the IL field (starting from IL35 and proceeding to IL10). Western Sahara is a disputed country, administered by Morocco but having declared independence from them, is on the western (Atlantic) coast of Africa, and is about one and a half times the size of Wisconsin.

VP8TDX: I feel some attraction to the Falkland Islands (or Islas Malvinas) for some reason. VP8TDX will be active from Stanley in the Falklands (a couple hundred miles off the coast of Argentina in the Atlantic) from February 7-14, 40-6m, all modes.

See you next month,
-Michael AA9RK





February 2026
Johnson, WO9B

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Hamtrix

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By Michael

HamClock EOL

Last week the ham radio world was greeted with a game changing announcement: Our beloved HamClock would cease functioning in June, 2026. The creator of HamClock,

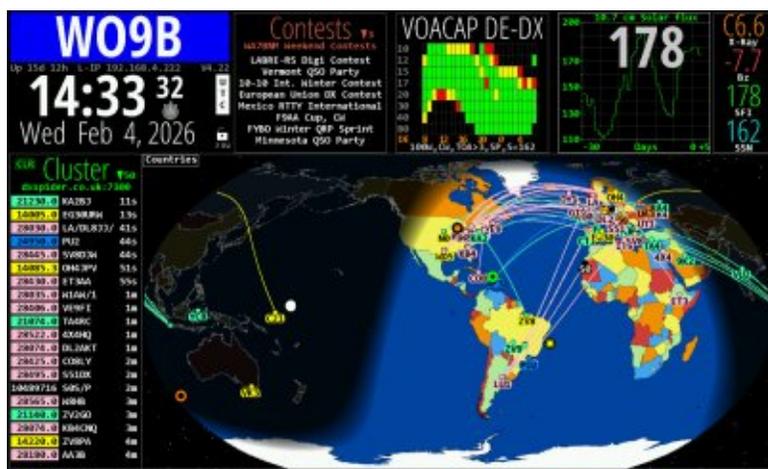
Elwood Downey, WB0OEW, is now SK and his backend server will be removed from service in June which means the software will cease functioning as it needs to “phone home” to function. What an astounding bit of software Mr.

Downey created. The whole HamClock package is a marvel of information presented in a beautifully rendered graphic. If there is any good news from this tragedy, work is underway to replace, replicate or reimagine the software. Those with time and talent have risen in the moment. The void is already being filled.

This got me thinking about other ham software that floats through my shack. The software model used by HamClock is wildly prevalent in the ham radio world. I use a LOT of software packages which have been freely donated to most anyone in our hobby who is interested enough to put it to use. Most of these are maintained by individuals or small groups that ultimately are as fragile as HamClock turned out to be. I knew this, of course, but relegated it to being a matter of no concern. This has been a wake up call for me.

A quick accounting of the software packages I use regularly include N1MM (Contesting), Log4OM (Logging), SDR Console (SDR), Omnirig (Port Sharing), FLrig & FLdigi (Digital), WSJT-X (FT8), VARAC (Digital), WinLink Express (Digital), MMTTY (RTTY), 2Tone (RTTY), Gritty (RTTY), JT Alert (FT8), Connect (SDR), ASL3 (AllStar Link Network), WPSD (Digital Voice). These are the main ones. There are others that get used infrequently. The point is, this is a gob of ham software that is provided at low to no cost and lives in my day to day ham life. Wow!!

As a matter of fairness and gratitude, I'll send a donation to the authors once in a while. Nothing big and certainly nothing regular. Just a small token of appreciation. The same thing applies to websites. That is another tranch of donated time and talent that is way too long to list out in this article.



I have been always interesting in circular polarized antennas. Even when I didn't have a clue what they were. Maybe they were cool to me because of pictures from the space program.

As I have learned over the years about them and still think they are cool. I have had a couple of them one a VHF turn-style one. Then I built a 20 meter one that worked. I need to rework it and do some more experimenting. Found this article as part of a advertisement for circular antennas. One thing that caught my eye was the fact during their tests the circular antenna seem to give better range. The VHF antenna seemed to do the when I replace it with a whip.

This is from this web page.

<https://www.radiodesigngroup.com/blog/the-impact-of-circularly-polarized-antennas>

Pioneering Circularly Polarized Antennas in the RF Industry

Back in the late 1970's, when I was just getting started in the RF industry, I was mentored by a good friend and Ham Radio buddy named Ray. Ray was an RF engineer who specialized in antenna design, and worked for a defense contractor that made a variety of sophisticated antennas for military and space applications.

Being an experimenter, I had built a Ham Radio repeater station and located it on top of a 4000' peak at the edge of the San Fernando Valley. The coverage was great, but there were a lot of areas that were slightly shadowed by the surrounding hills, and the signal in those areas was pretty marginal.

Ray was one of the Hams that used my repeater, and he took note of the coverage issues. One evening, as we chatted about improving the system, Ray told me that I should consider using a circularly polarized (CP) antenna. I knew a little about CP, that it had been developed for use with spacecraft, since in space the idea of vertical or horizontal makes little sense, since there is no "up" or "down."

Collaborating with an Expert Antenna Designer

Why would CP help, I wondered aloud? Ray explained that when you get into RF environments that are not a clear path, the polarization of a radio signal can be "rotated" to a different plane than the original, due to reflection or refraction or a combination of both; a phenomenon known as "polarization rotation." This means that a signal from a vertically polarized antenna at the radio site winds up being horizontal at the user's radio location. When the polarizations are mismatched, a substantial loss of signal occurs, typically on the order of 20 dB. This is what caused the signal degradation in the marginal coverage areas of my repeater. With a circularly polarized antenna, when the wave signal is rotated due to reflection or refraction, it's still circularly polarized, and so doesn't have the loss that a linearly polarized signal would.

Ray offered to help me build a circularly polarized antenna. When an experienced antenna designer offers to help you build an antenna, how can you say no? In a matter of a few weeks, we had built a huge monstrosity of an antenna, and we were ready to

install it at the radio site. In the spirit of true experimenters, we decided to leave the old antenna up and put the new one just below the old one. We added a remote-controlled antenna switch, and told all of the users on the repeater to “pick the antenna they liked the best.” We had a simple strip chart recorder that kept track of which antenna was being used.

The results were stunning. Not only was the CP antenna almost universally chosen, but the comments from the other Hams using the system were overwhelmingly in favor of the new antenna. It wasn't long before we took down the old antenna, and left the CP antenna as the only option.

Enhancing Wireless Coverage with Circularly Polarized Antennas

Since then, I have noticed several places where CP antennas have made their mark. FM radio stations almost all use CP antennas, and my friends in the broadcast industry tell me that without circular polarization, FM would never have been as popular as it is today. Also, as it turns out, the wireless microphone and intercom industry uses CP extensively to prevent coverage-related noises and dropouts.

Spiral antennas for the Circular polarization



DON'T KEY LIKE A PHONE MAN



SLOW SPEED CW QSO NET

Monday's - 8:00 PM - 146.55 Simplex and AllStar Node #63584

CW Practice

One of the best and maybe the only way to get better at CW is practice. Having someone else who also wants to practice also helps. Just makes it more fun.

The West Allis Radio Club is going to try to help. We are running a CW practice net on Monday at 8pm The repeater is 147.045+ 127.3 the CW portion is on HF

Mike WO9B has been joining me and setting up some practice but we are open for suggestions on where to go with this. Come join us.

Officers and Board
President:

Mike Johnson WO9B

Vice-President

Pierre Porter KD9SSY

Treasure:

Jerry Roeder K9HOG

Secretary:

Bill Dargis KD9BJZ

Committee member(2)

Scott Sherer, KC9WPS

Tom Macon K9BTQ

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