



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

Volume 75, Issue 5 May, 2026

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

MAY CLUB HAPPENINGS

Note new place

Premeeting dinner
at 5:15pm
[Cleveland Pub at
Sunnyslope and
Cleveland](#)

Trunk to Trunk Starts at 6:30pm
Followed by a
Meeting at 7pm at the new building
May 12, 2026
Location:
Hickory Grove Community Center
2600 S Sunnyslope Road Rm 310
New Berlin

Presentations:
WIQP 2026 Wrap Up -
Chuck, W9WLX
Heathkit Origins Story
Video - Phil, W9NAW

WAARC 2026 ARRL
Field Day is
June 27

Valley View Park
New Berlin

VOLUNTEER TIME

WARAC SENDIK'S
GRILL WEEKEND
FUNDRAISER



WARAC is back to the New Berlin Sendik's
Saturday May 16th 11am - 4pm



Everyone is invited for the
Pre-Meeting dinner
@5:15pm
Come Get Some!

New location!
ADDRESS:
14000 W. CLEVELAND AVE
NEW BERLIN, WI 53151



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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



The Summer Begins



Good Month everyone.

This month we have a full plate of club activity, a little bit of club identity housekeeping, and some good reasons to get out from behind the radio and spend time with fellow WARAC members.

First, we are moving ahead with the club rebranding and logo update. This has been one of those projects that sounds simple until you actually start working through it. A logo is not just a picture. It ends up on the website,

newsletter, certificates, flyers, QSL material, event signs, shirts, social media, and whatever else we dream up next. The goal is not to erase the club's history, but to give WARAC a cleaner, more flexible look that works better in today's print and digital world.

At the board meeting, we previewed a new logo and are hoping to preview it and seek comments from the club and seek membership approval next month. Fingers crossed.

Our next social opportunity is Sendik's Grill on Saturday, May 16th. This is a nice low-key chance to get together, enjoy some food, and talk radio while raising some money for the club. These casual gatherings are important and give us an opportunity to spotlight the club's profile in the community. A club is more than business meetings, contest logs, antennas, and repeaters. Come out if you can, we really need the help.

This month's club meeting will feature our Trunk-2-Trunk parking lot swapfest. What began as an off the cuff activity by our previous president Feroz, WU9N has become one of our annual rites of Spring. It would be nice to not have weather be a factor. I think we've earned a clear sky event after last month's weather canceled meeting.

The main presentation this month is the Wisconsin QSO Party final results from Chuck, W9WLX. The WIQP is one of the club's signature activities, and seeing the final numbers is always worthwhile. It gives us a chance to recognize the work that went into the event, see how participation shaped up, and start thinking about how to build on it next year. Thanks to Chuck, Tom, Howard and Jeff for putting this together and helping keep the WIQP front and center.

Rounding out the meeting program, Phil, W9NAW will present a short video on The Origin of Heathkit. For many hams, Heathkit is more than a brand name. It is a memory, a learning experience, and in some cases the reason they got comfortable holding a soldering iron in the first place. Heathkit helped define the build-it-yourself era of amateur radio and electronics, and I am looking forward to hearing Phil's take on how it all started.

So, yes, we have a busy month ahead. New look for the club. Food and fellowship at Sendik's. A full club meeting with Trunk-2-Trunk, WIQP results, and a little Heathkit history. Not a bad lineup.

See you at the meeting, and hopefully at the grill.

WARAC General Meeting Canceled - April 14, 2026

Mike Johnson, WO9B was informed by the City of New Berlin that the building is being closed due to weather. There will be no April Meeting. Mike is not rescheduling, so the next meeting will be in May as usual.

Respectfully Submitted
Bill Dargis KD9BJZ
Secretary WARAC, April 14, 2026

WARAC Board Meeting Minutes - April 27, 2026

Board meeting called to order by Mike Johnson, WO9B @ 7:05PM.

Present: Mike Johnson - WO9B, Pierre Porter - KD9SSY, Bill Dargis - KD9BJZ, Jerry Roeder - K9HOG, Jeff Pahl - W9JSP, Feroz Ghouse - WU9N, Scott Sherer - KC9WPS, Paul Sperbeck - W9PCS, Dave Garnier - WBOWN, Dean Hettel - WC9C.

Pre-meeting Dinner location: Cleveland Pub (Sunnyslope Rd. & Cleveland).

Meeting Room TV donation:

Mike has not received a response from New Berlin.
Mike will try contacting the Mayor's administrative assistant.

Club Archives: Project is completed. Tom will due a presentation in the near future.

Treasurers report - Jerry Roeder:

CD matured, \$5,719. Closed and moved to general checking account. Plans are to move to another Schwab account. Income, \$20 Dues. Expenses, \$140 Field Day permit.

2026 Membership Directory - Bill D.: Completed and Email link was sent out.

Committee Reports:

Hamtrix - Frank Humpal: Update Hamtrix format to go all with... the coming new Website.

Sendik's Grill: May 16th @ New Berlin Sendik's.

Field Day - Dave Garnier: Valley View Park New Berlin. Online Field Day Meeting May 5th 7pm.

WIQP: Mike talk with Chuck and the WIQP report is ready for the next Membership meeting.

Scholarship: No update.

Publicity - Pierre Porter: Pierre will work on poster/handout/flyers for Sendik's. Scott

has some marketing ideas.

Club Priorities for 2026:

New Website – Feroz: Working on the new website from the ground up with themes from templates. Needs the new club Logo.

Publicity - Marketing:

New Berlin Community Email, others. Scott contacted New Berlin with a draft of an AD about our club. New Berlin enhanced and put it in there city's News Letter. He will try contacting the other surrounding suburbs with the AD. Face Book.

Field Day: Posters, flyers, club information, what is Ham Radio.

Sendix's Grill: Flyers, club information.

Club Rebranding: Updated Logo idea. Present Logo to membership for comment and future vote.

Meeting Programs:

May – Trunk to Trunk, 6:30 – 7pm. WIQP wrap up.

June – Field Day, DLARC Presentation.

July – DMR Repeater System: Chad Stiles N9PAY.

August – Pizza in the Park.

September – Polar Modulation.

October – Elections.

2026 Board Meeting schedule

Monday July 27

Monday Oct 5

Meeting Adjourned at 8:15PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Bill Dargis KD9BJZ

WARAC Secretary, April 27, 2026

Question—Where is this?:

Lat:42.9514
Lon:-88.091975
Elevation 281 m / 922f2
Grid: EN52WW88X
ITU Zone:8
CQ Zone:4

Answer—Valley View Park New Berlin, where the WARAC 2026 Field Day will be held!





Contest Corner and DX Report Michael Falk, AA9RK

It's a short column this month because May is my busiest time of year and I am (once again) overbooked!

This weekend, May 8-10, I want to draw your attention to the Canadian Prairies QSO Party (10 hours on Saturday afternoon and evening) on SSB and CW, 40 through 10 meters, where you work VE4 (Manitoba), VE5 (Saskatchewan) and VE6 (Alberta) stations. Your exchange is RS(T) and state. Also there is the 6 meter Spring Sprint, typically the beginning of 6 meter DX season. It runs Saturday evening as well for 4 hours.

The following weekend, May 15-17, a big event is the His Majesty King of Spain Contest (CW edition), for 24 hours from Saturday morning until Sunday morning. Lots of EA stations should be on the air. The Arkansas QSO Party is also on from Saturday morning until late evening.

There are just some smaller and shorter (especially CW and QRP) events on the weekend of May 22-24, like the North American QRP CW Contest Sprint and the QRP ARCI Hootowl Sprint. These can be great warmups for the big one, the CQ Worldwide WPX ("Worked All Prefixes") CW contest, the weekend of May 30-31. Everyone works everyone else, and multipliers are the unique call sign prefixes you work.

On the air, I want to point out one interesting operation. The 3G0Z crew is activating Robinson Crusoe Island (and possibly some other lesser known islands) from the Fernandez Islands off the west coast of Chile. They are QRV 160 through 6 meters (but focusing on the lower frequency bands), SSB, CW, and FT8. Their website is robinsoncrusoe2026.net.

See you next month,
-Michael AA9RK



March 2026 * Hamtrix * By Michael Johnson, WO9B

APRS Messaging

Here is one of those ham radio features that I have known about for years, mostly ignored, and then suddenly wondered why I had not been using it all along. APRS messaging on VHF. Not APRS tracking. Not watching little cars crawl around on a map. Not wondering why some guy's weather station in Sheboygan is reporting wind gusts from 2009. I'm talking about sending an actual short text message over 2 meters. That sounds simple enough, but of course this is ham radio, so there is always a little twist. APRS stands for Automatic Packet Reporting System and, despite what most of us think, it was never intended to be just a vehicle tracking system. It is really a local tactical digital information system, which is a fancy way of saying "send useful little bits of information to people nearby." Position reports, weather data, objects on a map, bulletins, and yes, messages. APRS is a two-way real-time digital communications system, and messaging is part of the basic package.

The thing that makes APRS messaging interesting to me is that it is not trying to replace texting. Your phone is better at texting. Much better. It has a keyboard, spell check, emojis, and the ability to make you regret hitting send. APRS messaging is different. It is short, clunky, and very ham-like. That is both the charm and the limitation. You are not going to write the great American novel with it. You might, however, send "At Shelter 2," "Need coax," "Net moved to 146.52," or "Running late, coffee emergency." That is useful stuff.

There are several ways to play. Some radios have APRS built in, and those are the easy button if you can stand entering text with radio buttons and knobs. I know, I know, using a multi-function knob to compose a message builds character. It also builds vocabulary not suitable for the club newsletter.

The current software path is actually pretty interesting. For Windows users, PinPoint APRS is probably the friendly place to start. It has a modern look, does mapping, and can send APRS messages using either RF or APRS-IS depending on how you set it up. That means you can pair it with a radio and TNC arrangement, or use it on the Internet side while you are learning the ropes. For the Linux crowd, and for those of us who enjoy making computers do useful things while muttering under our breath, YAAC and Xastir are still very much in the conversation. YAAC is cross-platform Java software, while Xastir is the old reliable open-source mapping and APRS workhorse. Neither is exactly "download app, push big green button, done," but both are serious tools. DigiPi is also a source for APRS messaging with a very capable onboard app. Now you have a great excuse to get up close and personal with DigiPi.

Phone options exist too. APRSdroid is a popular Android APRS app that can handle position reporting and APRS messages. It can be used through the APRS Internet system, and with the right cabling or audio setup it can also get involved with RF. This is

a very tempting path because, let's face it, phones are pretty good at typing messages. The ham-radio part is making sure we are not simply using the Internet and calling it radio. That is where the RF connection matters.

There are a few practical cautions. APRS on 144.390 is one shared channel. It is not the place for extended ragchewing, dramatic storytelling, or sending "testing 1 2 3" every 30 seconds until everyone in three counties knows you bought a new cable. Keep messages short and purposeful. Also remember that coverage depends on local digipeaters and iGates. If you are in a good APRS area, it can feel surprisingly capable. If not, it can feel like yelling into a coffee can.

For club use, APRS messaging has some real possibilities. Field Day logistics. Public service events. Bike rides. Park operations. ARES-style exercises. Even a simple club experiment where a few members try sending messages across town would be worthwhile. It is digital. It is VHF. It is old packet. It is sort of new again. Best of all, it gives us another excuse to plug a radio into something and see what happens.

HAM NEWS

FCC GRANTS FREQUENCIES' USE FOR SATELLITE SERVICE

(Source: [Amateur Radio Newsline Report 04/24/2026](#))

Submitted by Pierre KD9SSY, permission granted

The US Federal Communications Commission announced that it had authorized AST SpaceMobile's full, 248-satellite constellation to use requested parts of the radio spectrum, including those that had drawn objections from the amateur radio community.

The agency's move will permit AST to fulfill its goal of providing services to consumers in so-called "dead zones," regions without terrestrial networks, especially for emergency services. The successful application on behalf of the low-Earth orbit satellite system was granted on the 21st of April with conditions. The grant for the use of 698 to 960 MHz includes permission to make use of 430 to 440 MHz for emergency control and tracking of the satellites - a move that amateur radio operators feared would cause interference with hams' operations.

The FCC said that AST emergency telemetry use will be limited to the 430.5MHz, 432.3MHz, 434.1MHz, 435.9MHz, and 439.5MHz frequencies for a duration of less than 24 hours. The FCC has said in the past that interference with ham radio was "unlikely."

STEPPIR ANNOUNCES RETURN TO AMATEUR RADIO MARKET

(Source: [Amateur Radio Newsline Report 04/24/2026](#))

Submitted by Pierre KD9SSY, permission granted

SteppIR, which announced last summer that it was halting production of its popular antennas for the amateur radio market, is returning to the ham radio business.

A recent statement on the website of the Washington State company said that although SteppIR had decided

last year to focus on commercial sales, recent favorable developments in that sector are permitting the company to resume supplying hams with antenna kits, parts and accessories as before. The ham radio market is to be served only by online sales.

SteppIR said that the commercial side of its business may lead to the introduction of new products for amateur radio. Its statement acknowledged that its earlier decision was made [quote] "in search of more stable long-term income sources" [endquote] but said that SteppIR never gave up the hope that it would go back to serving amateur radio operators in some way.

Interesting Projects

HAM SATTING - A multi-platform application for amateur radio satellite tracking, QSO logging, and SSTV decoding.

WARAC Group.IO info

The WARAC Group.IO is up and running with some activity. At this writing we have 23 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

As normal for our trunk to trunk meeting, weather is a factor, but we are all Wisconsinites so we know not to put too much faith in any weather forecast!

Note: we are still having our per-meeting meal next door. We don't have to add any driving time HI HI

Looks like good presentations for the meeting.

Don't forget our spring Sendik's fund raiser. Many options: sign up to work, stop by to work, Stop by for a meal, come by just to say hi, tell your friends about it etc. We have found the food to be good so you can't go wrong.

With all that you are all welcome to share any stories.

73

Frank

SAVE THE DATE!!

Green Bay Hamfest

Saturday May 30, 2026

Great Commercial Vendors Featuring Tower Electronics

Other Past Vendors include Wolf River Coils and C3 Electronics

MORE INVITED FOR 2026

Huge parking lot for trunk sales/tailgating,
PLUS plenty of indoor space!

Be part of the fun!

- ✓ Food available on site
- ✓ 50/50 Raffle
- ✓ "Bucket Drawings
- ✓ Meet our ARRL Section Manager
- ✓ DXCC Card Checking
- ✓ Amateur Radio Youth Lounge...BRING THE KIDS!
- ✓ Great Door Prizes Commercial Vendors
- ✓ Lots of Vintage Electronics
- ✓ Grand Prize Drawing
- ✓ Trunk Sales/Tailgating
- ✓ FCC License Testing



Don't miss out!

For more information and to reserve a table or parking lot sales space, contact Todd Clausen, W9GRB, toddw9grb@gmail.com or 414-455-6374. *(If No Answer, Please Leave A Message.)*

Sponsored by the Green Bay Mike & Key Club

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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