



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

Volume 75, Issue 3 March, 2026

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

MARCH CLUB HAPPENINGS

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

Location:

Hickory Grove Community
Center

2600 S Sunnyslope Road Rm
310
New Berlin



Join us 7:00 pm March 10th

for

Get ready for the:



Sunday March 15th

1pm - 8pm

**Post QSO Party
dinner See Page 12**

Chuck W9WLX
shares the latest
about the upcoming
Wisconsin QSO
Party!



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

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

Premeeting dinner at 5:15pm

Senor Luna's on Calhoun, just south of
Greenfield Ave

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

Sendik's Community Grill

Dates

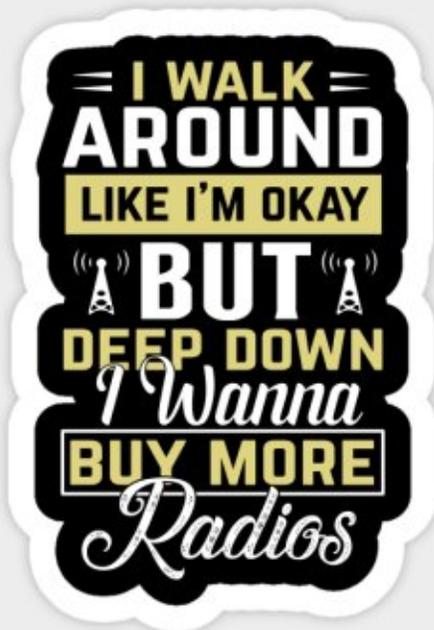
**Saturday May 16, 2026 &
Saturday September 12,
2026**

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

Index

The pre shack.....3
Meeting Minutes5
Equipment sale.....6
Groups IO.....7

Contest & DX.....8
Digital Digest.....10
post QSO party.....12
Hamfests.....13
low Speed cw.....15



WARAC 4th Tuesday Breakfast

NOTE NEW LOCATION

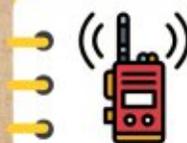
Several years ago there was talk among Nut Net members that we should get to meet each other. A breakfast get together idea was started. It was open to all hams, XYL/partners and anyone who wanted to learn about amateur radio. Even visiting OM/XYL couples joined us.

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.

Season's are Changing



From last month's proper winter to this month's thaw, you know it's time for the annual welcome-spring event: the **WI QSO Party**. It should be the usual fun afternoon on the radio. What's your plan—staying home, going mobile, or trying a multi-op setup? However you plan to participate, time is running short for planning your March 15th event. Turning to club business, we have a few initiatives underway that I'd like to highlight.

WARAC Archive Project:

The archiving team is nearly finished. Tom, K9BTQ, is completing the final sorting and scanning and expects to wrap things up next month. The material will be sent to , the digital ham archive organization. We'll have a presentation next month with full details.

Directory:

Bill D, KD9BJZ, is putting the final touches on the 2026 Directory, which should be released later in March. I find the directory very useful, and it will be distributed as a PDF—so keep an eye on your email.

Marketing:

Following up on our discussion last November, the marketing effort is starting to gain momentum. We're looking to improve our visibility and let the greater Milwaukee area know we're open to new members and ham-related programs. One item under consideration is a club name change. We've been kicking around some ideas—what do you think? As plans take shape, we'll share what's coming and, more importantly, how you can help.

For this month's meeting, the main presentation will feature Chuck, W9WLX, covering the do's and don'ts for this year's WI QSO Party. The pre-meeting dinner will again be at what's becoming our regular spot, Señor Luna's on Calhoun Road.

It should be another good meeting. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Winter 2026 Tribute

As we wend our way into the welcome arms of spring-like weather, I thought I'd share this photo of my daughter's driveway in the UP. This was taken on March 1st....they have had a pretty good go with winter this year. To give you a sense of scale, the dog at the top of the snow wall is about the size of a german shepherd.



WARAC General Meeting Minutes - February 10, 2025

Called to order by Mike Johnson, WO9B @ 7:05 pm.

Attendance: 27 - 26 Member's, 1 Visitor.

Club Archives Initiative to the DLARC: Bill Reed, Tom Macon, and Scott Sherer are sorting through club's documents. Which consists of photo's, slides, 8mm films, news letters, Hamtrix collection plus other paper documents. Undertaking the process of scanning everything would be a major task. Many many hours. Scott contacted the DLARC and found out they could scan our collection or we can scan and upload. If we have DLARC scan we can still down load and save the club's information.

GroupsIO: Frank, KA9FZR has setup a GroupsIO. .

Publication of the Month: SWR Magazine, .

HamClock: The developer died. Other Hams are looking into taking over the HamClock project. Possible alternatives are OpenHamClock, DXLook, HamClock OpenBackend.

Operating Events: KP3/NP3VI Desecheo Island, 3YOK Bouvet Island. Contests - CQ ,WW, RTTY, WPX, Ductch, PACC, ARRL DX (CW & SSB), MARC FM Simplex.

Hamfests: Tri-County swapfest March 15th, ORC swapfest April 25th.

Meeting Minutes - December, January: Approved.

Treasurer's Report Jerry: Checking \$7,281.43, CD \$5,663.72, Scholarship savings \$604.23, Schwah Scholarship account \$14,428.91.

Scholarship Gery Beier, KD9VGL: The ARRL scholarship fund is funding the full amount for the 2026 \$3,000 scholarship this year.

Hamtrix: Frank is asking for articles. If you have anything interesting, write it up and send it to Frank.

WIQP, Chuck: The new computer setup is ready for the 2026 WIQP party.

Sendik's Frank: May 16th and September 12th.

Field Day Dave: June 27th at Valley View Park, New Berlin.

Club Directory: Bill D. will be working on the new directory. The plan is for a March distribution.

Presentation by Jim Burns, KD9CIV: New Berlin Emergency Management Manager

By Wisconsin Statute, every Town, City, and Village has to designate an emergency management type person to take on the responsibility for emergency management for

their community during any emergency's. This could be the Fire chief, Police chief, City Business manager or other designated city employee. Jim Burns is New Berlin's Emergency Management Manager, Jim is a department of one. On FB. His job is to get the city, citizens and business's ready for what could be the worst day of there life's. During an emergency or disaster he works with the Fire dept., Police dept., 911 and all city departments to handle the on going emergencies and disaster. Jim coordinates, plans, and oversees all activities related to preparing for, responding to emergencies and disasters. Prioritizing fire/life safety calls and others to send resources where needed. The city has only a limited amount of resources and equipment. If needed Jim will try to find additional mutual aid from the surrounding communities, county and state agency's. New Berlin uses a trunk-ed encrypted radio system to communicate within the city departments, and all the other City's/County/State/Federal agency's in SE Wisconsin. Jim's radio has over 600 talk group to talk with the above groups. Jim has Firstnet and a portable cell system to use. Jim is also a licensed Ham, this allows him to reach out to us as ham's if our help is needed.

With last August's Flood assessment. 9"-12" of rain, @ ~2"s/Hr. The 3 communities hit the hardest where, Menominee falls, Muskego and New Berlin. With New Berlin having ~ \$52M in damages.

We as individuals need to prepare a plan for any emergency. Where to go. How to communicate and find family, neighbors, and friends. Voice calls may be overloaded, text your status/location, change voice mail message if you can. Check on neighbors. How can we help and not be a problem. Fire, medical, life/safety, power outage, ice storm, tree's down and others, all need plans of what to do, share with our family, friends, and neighbors. Keep food/water/medications/tool's and anything else you think you may need ready. Try to be prepared.

The New Berlin Emergency Management web site. has information to help make your plans. <https://newberlinwi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/21330/Emergency-Preparedness-Workbook--Guide>

The 211 system was expanded after the flood in August to collect data on the Flood. This information was used to sort where RACES Ham group needed to go to document the damage in the different communities, for individual FEMA damage claims.

March program WIQP Party.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 pm.
Respectfully Submitted
Bill Dargis KD9BJZ
Secretary WARAC, February 10, 2025

WARAC Group.IO info

The WARAC Group.IO is up and running with some activity. At this writing we have 21 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.





, March is a wild month for contests! On the first weekend, the big event is the ARRL International DX Contest, SSB edition. It runs for 48 hours, from 6PM on Friday, March 6th to 6PM on Sunday, March 8th, and it is when all of the big DX stations will be on the air. If you want to work DX stations, this is your best chance.

The weekend of March 13th-15th is the highlight of the contest year for me. There are a ton of events on the air. On Saturday, there is the Stew Perry Topband Challenge – CW, 160 meters – as well as the North American Sprint (RTTY) edition, a four-hour wild ride. The Oklahoma and Idaho QSO parties are also going down that weekend, but the marquee event is, of course ...

... The Wisconsin QSO Party, sponsored by our club, running for 7 hours on Sunday, from 1PM to 8PM. It is, in my opinion, the best state QSO party. It's short, activity levels are high, and it's particularly great for us here in the state. Everyone wants to contact you because you're in Wisconsin. I will be out mobile once again with the WO9B team (along with Mike WO9B, Frank KA9FZR, and Max KD9NZB), on 20, 40, and 80 meters CW. Remember to look for stations on SSB and CW, on 2 meters and 70 cm FM, and even digital if you're feeling adventurous. Help the club win the club competition and enjoy a great afternoon and evening on the air.

There is a St. Patrick's Day contest run by the PODXS 070 Club, using the PSK31 mode. It's weird because it's during the week, but hopefully there will be some good activity during the evening. The Virginia QSO Party runs the weekend of March 21st and 22nd, during the day on Saturday and Sunday.

The month ends the way it started, with a 48 hour worldwide SSB DX contest. From the 27th through the 29th, it is the CQ WW WPX Contest. This is another of the biggest contests of the year, with worldwide activity. You can work stations in your own country (unlike the DX contest, in which you can only work stations outside your country for points), and the multipliers are every unique prefix you work.

The first weekend of April, Easter weekend, is also the PODXS 070 New Member Jamboree, a PSK31 contest, and the Louisiana and Mississippi QSO Parties on Saturday.

How's DX? Well...

3Y0K: Bouvet is on the air and the pileups are impressive, in a word. Remember to listen and work split.

J51A: Guinea-Bissau is on the air until March 14. One week in and J51A has already worked 124,600 QSOs. They are on lots of bands, lots of modes, and satellites too.

5N7QBR: Nigeria will be on the air through March 10th, holiday style, with plans to be on for the ARRL DX contest (see above). They're operating at 100 watts but with big antennas.

N9YU and NS3A: The calls aren't very exotic in that form, but they will be QRV from the Philippines (as DU6/N9YU and DU6/NS3A) from March 4-12, Guam (KH2/N9YU and KH2/NS3A) from March 13-17, and then Saipan in the Northern Marianas (KH0/N9YU and KH0/NS3A) from March 17-23. This is also holiday-style, all bands, all modes.

See you next month,
-Michael AA9RK





March 2026

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Hamtrix

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By Michael Johnson,

WO9B

Software Skirmishes in the Ham World

The amateur radio community benefits enormously from the work of very talented hams who create and maintain the software that keeps our hobby moving forward. Much of this software is open source, which not only makes it easy to adopt, but also encourages experimentation and modification.

Of course, open source comes with an occasional downside: transitions and disagreements. Most of the time, those discussions happen quietly behind the scenes. When they spill into public view, however, things can get interesting. Here are a few recent examples worth highlighting.

Nothing to See Here Status: WPSD

The very public fork of the WPSD project—and its sister fork, WPSD-M17—has settled into a state of peaceful coexistence. For those outside the digital voice hotspot world, this dust-up centered on the open-source M17 mode being excluded from WPSD, the popular Pi-Star replacement.

I still use WPSD, but if you're interested in M17, you'll need to pick a side. The core issue is that WPSD is largely a one-person project, and its developer made a clear decision. The software is updated multiple times a week and, by any measure, is top-notch. The M17-enabled variant simply doesn't have much leverage, so what began with a loud bang has faded into both camps staying firmly in their respective corners.

Given the rapid pace of WPSD development, it remains an open question how viable the forked version will be over the long term.

Cold War Status: HamClock

Most of us know the unfortunate story surrounding our beloved HamClock. As the end-of-life clock ticks closer to the June shutdown date, the scramble to find solutions is well underway.

The latest issue of [The Random Wire \(Issue 171\)](#) . It's an impressive effort. Another knowledgeable opinion was penned [HERE](#) by NOLSR, the force behind the HamClock computer seller INVATO.

Personally, replacing the backend server is the option that interests me most. I really like the look and feel of HamClock, now commonly referred to as the “legacy” version. I'm not particularly fond of that label, but it is accurate — especially with several completely different replacement offerings now in development.

Despite the admirable work being done to keep the legacy version alive via the backend server replacement, I can't help but wonder who is minding the store on the legacy **frontend** software. Are we destined to stay on version 4.22 indefinitely? At some point, it will need an update so perhaps the frontend updates will fork as well... but that may be a problem for another day. In the meantime, I plan to try one of the alternative backend servers.

Hot Shooting War Status: FT2

The new FT2 digital mode is barely a week old and has already been forked—worse yet, into competing versions that are incompatible with each other. This border war is moving so fast that by the time this article is published, the landscape may look entirely different.

WSJT-X has long been a disruptive technology, and I mean that in the best possible way. Joe Taylor and his team have consistently been models of conservative, professional software development. FT2, however, is not their creation. It seemingly appeared out of nowhere as a derivative mode.

I've downloaded and briefly tested the “FT2 WSJT Improved” variant. It will feel very familiar to anyone who has used the other FT-x modes—but it's much, much faster. It's far too early to know whether FT2 will gain widespread adoption, but starting out with incompatible versions is hardly ideal. This is definitely one to keep an eye on.

Open-source software has been one of the greatest strengths of amateur radio's modern evolution, but these recent episodes are a reminder that openness cuts both ways. Innovation moves fast, personalities matter, and governance—formal or informal—often determines whether projects thrive, fracture, or quietly fade away. Whether these skirmishes lead to better tools or lasting divisions remains to be seen. For now, I suggest you jump in and swim a few laps with the new software. If you don't like it, the delete key works like a charm.

Get ready for the:



Sunday March 15th

1pm - 8pm

After the QSO Party



We are going to gather at Double D's in Hales Corners. Immediately after the QSO Party... so 8:00 PM or so until dinner is done!!

- [Click image for directions](#) -

5171 S. 108th Street Hales Corners, WI 53130

HamFest 2026

Buy/Sell Amateur Radio Equipment, Electronics and Computer Gear



Sunday

March 15, 2026

Free Parking!

Can you believe it? The Tri-County Amateur Radio Club



HamFest 2026 at the Jefferson County Fair Park Activity Center, 503 N Jackson Street, in Jefferson, WI, is **less than 2 WEEKS AWAY** on Sunday, March 15, 2026? The event is 100% indoors, so come rain or shine, Wisconsin weather doesn't stop us!! Doors open to the public at **8AM**, with Vendor set up starting at **6:30AM**. On-air talk-in will be available on the Club 2M repeater, W9MQB, at 145.49 (negative offset, with CTCSS 123.0). Check the website for detailed maps and directions to the event.

Vendor tables have been selling fast, with over 100 already claimed, but we still have around ten still open, if you move fast. Tables are available in advance for \$15 per 8' table; choose your own tables on the Club website at <https://www.w9mqb.org/SwapFest/> using our online ordering tool. Sorry, there isn't enough time for mail-in orders at this point and I don't expect that we'll have any left on the day of the Fest. You'll get to pick your own table and will receive electronic tickets delivered to your email inbox in a few minutes, so no need to worry about lost tickets!

Tickets: Save time waiting in line and buy your tickets online at <https://www.W9MOB.org/SwapFest/> and save 20% -- online tickets are only \$8 (plus fees and taxes). You'll get electronic tickets delivered to your mail inbox in a few minutes, so no need to worry about lost tickets! We've passed the deadline for snail mail, so this is a MUCH better option than waiting in line!

Testing: While we're still working on options to make this possible in 2027, we will not have Amateur Radio exams at the Fest this year. If you are interested in testing, drop a reply to this email, so we can suggest other options to test for your first Amateur Radio license or upgrade.

Breakfast: The Fair park informed us that we WILL have breakfast served by a local 4H group. Get your caffeine and blood sugar levels up while you support a good local cause.

Questions? Reply back to us at HamFest@W9MQB.org for answers to your questions!

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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