

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.

Program:

Ben Brewster, KF8DES, gave an impromptu presentation about the B-Tech UV-Pro dual-band handheld. The UV-Pro is a higher-quality and higher-performance Chinese handheld that includes a 2600mAh battery, IP67 protection against water and dust, built-in APRS, USB-C charging, NOAA weather alerts, and reception of civil aviation in AM mode, among other features. Learn more about the UV-Pro at [B-Tech](#).

Attendance

Michael Baxla, KE8ICP
Ben Brewster, KF8DES
Linda Clark, KF8DQV
Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ
Carl Denbow, N8VZ
Jeff Finlay, KD4CKX
John McCutcheon, N8XWO
Drew McDaniel, W8MHV
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF
Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ (via Zoom)

Corrections/additions of Minutes

Copies of the September 2025 meeting minutes were distributed.

A motion to accept the September minutes as published was made by John McCutcheon, N8XWO. The motion was seconded by Drew McDaniel, W8MHV. The motion to accept the minutes as published passed without dissent.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, presented the financial report.

The club holds \$2,106.53 in unencumbered funds at Hocking Valley Bank and \$5,160.32 in unencumbered funds at Atomic Credit Union. The Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station Fund at Hocking Valley Bank holds \$415.13. The values of the two Certificates of Deposit (CD) at Atomic Credit Union are \$11,206.06 and \$11,075.39.

Drew reported that the two four-month CDs at Atomic Credit Union will mature in November. Since he will be overseas when this happens, he has arranged with a representative at Atomic Credit Union to roll over the CDs on the club's behalf.

Drew proposed that in February, when the four-month CDs next mature, to split one of the CDs into two smaller CDs so that if the club needs to access the money prior to the CD's maturity, the club can do so while limiting the size of the penalty for early withdrawal. John McCutcheon, N8XWO, suggested that, instead, the club transfer a portion of one or both of the CDs into the Atomic Credit Union savings account. Carl Denbow, N8VZ, suggested that all the interest accumulated in the CDs be transferred to savings, leaving the original \$10,000 in each of the CDs. This issue will be re-visited at or prior to the February meeting.

Ben Brewster, KF8DES, made a motion that President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, be added to the Atomic Credit Union accounts. The motion was seconded by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion passed without dissent.

A motion to accept the Treasurers Report as presented was made by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion was seconded by Ben Brewster, KF8DES. The motion to accept the treasurers report as presented passed without dissent.

The Treasurer's Report can be viewed online at https://www.ac-ara.org/?page_id=37.

Old Business

Repeaters

2m Repeater: Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club's 145.15 MHz repeater is working well. He mentioned that Carl Denbow, N8VZ, had suggested during one of the weekly nets that the club should consider moving the 2m repeater to the Roosevelt tower site, with the expectation that this location would provide better coverage of the city of Athens and the surrounding area. Since the city of Athens has yet to repair the broken tower at the Roosevelt tower site, this discussion will be tabled until the tower has been repaired.

70cm Repeater: On behalf of UHF Repeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, who was not yet in the meeting, Eric reported that the repeater continues to operate as well as it has been. Carl Denbow, N8VZ, reported that the signal from this repeater has been stronger at his home this past week than it usually is.

Eric reminded the members that the UHF repeater had been a gift from Fairborn Amateur Radio Association (FARA) and had previously been part of FARA's wide-area repeater system. The repeater system came with three antennas (70cm, 1.2m, and 6m) on the 9-1-1 tower, with none of the feedlines marked. The repeater site has so much RF that it proved to be impossible to identify which antenna each feedline connected to using an antenna analyzer, and it's possible that the repeater is connected to the wrong antenna. He suggested that in the Spring, the club engage the services of a tower climber to determine that the repeater is connected to the correct antenna, to determine the condition of the feedline and antenna, and to replace one or both, if necessary.

GMRS Repeater: Ben Brewster, KF8DES, reported that the GMRS repeater is performing well at the Roosevelt tower site with the temporary antenna installation. He mentioned that due to the repeater's time-out-timer and lack of a reset beep, it's important for a station to wait for the repeater's squelch hang time to elapse prior to transmitting to avoid timing out the repeater.

Ben mentioned that neither he nor Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, have keys to the pump house at the Roosevelt tower site. Because of his connections within the city, he has been able to borrow a key when one has been needed. Ideally, the club should arrange to procure a key so that the repeater can be serviced without arranging to borrow a key.

Old Business (continued)

Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station

Ben Brewster, KF8DES, reported that the cable entrance box hasn't yet been installed; the installer at Stoncel Electric is doing the work pro-bono, so we need to wait for him to do the work at his convenience.

Ben reported that he and Paul will arrange an antenna party prior to the arrival of winter to check all the rooftop antennas and the associated feedlines. This work should be completed prior to January's Winter Field Day event.

Ben further reported that the club might wish to purchase chokes to protect the station's computers from transmitter RF.

Old Business (continued)

ACARA Nets

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that ACARA's weekly and monthly nets continue to do well except for the weekly System Fusion nets which continues to have low participation. He reminded members of the current net schedule:

- 2m FM Net, Mondays, 7pm, 145.15 MHz
- 70cm FM Net, Mondays, immediately following the 2m net, 442.100 MHz
- 10m SSB Ragchew Net, Tuesdays, 5pm, 28.375 MHz
- 6m AM Net, Sundays, 5pm, 50.4 MHz – since 2003
- 2m System Fusion Net, Thursdays, 5pm, 145.15 MHz
- 70cm System Fusion Net, Thursdays, immediately following the 2m System Fusion net, 442.100 MHz
- GMRS Net, Thursday, 7:30pm, GMRS channel 20 repeater / 462.675 MHz, tone 91.5 Hz
- 2m FM Simplex Net, first Thursday, 7pm, 146.400 MHz

Eric extended thanks to all those serving as net-control and to all those participating in the club nets.

Old Business (continued)

Public Service Event: Baileys Dirt Fondo / Funduro

Event Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025

Event URL: <https://baileystrailsystem.org/baileys-dirt-fondo/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club did *not* support the Baileys Dirt Fondo / Funduro this year and read from a September 22 email from Ben Brewster, KF8DES:

“I spoke with Elle Dickerman (the race organizer) ... She said that no one from the ACARA ever reached out to her to offer support, so she has planned the event without it. As such, this year, our support is not necessary. In the future if we wish to support the event, I would recommend that we reach out in a more official capacity so that she is able to plan around our assistance.”

Ben explained that Ms. Dickerman used Garmin Inreach devices to provide communications for this year's event but remains interested in our support for future events.

Ben volunteered to coordinate between Ms. Dickerman and Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, to ensure that the club can support the event in 2026.

Public Service Event: Blue Blazes Festival

Event Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that ACARA provided communications support to the Blue Blazes Festival on Saturday, September 27.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that six operators participated in the event. Communications took place on a 2m simplex frequency and relied on relay to pass some of the traffic. He explained that some of the aid stations were in deep spots and that net-control had been moved to the new start/finish line, also located in a deep spot. For next year, Jeff will coordinate with the Hocking Valley club for use of their repeater.

Old Business (continued)

VE Testing Session: Monday, October 20, 2025

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that the VE session on Monday, October 20 served two candidates, both of whom passed the Technician test. Because the FCC website remains down during the government shutdown, neither candidate had been able to register for an FRN prior to the test session, and Jeff will delay submitting the VE package to ARRL until they're able to get their FRNs. VEs present at the session were Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV; John McCutcheon, N8XWO; Andy McDonald, K8FO; Eric McFadden, WD8RIF; and Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ.

Upcoming Social Event: ACARA Annual Holiday Dinner

Event Date: Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Event Location: TDB

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded the membership that the club annually holds a holiday dinner at a local restaurant in December in place of the monthly meeting and this year that date is Tuesday, December 16.

Eric led a discussion about possible venues in addition to the Athens Applebee's, with discussion eventually settling on the Ohio University Inn and the solarium in Cutler's Restaurant. Ben Brewster, KF8DES, agreed to contact the inn and ask about costs associated with the solarium, a possible reservation of a meeting room, and appetizers for twenty. Ben will report his findings to Eric and Eric will then reserve the use of either Applebee's or Ohio University Inn for the holiday dinner.

New Business

Officer Elections

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that September is the month in which the club takes nominations for club officers to serve the following year, with ballots to be counted at the October meeting.

Ballots Received: 18 electronic (Qualtrics) and 6 paper

President: Eric McFadden, WD8RIF	24
Vice-President: Paul Schulz, WD8SCV	23
Write-in: Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV	1
Treasurer / Membership Chairman: Drew McDaniel, W8MHV	24
Secretary: Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV	6
Secretary: Linda Clark, KF8DQV	18
Newsletter Editor / Webmaster: Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ	24
Repeater Trustee: Eric McFadden, WD8RIF	24
Packet Node Trustee: Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ	23

New Business (continued)

Officer Elections (continued)

The electronic ballot included two survey questions:

1. If ACARA were to offer another group build session, which of these projects would you be interested in?

- 2m/70cm copper J-Pole 8
- 2m/70cm copper fan-dipole 3
- 2m tape-measure Yagi 2
- Handi-Finder Direction Finding antenna 3
- 2m step-attenuator for Foxhunt 4
- HF End Fed Halfwave Antenna 5
- Other: Off-Center Fed HF Dipole
- Other: transformers
- Other: non-collapsible GMRS copper J-Pole

2. Please provide any comments or suggestions. (How can ACARA be improved? What does ACARA do that you enjoy? What activities would you like to see ACARA sponsor?)

- More organized community involvement / demonstrations of "what ham can do you" for local event planners.
- I support all of the build project highlighted above, but I think the most practical one for us is a GMRS antenna build session to promote that band... perhaps in conjunction with a 2m/70cm build day... as they use the same basic materials and assembly, and could be done simultaneously one day.
- I need an Elmer to contact when I have questions.
- I'd prefer club communication and discussion happen on an interactive messaging platform with threading (like Facebook or Nextdoor or Slack) instead of an email list. Having joined in May, I'm too new to opine about activities, since I haven't participated in any yet.

In response to the last comment, Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, volunteered to look into creating a Groups.io discussion group to replace or supplement the current email listserve.

New Business (continued)

Upcoming Public Service Event: Bobcat Trail Marathon and Half Marathon
Event Sponsor: Western Reserve Racing / Joe Jurczyk
Event Date: Saturday, November 8, 2025
Event URL: <https://www.westernreserveracing.com/races/bobcat-trail-marathon-half-marathon/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club will be providing communications support to the Bobcat Trail Marathon and Half Marathon on November 8, 2025.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that he has operators assigned to most of the locations, but he still needs to identify a few more operators.

Upcoming Event: ARRL 10-Meter Contest + NC8V Memorial Trophy
Event Date: Saturday-Sunday, December 13-14, 2025
Event URL: <https://contests.arrl.org/10m/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that the ARRL 10-Meter Contest is to be held on the weekend of December 13-14, 2025, and that ACARA participates in this contest in two ways:

1. The club participates in the ARRL 10-Meter Contest as a club, in the Affiliated Club Competition in class "Local". Members who will be operating at a location within 35 miles of uptown Athens will be eligible to participate in the Affiliated Club Competition. When they submit their 10-Meter Contest submissions to ARRL, members will list "Athens County ARA" in the "Club Name" field and their scores will count toward the ACARA's Affiliated Club Competition score.
2. The ACARA member submitting the highest score to the ARRL will win the coveted NC8V Memorial Trophy which is presented annually in recognition of the life and accomplishments of past-member John Cornwell, NC8V (SK). The current holder of the NC8V Memorial Trophy is Paul Schulz, WD8SCV.

The winner of the NC8V Memorial Trophy will be announced at ACARA's annual Holiday Dinner on Tuesday, December 16.

New Business (continued)

Technician License Course

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, has scheduled the upcoming annual Technician License Course to take place on Mondays starting on January 12, 2026, with the VE testing session to take place on March 16, 2026. Classes and VE testing will take place at the Athens Red Cross, with sessions starting at 7pm.

Upcoming Operating Event: Winter Field Day

Event Date: Saturday-Sunday, January 24-25, 2026

Event URL: <https://winterfieldday.org/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that at the September meeting, they chose to participate in the upcoming Winter Field Day at the Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that he has reserved the use of the Athens Red Cross for the event.

Eric asked for a volunteer to serve as Winter Field Day Chairman. When no one volunteered, Eric volunteered himself to serve as Chairman.

New Business (continued)

Upcoming Operating Event: ARRL Field Day 2026

Event Date: Saturday-Sunday, June 27-28, 2026

Event website: <https://field-day.arrl.org/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that at the September meeting, they chose to participate in the upcoming ARRL Field Day in the Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station.

Eric reminded members that he will be out of state over Field Day weekend and will be unable to participate in Field Day with the club. Eric also reminded members that Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, the Field Day Chairman for the 2024 and 2025 events, expects to be out of state over Field Day weekend and won't be able to participate in Field Day with the club.

Eric asked for a volunteer to serve as Field Day Chairman. No one volunteered. This question will be revisited in upcoming meetings.

WIRES-X

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, announced that at the November meeting he will begin a discussion about adding WIRES-X capability to the club's 2m repeater.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that already has a suitable WIRES-X interface unit.

Following a motion by John McCutcheon, N8XWO, and a second by Ben Brewster, KF8DES, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.