

Meeting held in-person at Athens Red Cross with a remote option.

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

This was the first club meeting following election of officers at the October meeting. Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, welcomed the new club Secretary, Linda Clark, KF8DQV.

Attendance

Linda Clark, KF8DQV
Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ
Jeff Finlay, KD4CKX
Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV (via Zoom)
Drew McDaniel, W8MHV (via Zoom)
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF
Paul Schulz, WD8SCV
Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ (via Zoom)
Len Tough, W8VQ (via Zoom)

Corrections/additions of Minutes

Copies of the October Minutes were distributed. No corrections or additions to the minutes were offered.

A motion to accept the October minutes as published was made by Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ. The motion was seconded by Paul Schulz, WD8SCV. The motion to accept the minutes as published passed without dissent.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Drew McDaniel, W8MHV (participating via Zoom from Thailand) reported that the club has:

- \$1,602.53 in unencumbered funds at Hocking Valley Bank (HVB)
- \$315.19 in Jim Crouse Memorial Fund at HVB
- \$5,160.32 in unencumbered funds at Atomic Credit Union (ACU)
- \$11,261.71 in a 4-month CD at ACU
- \$11,130.40 in a 4-month CD at ACU

Annual ARRL Insurance for club equipment and liability coverages totaling \$544.00 was paid in October.

Drew reported that he rolled over the two CDs at ACU on November 17. The new interest rate is 4.02%, down slightly from the previous interest rate. He suggested that when these 4-month CDs mature in March, the club split the CDs into several smaller ones to make the money available while paying a smaller early-withdrawal penalty. This topic will be introduced in January or February.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Paul Schulz, WD8SCV. The motion was seconded Len Tough, W8VQ. The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report passed without dissent.

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

Old Business

2m Repeater

VHF Repeater Trustee Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club's 2m repeater continues to operate well, with occasional instances of what might be desense from strong local signals being noticed during the weekly 2m net.

UHF Repeater

Eric reported that as of November 17, 2025, club's 70cm repeater was down. UHF Repeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, is checking, and will report back.

GMRS Repeater

Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, reported that the club's GMRS repeater located at the City of Athens' Roosevelt tower site is working well with the temporary antenna installation. Paul further reported that the city is experiencing telemetry problems with the water department's equipment located at the Roosevelt tower site. Paul will coordinate with the city's technician to verify that the club's GMRS repeater is not contributing to this problem.

Paul reported that he has noticed that the GMRS repeater's signal-strength appears to drop during long transmissions. He and Ben Brewster, KF8DES, will visit the site to diagnosis this issue and to open the repeater's squelch some to enable more distant stations to hit the repeater.

Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station

Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, reported that he is waiting on the electrician Tony Stoncel to connect the station's grounding system to the Athens Red Cross building's grounding system. Once this has been accomplished, the new cable feed-through box can be mounted to the wall and the antenna feedlines connected through lightning arrestors within the box to the station's radios. Paul said he will contact Mr. Stencil for a timeline.

Paul stated that the club will need to evaluate and repair or replace the current antennas located at the Red Cross. No further action was taken at this time.

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 continue to see 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 / 462.675 MHz repeater
- 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)

Results: ARRL Field Day 2025

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Field Day 2025 results have been published in the December 2025 issue of QST magazine and online at <https://field-day.arrl.org/fdresults.php>

ACARA, operating as K8V and W8UKE, made 590 QSOs and placed 8th out of 57 in Class 2F, 1st in Ohio in Class 2F, and 2nd in Great Lakes Division (MI, OH, KY) in Class 2F.

Eric thanked Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, and Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, for leading the successful Field Day effort.

A report detailing ACARA's Field Day 2025 operation can be found at <https://www.ac-ara.org/?p=2673>.

Results: Ohio State Parks on the Air

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Ohio State Parks on the Air (OSPOTA) 2025 results are available at <https://ospota.org/>.

Perhaps due to low member participation, ACARA operating as W8UKE at Strouds Run State Park made only 77 QSOs and placed 7th out of 13 in class "Multi-Op, Single Radio, Low Power, in a Park".

ACARA did not receive a "Golden Log" annotation this year, meaning the submitted log contained one or more errors. Eric added that a very small proportion of submitted logs receive "Golden Log" status.

A report on the ACARA's OSPOTA 2025 operation can be found at <https://www.ac-ara.org/?p=2661>.

Old Business (continued)

Public Service Event: Bobcat Trail Marathon and Half Marathon

Event Date: Saturday, November 8, 2025

Event Sponsor: Western Reserve Racing / Joe Jurczyk

Event URL: <https://www.westernreserveracing.com/races/bobcat-trail-marathon-half-marathon/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club supported Bobcat Trail Marathon and Half Marathon on November 8. The weather was beautiful, and 11 operators participated in support of the event.

Club Build: Collapsible 2m/70cm Copper J-Pole

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, had scheduled a group build of the collapsible 2m/70cm copper j-pole antenna to take place outside the Athens Red Cross at 2pm on Sunday, November 16. On the 11th, Jeff canceled the build due to an apparent lack of interest and a weather forecast calling for inclement weather on the day of the build. Jeff will schedule another build this coming Spring.

Old Business (continued)

Operating Events: ARRL 10-Meter Contest + NC8V Memorial Trophy

Event Date: Dec 13-14, 2025

ARRL 10-Meter Contest rules: <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 automatically 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 December 16.

Upcoming Social Event: Annual Holiday Dinner

Event Date: Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that the club annually holds a holiday dinner at a local restaurant in place of the December meeting on the third Tuesday of the month.

At the October meeting, Ben Brewster, KF8DES, had volunteered to contact Ohio University Inn to ask about use of the restaurant's solarium. Ben was not present at the November meeting but Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, reported on his behalf that Ben had called Ohio University Inn but has not yet received a response. If no other suitable venue is identified soon, Eric will reserve space at Applebee's on East State Street in Athens.

Old Business (continued)

Technician License Class

Event Dates: Jan 12 through Mar 16, 2025

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, has scheduled the club's annual Technician License Course to be held on Mondays, with the first session to be held on January 12, and with the VE testing session to be held on March 16. The classes and the VE testing session will take place at 7pm at the Athens Red Cross.

Upcoming Operating Event: Winter Field Day

Event Dates: Jan 24-25, 2026

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

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that at a previous meeting, the membership decided to participate in Winter Field Day (WFD) at the Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station. Eric asked for a volunteer to serve as Winter Field Day Captain, explaining that he is trying to provide opportunities for members to participate in club leadership, but no volunteers came forward. Eric said that if no one volunteers to serve as WFD Captain, he will do so.

New Business

Yaesu WIRES-X

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded the members that at the October meeting, Carl Denbow, N8VZ, had announced that at the November meeting he would initiate a discussion about adding WIRES-X functionality to the club's 2m Yaesu System Fusion repeater. However, Carl had to postpone this discussion until the February meeting.

Since people have been asking Eric about WIRES-X since Carl's mention of it, Eric provided an overview of WIRES-X from the Yaesu-Japan website (<https://www.yaesu.com/jp/en/wires-x/index.php>)

WIRES (Wide-coverage Internet Repeater Enhancement System) is an Internet communication system which expands the range of amateur radio communication. For WIRES-X, an amateur node station connecting to the Internet is used as the access point and connects the wireless communication to the Internet. Users' stations can communicate with other amateur stations all over the world using a node within the radio wave range.

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WIRES-X supports the C4FM digital and the clear and crisp voice technology enables high sound quality. By repeating C4FM digital data as it is via the Internet, users can enjoy clear voice communications even if they are thousands of miles away each other.

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WIRES-X of course also supports traditional analog FM users. Not only can analog FM stations have a QSO with each other, WIRES-X also permits C4FM Digital stations to communicate with analog FM stations. WIRES-X is an FM friendly digital solution, because Amateur Radio should always allow operators to communicate freely all over the globe.

New Business (continued)

Upcoming Social Event: February Potluck
Event Date: Saturday, February 21, 2026

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded the membership that the club annually holds a potluck dinner at the Athens Red Cross on a Saturday in February, adding that this coming February has Saturdays that fall on the 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th, and that the 14th is Valentine's Day. After some discussion, February 21 was selected as the date for the February Potluck. Eric will ask Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, to schedule the room at the Athens Red Cross building.

Upcoming Public Service Event: Iron Furnace Trail Runs
Event Date: Saturday, April 4, 2026
Event Sponsor: Southeastern Ohio Trail Runners
Event URL: <https://www.seotrevents.com/ironfurnace>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the Iron Furnace Trail Runs will take place on Saturday, April 4, 2026.

Upcoming Public Service Event: Athens Marathon
Event Date: Sunday, April 19, 2026
Event URL: <https://athensohiomarathon.com/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Athens Marathon 2026 will take place on Sunday, April 19, 2026.

Upcoming Public Service Event: Athens Race for a Reason
Event Dates: Saturday-Sunday, April 25-26, 2026
Event URL: <https://www.ohioraceforareason.org/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Athens Race for a Reason will take place over the weekend of April 25-26, 2026, noting that the Sunday of this event will conflict with our Athens Hamfest. Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, will coordinate support of the event with the event organizers.

New Business (continued)

Athens Hamfest

Event Date: Sunday, April 26, 2026

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that the club's annual Athens Hamfest traditionally takes place on the last Sunday in April, which means that Athens Hamfest 2026 will take place on Sunday, April 26.

Eric will reserve the use of the Athens Community Center for the hamfest, will coordinate the hamfest with ARRL, and will apply for the Athens Convention and Visitors Bureau's Tourism Development Grant to help cover hamfest promotional costs.

Eric suggested that the club will want to start early trying to get door prizes from local retailers and restaurants. Eric will ask for volunteers to help with this task, and he will also ask for volunteers to reach out to the traditional amateur radio suppliers for door prizes.

Eric added that the Athens Hamfest will be a business item at each club meeting until the date of the event, and that he will also reach out to members via email for assistance with the event.

New Business (continued)

Upcoming Operating Event: ARRL Field Day 2026

Event Dates: Sat-Sun, June 27-28, 2026

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

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that ARRL Field Day 2026 falls on the weekend of June 27-28, 2026.

Eric asked for a volunteer to serve as Field Day Chairman, reminding members that he will be in Kentucky over Field Day weekend, and that Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, will be in Wisconsin over Field Day weekend. Eric added that the Field Day Chairman will be able to determine the location and scope of the club's Field Day operation, and the operation can be as small as, or as large as, the Field Day Chairman wishes.

No-one came forward to volunteer to serve as Field Day Chairman.

This topic will be addressed again during the January meeting.

APRS iGate

Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, reported that the club's APRS iGate, the equipment that ports digital APRS spots to the internet, is currently not functioning. He said he will reach out to the club's Packet Node Trustee, Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, about this. Paul added that both he and Ben Brewster, KF8DES, will volunteer to help Jeff get the iGate working again.

Following a motion by Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, and a second by Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Linda Clark, KF8DQV, and President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.