

The meeting was called to order at 7:17 PM by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.

Silent Key

Greg Weinfurter, NS8O, passed away on March 3, 2026 in his home in Albany, Ohio. A small funeral service was held on March 9 at Athens Bible Church in The Plains. In lieu of flowers, his widow asks that donations be made to Athens Bible Church.

The club has sent a sympathy card to Greg's widow.

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, remembers that Greg was an excellent technician, able to fix seemingly unrepairable equipment, and that Greg was a "ferocious CW operator", adding that Greg will be missed by the Amateur Radio community.

Program

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, gave a short presentation on Yaesu WIRELESS-X, an Internet communication system which expands the range of amateur radio communication. Carl screened a video by KC8MTV ([link](#)) and suggested interested parties also watch a second, longer, video by KC8MTV ([link](#)).

Attendance

Elliott Beal (awaiting callsign)
Ben Brewster, KF8DES
Chris Koon (awaiting callsign)
Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ
Carl Denbow, N8VZ
Jeff Finlay, KD4CKX (via Zoom)
Drew McDaniel, W8MHV (via Zoom)
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF
Tony Peric, KE8VFA
Paul Schulz, WD8SCV

Corrections/additions of Minutes

The February meeting minutes were distributed.

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, noticed that the statement in the Treasurer's Report section about PayPal fees ("the club's PayPal non-profit account will charge the club 1.5% + 0.49%...") looks incorrect, suggesting that the second percentage should be a fixed amount rather than a percentage. Rather than correct the February meeting minutes, the Treasurer will investigate and report his findings at the April Meeting.

A motion to accept the February minutes as published was made by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion was seconded by Ben Brewer, KF8DES. The motion to accept the minutes as published passed without dissent.

Treasurer's Report

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, presented the Treasurer's report.

The club treasury holds \$1,638.54 in unencumbered funds at Hocking Valley Bank after receiving \$239.44 in membership dues. The club holds \$5,160.45 in regular savings at Atomic Credit Union. The Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station Fund at Hocking Valley Bank holds \$413.47. Upon their maturity, Drew rolled the two 4-month certificates of deposit (CD) at Atomic Credit Union (ACU) into new 3-month CDs which together hold \$22,587.79. Members found some minor errors in the printed Treasurer's Report. Drew will send a corrected file to the President to publish.

Drew reported that ACU still has the best rates on CDs within the local area, other than a new longer-term CD at OUCU Financial which is better by only 0.04%.

Drew reported that he spoke with a representative at ACU who explained that if we need to pull partial funds out of one of the CDs, ACU will withdraw only the amount we need, and we'll be assessed an early-withdrawal penalty only on the amount withdrawn. This led Drew to roll the whole amount of both CDs into the new 3-month CDs instead of pulling some amount out of each CD to place into regular savings.

Drew reported that three members chose to renew their membership dues via PayPal. He asked that payments made to the club via PayPal need to include a note explaining what the payment is for and who the payer is.

Drew reported that he has filed the club's annual tax returns, adding that, as a non-profit, the club doesn't pay any taxes but there is a \$50 fee associated with filing the return. This \$50 fee is not included in this month's Treasurer's Report but will be included in the April report.

Drew reported that he had been asked to investigate Walmart "Spark Good", a program in which Walmart shoppers can round their payments up to benefit their charity of choice. He explained that while ACARA is a non-profit, he doesn't feel it meets the criteria for a charity. None of the members present felt that ACARA meets the definition of a charity, so Drew will not register ACARA in the Walmart "Spark Good" program.

Tony Peric, KE8VFA, moved to accept the corrected Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion passed without dissent. The Treasurer's Report can be viewed online at https://www.ac-ara.org/?page_id=37.

Old Business

Repeater Reports

VHF Repeater

VHF Repeater Trustee Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the repeater continues to work well, with few instances of de-sense noted during weekly 2m nets.

UHF Repeater

In the absence of UHF Repeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, Eric reported that the UHF repeater continues to work as well as it has been, and that the blown circuit-breaker issue that occurred in January hasn't re-occurred.

GMRS Repeater

Ben Brewster, KF8DES, reported that the Roosevelt Tower site experienced a power failure earlier in the week and this led to the discovery that the GMRS repeater had been plugged into an outlet that is not connected to the site's backup generator. The repeater is now connected to an outlet that is connected to the backup generator.

Old Business (continued)

Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that at last month's meeting the Executive Committee had been given permission to purchase antennas, feedlines, and other items so these can be available when the club gains access to the Red Cross building's roof. He further reported that he has asked Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, for an inventory of current antennas but this inventory hasn't been received yet.

Eric suggested that the feedline and power feedthrough box should be installed on the building prior to ARRL Field Day in late June. Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, stated that he will coordinate with Stoncel Electric on making a connection to the building's grounding system, after which he will install and properly ground the feedthrough box.

Paul confirmed that he will contact Athens Red Cross to schedule access the roof.

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, participation in which has dropped significantly. Eric reminded members of the current net schedule:

- Weekly 6m AM Net, Sunday, 5pm, 50.4 MHz AM – since 2003
- Weekly 2m FM Net, Monday, 7pm, 145.15 MHz
- Weekly 70cm FM Net, Monday, immediately following the 2m net, 442.100 MHz
- Weekly 10m SSB Ragchew Net, Tuesday, 5pm, 28.375 MHz
- Weekly 2m System Fusion Net, Thursday, 5pm, 145.15 MHz
- Weekly 70cm System Fusion Net, Thursday, immediately following the 2m System Fusion net, 442.100 MHz
- Weekly GMRS Net, Thursday, 7:30pm, GMRS channel 20 repeater / 462.675 MHz, tone 91.5 Hz
- Monthly 2m FM Simplex Net, first Thursday of the month, 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)

Technician License Class

Course Dates: Jan 12 through Mar 16, 2025

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the Technician License Course has ended, with the VE testing session having been held on Monday, March 16. Three students and three walk-ins tested. Two students earned their Technician Licenses. One student earned his General Class License. One walk-in upgraded to General Class. The other two walk-ins earned their Technician Licenses.

Eric thanked Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ; the Technician License Course instructors; and the VE team for their work.

Social Event: February Potluck

Event Date: Saturday, February 21, 2026

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club's annual February Potluck took place on Saturday, February 21 at the Athens Red Cross. Sixteen members and guests participated. Two episodes of "The Twilight Zone" were screened: "Two", featuring Charles Bronson and Elizabeth Montgomery, and "Nothing in the Dark" featuring a very young Robert Redford.

Participants:

Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ
Carl Denbow, N8VZ
Jane Denbow
Andrés Goossen
Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV
John McCutcheon, N8XWO
Chalisa McDaniel, N8MHV
Drew McDaniel, W8MHV
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF + young grandchildren
Miles McFadden, KD8KNC
Vickie McFadden, KC8MAJ
Daniel Post
Edie Post
Rich Post, KB8TAD

Old Business (continued)

Upcoming Public Service Event: Iron Furnace Trail Runs

Event Date: Saturday, April 4, 2026

Event Organizer: SE Ohio Trail Runners / Michael Owen

Event URL: <https://www.seotvents.com/ironfurnace>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club will be providing communications support to the Iron Furnace Trail Runs in Lake Hope State Park and Zaleski State Forest on Saturday, April 4.

Eric read from an email from event organizer, Michael Owen:

The Iron Furnace will operate as we planned last year. If you remember we had to cancel the event last year, so we didn't see how the new course layout worked, but the plans remain the same.

With two newly licensed amateurs being present, Eric suggested this event would be a good "first public service event" for them to participate in.

Watch for emails from Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, as the date of the event approaches.

Old Business (continued)

Upcoming Public Service Event: Athens Marathon

Event Date: Sunday, April 19, 2026

Event Organizer: Michael Owen

Event URL: <https://athensohiomarathon.com/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club will provide communications support to the Athens Marathon on Sunday, April 19, 2026.

Eric read from an email from new event organizer, Michael Owen:

I have taken over the race director role for the Athens Marathon. You have probably worked with the previous race director, Condy Richardson, the past two years, and prior to him was Lisa Simons. I'm excited to now be the director!

I'd be interested in hearing from you the scope of ACARA's service for the event. I know you have operators on bikes on the course, but could you list everything you do? Are you set up at a specific location at the finish line? I know your communication provides significant value for this event, so I just want to make sure I'm aware of everything you've provided in the past. The overall event should operate logistically the same as it has in the past.

With two newly licensed amateurs being present, Eric suggested this event would be a good "first public service event" for them to participate in.

Watch for emails from Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, as the date of the event approaches.

Old Business (continued)

Upcoming Public Service Event: Athens Race for a Reason

Event Date: Saturday, April 25, 2026

Event URL: <https://www.ohioraceforareason.org/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the club will provide communications support to the Athens Race for a Reason on Saturday, April 26, 2026. Although this event takes place on both Friday and Saturday, ACARA will be supporting events only on Saturday.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email:

(ACARA will be supporting the) Triathlon and Biathlon starting at Peden Stadium. After the swim at the aquatic center, the bike portion takes place on the bike path west of Peden out to Eclipse in The Plains, winding through The Plains to SR 682 to Armitage Road, then on the bike path spur to the West State Ballfields back to Peden. The 5K Run for both races takes place on the bike east to the Stimson Avenue turnaround and back to Peden. We are mainly concerned in covering the bike race. If we have enough ops, we will cover the run as well. We will not cover the Friday evening events.

Watch for emails from Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, as the date of the event approaches.

Old Business (continued)

Athens Hamfest

Date: Sunday, April 26, 2026

URL: https://www.ac-ara.org/?page_id=25

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that the Athens Hamfest will take place on Sunday, April 26, 2026.

Eric reported he has reserved use of the Athens Community Center; that he has coordinated the hamfest with ARRL; and that he has completed and submitted the Athens Convention and Visitors Bureau's Tourism Development Grant application, asking for \$472 to cover promotional expenses.

Eric reported that Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, had reported in an email that the club's email address list now exceeds the limit allowed in the club's free MailChimp account, suggesting that the club could either move to a MailChimp paid account or find an alternative service. Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, made a motion that the club purchase a MailChimp account for hamfest and trunkfest promotion. The motion was seconded by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion passed without dissent. Eric suggested that the cost of the MailChimp account might be included in Tourism Development Grant applications after this year.

Drew reported he has designed the flyer and postcard for this year's hamfest, adding that the hamfest budget he had sent Eric for the Tourism Development Grant application was predicated on printing and mailing 350 postcards.

Old Business (continued)

Athens Hamfest (continued)

Eric again asked for volunteers to procure door prizes and reported on the results so far.

Door prizes:

Frida's
Jackie O's – WD8SCV
Eclipse Company Store – WD8RIF
Texas Roadhouse – WD8RIF
Grand Ranchero – WD8RIF
Applebee's – WD8RIF
Avalanche Pizza
Shade on State – WD8RIF
Lowe's – WD8SCV; nothing is available this year
Kroger – KE8VFA
Walmart – WD8SCV
ORCA – WD8SCV; will provide two gift bags
Athens Bicycle Club – WD8SCV; ABC will provide a two-pack TD-H3

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV – will provide a BTECH UV-Pro HT
Carl Denbow, N8VZ – will provide a Yaesu FT-4X HT
ARRL – WD8RIF; providing gift certificates and an EFHW antenna kit
ABR Industries – WD8RIF; \$50 gift card received
DX Engineering – WD8SCV; providing gift card
Gigaparts – WD8RIF; request politely declined
R&L – W8MHV
Quicksilver Radio – WD8RIF
Wireman – WD8RIF
Bioenno Power – WD8RIF; 15Ah LiFePO4 battery & charger received
Elecrafft – WD8RIF; providing AT1 41dB step attenuator kit
Radioddity – WD8RIF; GA2S HT 2-pack received
Alpha Antennas – WD8RIF; gift certificates received
Chameleon Antennas – WD8RIF; request politely declined
Packtenna – WD8RIF
West Mountain Radio – WD8RIF
Batteries America – WD8RIF
12VoltPower – WD8RIF
ICOM America – WD8SCV
Yaesu America
Easy Way Ham Books – WD8RIF; providing books and study guides
Ham Radio Outlet – KE8VFA
Flex Radio – N8VZ
Buddipole – WD8SCV

Old Business (continued)

Athens Hamfest (continued)

Eric asked if the club wishes to offer a radio again as a premium door prize in addition to the usual \$100 and \$50 bills, adding that in previous years, Drew McDaniel had paid for an HT to be used as a door prize, but that the club had purchased a Yaesu FT-4X last year and could pay for the prize again this year. Ben Brewster, KF8DES, suggested the BTECH UV-PRO, a rugged \$165 dual-band handheld that features IP67 rating, GPS and APRS, Bluetooth, and USB-C charging might worth considering. Drew volunteered to purchase a BTECH UV-PRO to donate to the club to be used as a door prize.

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, researched and found that the Yaesu FT-4X is currently available for \$99 and he volunteered to purchase one to donate to the club to be used as a door prize.

Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, volunteered to pick up and to return highway cones from Richland VFD.

Carl Denbow reported that he has had one table sale already and that he'll be re-arranging the table assignments slightly this year to allow ARRL and Alliance ARC to have adjacent tables.

Eric reported that he will ask Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, if his Masonic Lodge or an affiliated organization will be catering the event.

Eric reminded members to watch for emails about the hamfest as the date of the event grows near.

Old Business (continued)

Public Service Event: ORCA Emergency Drill

Event Date: Saturday, June 13

Event Sponsor: Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia

Sponsor URL: <https://www.orcaohio.com/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that at last month's meeting, Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, had reported that Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA) had asked the club to provide communications support to an emergency drill to be held within Baileys Trail System on Saturday, June 13. The drill will involve a simulated bicycle race in which two riders fall off course and need medical attention and extraction. The drill is scheduled to start at 7am, with the simulated accident to occur at about 9am. Paul and Ben Brewster, KF8DES, will coordinate with ORCA and Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, for this drill.

Watch for emails about this drill as the date of the event approaches.

Old Business (continued)

Upcoming Operating Event: ARRL Field Day

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

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

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that ARRL Field Day is to be held on the weekend of June 27-28, 2026.

Eric reminded members that he will be in Kentucky over Field Day weekend and will be unable to participate in Field Day with the club.

Paul Schulz, WD8SCV, reported that, despite earlier having had travel plans that would have conflicted with Field Day, he will be in Athens over Field Day weekend and volunteered to serve again as Field Day Chairman.

Paul plans for the club operation to take place in the Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station, in Class 1F or Class 2F, where class "F" is for operations which take place inside Emergency Operations Centers, which the Jim Crouse Memorial Radio Station qualifies as.

Paul asked if the IC-7300 transceiver at the new Athens County 911 facility would be available for use. Eric directed Paul to ask Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ. Eric added that he thinks John Biddle, W8PG, might have an IC-7300 that the club could borrow.

Ben Brewster, KF8DES, made a motion that Executive Committee be authorized to purchase bandpass filters and chokes suitable for multi-transmitter operation. Paul Schulz seconded the motion. The motion passed without dissent.

Eric mentioned that 2026 is ARRL's "Year of the Club" and that ARRL is asking clubs to participate in Field Day using their club callsign. Discussion followed, with Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, stating that the club's callsign, W8UKE, is not ideal for CW operations because the "dit" for the "E" at the end of the callsign is easy to miss during crowded band conditions. The decision was made to operate the main Field Day stations using special event callsign K8V, and to operate the Get on the Air (GOTA) station as W8UKE. The K8V page on QRZ.com will be updated to indicate the callsign is being used by ACARA, and the GOTA station will be using the club's actual callsign, which seems to meet the spirit of ARRL's request.

Old Business (continued)

Upcoming Group Build: Meshtastic Nodes

Build Session Date: Sunday, May 3, 2026

Event details: <https://www.ac-ara.org/?p=2809>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Ben Brewster, KF8DES, will lead a group-build of solar-powered Meshtastic nodes on Sunday, May 3, from 1:30pm until 4:30pm, at the Athens Red Cross. The club will underwrite \$50 of each kit's price and builders will need to pay \$70, in advance, for their kits. Details on the build, payment, and registration, are available at <https://www.ac-ara.org/?p=2809>.

Upcoming Public Service Event Athens Gravel

Event Date: Saturday, July 25, 2026

Event Sponsor: Team Athens Cycling

Event URL: <https://www.ohiogravelgrinders.com/ohio-gravel-race-series>

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that the club has been asked to support the Athens Gravel Challenge bicycle race on Saturday, July 25

Watch for emails as the date of this event nears.

New Business

Upcoming Social Event: June Picnic

Event Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026

Event Location: Dairy Lane Picnic Shelter

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded members that the club traditionally holds a potluck picnic in place of a regular business meeting on the third Tuesday in June. This year, the picnic falls on Tuesday, June 16.

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, agreed to reserve the use of the Dairy Lane Picnic Shelter for the picnic.

New Business (continued)

Proposed Repeater Upgrade: Yaesu WIRES-X

As a follow-up to his presentation about Yaesu WIRES-X at the start of the meeting, Carl Denbow, N8VZ, made a motion that the club proceed with adding Yaesu WIRES-X functionality to the club's 145.15 MHz repeater. After discussion, the motion was seconded by Tony Peric, KE8VFA. The motion passed without dissent.

Following a motion by Tony Peric, KE8VFA, and a second by Carl Denbow, N8VZ, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF