

The SPARK GAP



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SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 5, 2006. You are welcome to join all who want to eat, ordering off the Connell's II menu, at 6:00 P.M. The meeting will follow dinner at 7:00 P.M.

AUGUST MINUTES (Summary)

The August meeting was opened at 7:00 PM CDT by President Bert Spangler. There were 18 members in attendance including our newest member (Bob St. Louis KC9JVB) and one visitor (Steve Paulson WA0OAT...who became our newest member after the meeting closed). The secretary's minutes of the last meeting were read and approved and the Treasurer's report, which was also approved, showed a balance of \$1,021.88.

Gale Sorum WD0HFT was asked to outline his presentation for the September meeting, which he did. His presentation will cover APRS and GPS and sounded like it will be most exciting. Future programs include Radio Astronomy and PSK 31. The invitational FOX HUNT for September was also discussed. A policy

will be developed concerning CVARC assisting widows in selling the radio equipment of their husbands should they desire help. There being no new business the meeting was closed at 7:20 PM.

MOBILE RADIO SHOOTOUT

There will be a complete discussion of the Shootout at the September 5th meeting.

FOXHUNT INVITATIONAL

The Chippewa Valley Amateur Radio Club will host a two meter fox hunt on Saturday, September 23 at 9:00 a.m. and you are invited to take part ! Interested hunters should meet at the Hardees at 2933 Western Avenue in Eau Claire between 8:00 and 8:45 a.m. for registration, details, and perhaps breakfast or coffee. A map will be provided that will show the boundaries of the fox's territory. We strongly encourage at least two people per vehicle for safety. The only prizes will be the fun of participation and the glory of winning.

If you have questions or need help finding Hardees, please contact Ron Anderson, W9RMA, at (715) 723-1729 or w9rma@charter.net, or Bert Spangler, W9ZZI, at (715) 835-3215 or spanglbh@uwec.edu. You can also get information on this event from our web site at w9cva.org. Hope to have you with us!

LACROSSE NWS OPEN HOUSE

The La Crosse National Weather Service (NWS) is hosting an OPEN HOUSE on Thursday, September 14th from 2 - 7 p.m.

Everyone is invited to come tour our facility, meet their staff, and see how they issue warnings and forecasts for 28 counties in parts of Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

The open house will include:

- Details of their forecast operations area
- Demonstrations of their state of the art computer workstations
- Severe weather procedures and communications
- Background on NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio
- Examples of weather observation equipment, including Doppler Radar
- [Amateur radio communications](#)
- Regional county Incident Command Vehicles

NWS La Crosse is located just east of the city of La Crosse, on the ridge tops north of Granddad's Bluff. Their last open house was in 1999. They hope to see you on Thursday, September 14th from 2 - 7 p.m.

In conjunction with the La Crosse National Weather Service Open House on Thursday September 14, 2006, the Mississippi Valley Amateur Radio Association (MVARA) is hosting Amateur Radio Special Event Station W9S.

In the true spirit of Ham Radio the MVARA is inviting Riverland Amateur Radio Club as well as other area hams interested in demonstrating H.F. radio to join them in the operation of the W9S Special Event Station. The station operating space as well as time is limited so they are requesting that you schedule an operating time with the MVARA Special Event Committee by contacting them at <http://www.mvara.net> (Contact Us Button). Please leave your Name, Call, E-mail and Phone Number to confirm operating times. The NWS open house is from 2:00 ? 7:00 p.m. Thursday September 14, 2006.

This is the first Open House at the La Crosse National Weather Service since 1999. Join them to make this a national event for the La Crosse NWS! <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/arx/?n=emnews>

"POSTMARK KATRINA"

"Postmark:Katrina" is a special one hour edition of the Weather Channel's award winning series, "Storm Stories". This program depicts the efforts of the US Postal Service to restore critical mail service to the battered Gulf Coast in the wake of Hurricane:Katrina.

Produced by amateur radio operator Les Rayburn, N1LF, who owns Birmingham based production company Reel Cowboys (www.reelcowboys.tv). Rayburn and his crew were fully embedded with federal law enforcement officers from the US Postal Inspection Service within hours of the storm's landfall, and he traveled on missions with them throughout the Gulf Coast for weeks following the storms.

Rayburn, an extra class amateur and OES, along with his wife Abby, and a soundman, alternated between filming the recovery efforts and actually assisting in them by providing critical HF communications for the National Communications System (NCS) SHARES program. "We really put our ARECC training and preparation to work," said the amateur. "We had an extensive jump kit already in my truck, complete with camping equipment, a backup generator, extra batteries, radios, inverters, even a GPS, all of which proved invaluable. All we had to do was add our camera and sound gear and go" he continued.

Working an average of 18 hours per day, often sleeping on post office floors or in the pickup truck, Rayburn was also able to undertake a variety of missions from NCS using his

Yaesu FT-857D and Tarheel screwdriver antenna. "We were the first federal agency on the ground in Port Arthur, Texas, just hours after Hurricane Rita struck. NCS wanted us to check on the status of public service communications. We made our way down flooded streets to the washed out police station. After explaining who we were, we quickly found out that their repeater was down, and arranged for spare parts to be shipped immediately" was one example cited by Rayburn.

The team also was sent to Stennis NASA Station, near Waveland, MS to check on the status of an overdue technical support team, helped to relay messages from New Orleans overworked 911 system to the Coast Guard, and arrange for a Navy search helicopter for the mayor of Cameron, LA following Rita.

"Because of being embedded with the US Postal Inspectors, we were often the first people on the ground from the federal government and having HF radio support proved valuable over and over again" said Rayburn. In several instances, cellular and landline phones were inoperative and the HF radio was the only means of communicating with the outside world.

In addition to their work for NCS-SHARES, Rayburn and his wife helped to relay over 100 messages for ARES/SHARES/ and the Red Cross. "At one point, we were on the air for over 40 hours straight. But it was worth it to try and help those people" said Abby Rayburn. Though unlicensed, she participated by monitoring a spare receiver, logging messages, and making phone calls were possible.

The documentary includes brief portions of this amateur radio traffic, has a graphic explanation of how repeaters function, and even some Morse Code. It should be of interest to amateur radio operators and an opportunity to point out the value of this backup communications resource. "We were honored to tell the story of how the Postal Service struggled

to restore mail service and deliver critical FEMA checks," said Rayburn, "and honored to do our small part as well".

Postmark:Katrina airs on the Weather Channel starting on Sunday, August 27th at 8PM ET/PT.

NETS/FREQS/TIMES

- Badger Weather Net 3.985 - 0600
- Badger Emergency Net 3.985 - Noon
- Wisconsin Side Band Net 3.985 - 1715/1730
- ARES/RACES 3.977.5 - Sun - 1800

AREA REPEATERS

Albertville (link)	442.800	110.9
Albertville	444.350	110.9
Chippewa Falls	147.375	110.9
Eau Claire	146.91	110.9
Eau Claire	147.24	110.9
Eau Claire	443.300	110.9
Holcombe	145.47	110.9
Holcombe (link)	147.345	136.5
Holcombe	444.525	110.9
Menomonie	146.61	110.9
Osseo	145.33	110.9
Osseo	444.200	110.9

CVARC OFFICERS

President -- Bert Spangler (W9ZZ)
 Vice President -- Ron Anderson (W9RMA)
 Secretary -- Ron Krueger (W9JRW)
 Treasurer -- Joe Eide (KB9R)
 Past President -- Gale Sorum (WD9HFT)

Mailing Address