



CLUB MEETING INFORMATION

Meetings

Monthly on First
Thursdays

Next Meeting Date/Time
7:00 pm
Thurs, Feb 8, 2026

Build & Learn Sessions

Most Months on
Third Thursdays

Next Session Date/Time
6:00 pm or 7:00 pm
Check the club [calendar](#)

Location
Pilgrim Community
Church
[500 Arch Street](#)
[Leavenworth, KS 66048](#)

Club Breakfast

Every Thursday
7:30 am
at
[The Depot 1887](#)
781 Shawnee Street
Leavenworth, KS 66048



The depot
est 1887



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From the President's Desk

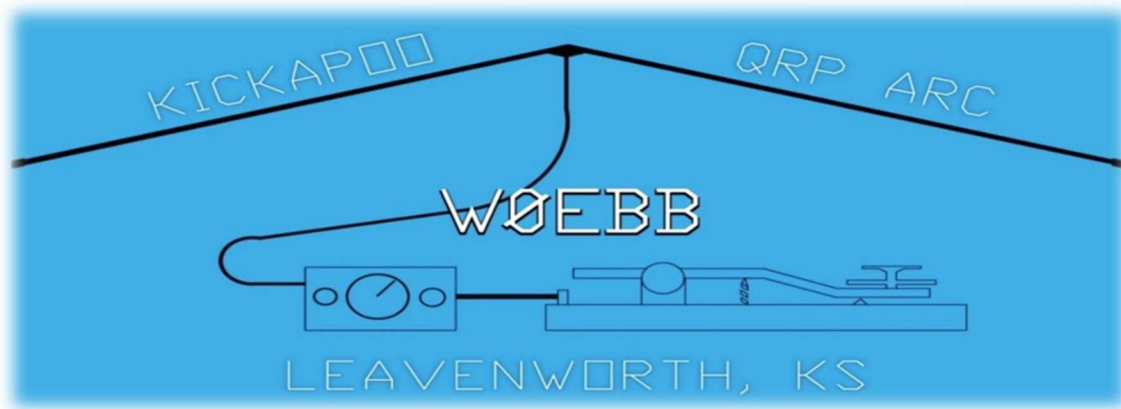
Greetings everyone, I hope everyone has been able to stay warm and dry during the bad weather we have had. During these times it is important to check in with others to let them know that we are thinking about them and will help if need arises. One simple phone call, text or email can mean so much to those people in need.

As we start the month of February, I would like to ask you to please volunteer for the spots available for the weekly nets. If you need to know what is available, please let me know and I will get the information for you. Also, we need volunteers to give short classes on your favorite topics or skills of ham radio. It doesn't have to be very long, 15 to 20 minutes would be fine. I believe everyone has a part to play in the Pilot Knob Amateur Radio Club. This is a great opportunity to step up and teach others about topics and skills for our hobby. If you have a topic or skill that you would like to teach at a meeting, please contact me so I can put it on the schedule.

In closing I would like to thank Gary and Steve for leading another outstanding build session. I am always amazed with all the new ideas that are brought up and completed at the building sessions. Also, I would like to thank Roxann for the leadership of the ARES and KCHEART group. It's not easy to put all the information together and give classes that are so in-depth. For that I thank you all. And we can't forget to give a BIG congratulations to Keith Collier (KF0KBC) and Jim Heade (KF0VJV) for passing their extra call exam! Again congratulations!

I am looking forward to seeing all of you again soon. Stay warm!

73s



From the Kickapoo QRP ARC operating desk

The month of December found us operating QRP from the great state of Montana. We were there to visit with our daughter's family, plus celebrate the Christmas season. This trip was fun, but not without some problems we had to deal with as I'll describe below.

The day we arrived in Helena Montana was a very high wind day. The pilot of the airplane managed to make a decent landing in spite of the high winds, but at the gate as we were getting off of the airplane you could feel it rocking like it was going to take off on its own. Later as we were hanging out at the house around 4:00 p.m. we lost electricity. This was a bad deal as they live out in the country and get their water from a well. Since we had no electricity to run the water pump, we had no water or heat. Turns out the high winds had blown down five electric poles in a row about a half mile from the house.

The power company had no way to repair that many poles in the remaining daylight so we spent the next 30 hours without electricity, plus the outside temperatures was in the low 30's. It made for some interesting times to say the least. We drove back into town for our dinner plus used their restroom facilities. Later the next day the power company managed to repair the damage and we got things somewhat back to normal. We also had to cook a couple of meals using a camping stove sitting on the regular stove, but overall it was an interesting way to start our two week visit to Montana.

I set up my new Spooltenna antenna which was a Hamvention purchased item last year. I had used this antenna for the first time in early November while in Arkansas doing six SOTA activations and was quite pleased with how it performed. The antenna wire winds up on a spool making setting it up and taking it down quite easy. This antenna is an end fed type antenna that is resonant on 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters and you don't need an antenna tuner to use it.

I brought along my Elecraft KX2 transceiver and set up to make contacts on the kitchen table. The bands were in fair shape and I was able to make coast to coast CW contacts using only ten watts. It was a lot of fun seeing how different the bands sound from another part of the country compared to back home. I ran the radio as long as I could until the battery finally ran down. I had not brought along a way to recharge the battery so I was down for the count for the rest of the trip. On future trips I will have a way to recharge the battery so a good lesson was learned there. Overall it was a fun time operating in that manner.

Our January build session was on January 15th. The plan for that build session was to build an antenna that is the electrically equivalent to the Spooltenna mentioned earlier. The company that makes the Spooltenna is a fairly new company and has a website so you can look them up on-line. They advertise their products as open source so the information is available to make a similar antenna which is nothing new in the world of antennas. The new unique part of this antenna is the spool device they have designed to use with the antenna they manufacture.

The antennas we built uses a 49 to 1 UnUn and I had seven kits with all of the parts to make this antenna, to include the box to mount the parts in. The builders need to supply the 67 feet of antenna wire of their choice. The next building session on February 19th we will construct the 25 foot coax cable probably using some RG-58 coax and five ferrite beads, plus connectors. This cable acts as the counterpoise for the antenna and the ferrite beads keep any RF coming back down the coax from going into the radio. I'll talk about that antenna project at the PKARC meeting coming up.

Don't forget our annual Freeze Your Keys winter operating event scheduled for February 28 over at Weston Bend State Park. We be testing these new antennas and putting them to use there so it should be a fun day.

See you at the PKARC meeting and weekly Thursday morning breakfast gatherings at the Depot Restaurant.

Gary Auchard - W0MNA



Secretary's Page



Call to Order

The meeting of the PKARC was held on January 8th, at Pilgrim Community Church. It began at 7:00 pm and was presided over by Stephen (W9WTY) President, John (KF0LNZ) Treasurer and Roxann (KZ0IMO) as Secretary.

Roll Call

Those in attendance: Gary (W0MNA), Martha (W0ERI), Victor (KD0PZV), Thadd (KF0PXE), Keith (KF0KBC), Stephen (W9WTY), Sarah (KE0YXG), Emily (KF0GNS), Gyluss (KD0YZC), Jim (KF0VJV), Vic (KE0SYO), Loren (KF0QAL), Roxann (KZ0IMO), John (KF0LNZ), Ron (N0CALL), Loren (KB0YME), Don (KF0MZG), Steve (W0SER), Phil (KF0DQA), and guest Ward (K0STZ).

Around of introductions were made.

Stephen announced it was time for dues (\$25) to be paid. Reminded members of the upcoming Build Session on the 14th. Freeze Your Keys is on the 28th at Weston and Winter Fest is from the 21st -22nd. Also, This Tuesday is the executive board meeting.

A sign up sheet for our yearly events and Wednesday night net slots (Net Control, Alt Net Control and Logger) was presented for members to volunteer for.

Roxann announced that the ARES first quarter meeting will be this coming Saturday (January 10th) and requests that members bring vests, radios ICS 214 and a laptop. She also invited anyone else that might be interested in ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Services) to attend.

Treasurers Report

John read the Treasurers report. The raffle went well. There was some discussion. Gary moved to approve. Thadd seconded. Motion carried.

Keith was given the floor for his presentation on how to use Telnet Winlink. He walked us through how to find the installation and how to set it up. Roxann reminded the group that you must send a Winlink email to a regular email before it will add them to your white list. Winlink to Winlink email will be received.

John was given the floor. He first gave another reminder about due and then sent around a subject matter sheet and asked that everyone pick 3 items that are of interest. Next, he began his presentation about building your first home station. He gave reference to Ham Radio University which host several PowerPoint (2018 slide deck) presentations available for public use- specifically Neil Hoft KC2KY. He reminded us that we should be continually asking "What can I do to make this better" (referring to evaluating your Home Station).

Next the floor was given to Gary who gave us information and details about the build session on the 14th. He showed us the spooltenna and let us know the kit cost will be \$20.00. He took a quick poll of those who plan to attend the build session. After that he talked about Freeze Your Keys. He will be there at 7am to secure our annual location. We will operate until 4pm (1600). It will be announced in the February QST. A quick poll was conducted about the type of food we would like to have this year. And lastly, a reminder that you have to bring Missouri wood to burn in an Missouri park.

Adjournment

Thadd motioned for Adjournment and Keith seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxann Kosmicki, KZ0IMO

Secretary



SHARC Net

Monday February 2nd
2026 1915-1930 Hours
147.000 (+) 151.4 Hz

Saint John Hospital Amateur Radio Club (SHARC)

SHARC provides an identity and rallying point for Radio Amateurs participating in activities at Saint John Hospital and supporting Providence Medical Center. The Amateur Radio portion of the Saint John Hospital Command Center is called the **SHARC Tank**. Club Call: **KFØLOG** President: Keith- **KFØKBC** Vice President: Tom - **KFØRWS** Secretary/Treasurer/Trustee: **Roxann – KZØIMO**

February 2nd, 2026 SHARC NET supporting the **KCHEART Monthly Test**

Team 2 (K0MDP, KD7QOR, and KB0YME) reports to SJH

Team 3 (KZØIMO, KFØKBC, and KFØRWS) reports to PMC

*Bring Laptop to PMC

All others report your availability to respond via 147.000 (+) 151.4 Hz FM to KFØLOG between 7:15 pm and 7:30 pm.

The **Kansas City Hospital Emergency Amateur Radio Team (KCHeart)** is the regional coordinating body for all hospital-based Amateur Radio stations used in auxiliary communications support to their host hospital. KCHeart forms a valuable voice and slow-speed data network between medical facilities.

Here is a gentle reminder that if you still need to finish some KCHeart training videos please use this link: [2023 Training Program - ARES® - Leavenworth Co - Kansas](#)

On the ARES groups.io on Nov 25th you can find the SHARC/KCHeart 2026 teams and dates (I did pin this so hopefully it is easy to find).

The annual KCHeart meeting has been re-scheduled for January 31st, 2026, at the Central Jackson County Fire Protection District Training Center (4715 SE US 40 Highway Blue Springs, Mo 64015) from 10:00- Noon. If you plan to attend let me know and we can coordinate carpooling or meet up and drive over together.

Roxann Kosmicki -KZØIMO



Reportable Hours

Exercises
Training
Public Service
Community Service
Emergencies
Weather
Meetings
Unclassified Events

<https://forms.gle/UowzGAE3RVFLm3tD7>

Leavenworth County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES®)

Emergency Coordinator: Roxann Kosmicki -KZ0IMO, AUXC

Website: <https://KS-LV-ARES.signaleer.us>

Groups.io: <https://groups.io/g/KS-LV-ARES>

ARES Credentialing

If you're new to ARES and need to start your credentials quest, here is a streamlined way to attain what you need.

1. **Download** the updated Amateur Radio Operator Credentialing Requirements and Resource Typing document revised on 01/17/25 from KS-LV-ARES.signaleer.us. Link is in the New Credentialing Requirements article (main page).

2. **Complete** the requirements for Radio Operator - Level IV. Courses are free and online at FEMA's Independent Study Program at <https://training.fema.gov/is/>.

3. **Submit** form and supporting documents according to instructions downloaded in Step 1. On the form, where it says, "MECC Agency including contact person name and email" use the following according to group you are affiliating with:

Leavenworth County ARES®
Roxann Kosmicki
sobelizard@rocketmail.com

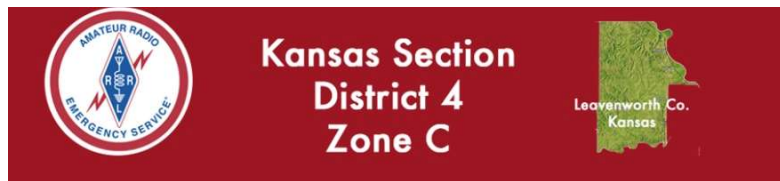
Leavenworth Co. Emergency Mgmt
Zach Phillips, Master Deputy
zphillips@lvsheriff.org

KCHEART
Matt May, Director
mmay@wycokck.org

SHARC/St John Hosp
Roxann Kosmicki
sobelizard@rocketmail.com

4. **Record** your achievements on your KS-LV-ARES Task Book. Task book is available upon request from Roxann-KZ0IMO. The Task Book will show the requirements you still need to complete for credentialing at the next level up.

NOTE: This section is reprinted from the February 2025 Newsletter. This information is also available on KS-LV-ARES.signaleer.us



Roxann Kosmicki
KS-LV-ARES Emergency
Coordinator

January has been a fairly busy month. KCHEART was on January 5th followed by the ARES Q1 meeting on January 10th.



Stephen-W9WTY, Victor- KD0PZV, Vic -KE0SYO, Roxann-KZ0IMO, Steve -W0SER, Ed M- KD7QOR and Thadd- KF0PXE

Those in attendance learned how to fill out the ICS 214 by hand followed by the “on the job training” experience of using the web based Net Control Manager to establish a JARA net, ARES net and a PKARC net. This gave each in attendance credit for being a logger. They had to input the call signs for everyone in attendance and enter comments. They were instructed on how to enter a banner message, how to delete an incorrect entry and how to close the log. They were then shown how to look at the NCM’s digital ICS 214 and ICS 309 after the log was closed. After that we paired off and checked 5 channels in the Golden 99 and learned how to adjust the mic gain on our radios (The directions for the three nets plus the test net is pinned inside the ARES groups.io message board).

During the G99 frequency check we did learn that some updates needed to be made since the October SET. Some frequencies had been saved on Channels 1 and 2 from that event.

Saturday January 24 at 1400 we opened a Winter Weather net (17161) and had members do a situation report (SITREP) with name, call sign, nearest cross streets, snow and/or ice measurements and temperature. The following members checked in and gave reports: Thadd- KF0PXE, Vic-KE0SYO, Keith- KF0KBC, Mark-KF0TXA, Guy-KF0KOS, Steve- W0SER, Loren M- KB0YME and Ed M- KD7QOR.

On the ARES net on January 26, 2026, we did a simple welfare check to follow up on the weather net the day before. There were a few additional inches added to the reports as well as better temperature. During Keith’s AEC Training and Drills comments he mentioned an article “Are We Prepared?” that a few of us saw in the ARRL NTS newsletter dated January 6th. Keith sent this out on the ARES groups.io. It is a very good article. If he hadn’t asked about it I would have brought it up as well. It is message #354 on January 25, 2026. I wonder what your take away will be after you read it? It’s worth expanding upon I think.

Our remaining 2026 ARES Quarterly Meetings are:

May 9th, July 25th, September 5th and the October 3rd SET.

On May 9th we will have a Table Top Exercise that we will focus in on two forms (ICS 214 and ICS 213). Keep in mind also in February there is Freeze Your Keys and June 27-28 2026 is Field Day .

Please note that groups.io now has the SHARC 2026 schedule and teams- go check it out (we did have a few changes as well as an addition of a sub - when available).

You should have received your updated taskbook electronically before the January 10th meeting. Let me know if any changes or updates need to be made.

At a meeting I attended on Jan 20th it was announced that the National Weather Service will not be having in person training. I reached out to the Leavenworth County Office of Emergency Management and they confirmed it is the case for us as well. In the near future they will announce a date and time that we can all meet and take the online training together.

Here is the schedule for February 2026 Sunday night JARA/ARES net, remember it is your responsibility to get a substitute and to notify me of any changes. Also, please note it is easier to schedule you than to make 20 phone calls. So. Please just let me know if any changes are made.

	1-Feb	8-Feb	15-Feb	22-Feb
JARA NC	KZ0IMO	W0SER	KF0KBC	KF0KOS
JARA ANC	KD0YZC	KF0TXA	KF0PXE	W9WTY
JARA LOG	KF0KOS	KZ0IMO	KB0YME	KZ0IMO
ARES NC	KZ0IMO	W9WTY	KF0RWS	KZ0IMO
ARES ANC	KD0PZV	KE0SYO	KZ0IMO	K0AWW
ARES LOG	W0SER	KZ0IMO	KD0PZV	KF0RWS

Remember at the end of every month you will need to send me your volunteer hours for anything other than KCHEART, JARA and ARES nets. For example- you attend a build session or you make an item on the Taskbook list (you will need to show it to me), or you check into any other local nets (PKARC- it counts). You just need to let me know. Also, your training hours for FEMA classes, CW classes or meetings for your AEC positions all count. If you are doing EmComm Winlink you will need to CC my rocketmail email address to get credit.

I have had a few more inquiries about NTS nets. My query resulted that we are in the 10th region with daily nets listed at 1:45 pm and 3:45 pm on 7.2775 and then 7:45 pm and 9:30 pm on 3.562. With a SSB Traffic Net on 7.28 MTWTHFS. Give it a listen. To send a radiogram through the portal go to website: nts2.arrl.org. Slow steps and share as you go.

Kansas has an NTS net on 3920 kHz at 6:30 daily. It is preceded by a weather net at 6. Ron Cowan-KB0DTI our ARRL Kansas Section Manager is Net Control on Saturdays

Stay Warm, Stay Ready,

Roxann Kosmicki –

KS-LV-ARES ARRL® Emergency Coordinator

Sign up [link](#) for PKARC positions

* NC **ANC *** Logger

Digital Shorts

The FT8 Revolution: Weak-Signal Magic in Ham Radio

Since its 2017 debut, FT8—short for *Franke-Taylor design, 8-FSK modulation*—has transformed amateur radio. Created by Nobel laureate Joe Taylor, K1JT, and Steven Franke, K9AN, FT8 is a digital mode engineered for extremely weak-signal communication. It thrives where voice (SSB) and Morse code (CW) fail, decoding signals as low as -20 dB SNR in a 2500 Hz bandwidth.

Built into the WSJT-X software suite, FT8 uses 8-frequency shift keying (8-FSK) with tones spaced just 6.25 Hz apart, occupying only 50 Hz of bandwidth. This spectral efficiency allows dozens of signals to coexist on a single frequency, making it ideal for crowded HF bands like 20m (14.074 MHz) and 40m (7.074 MHz).

How It Works: Speed, Structure, and Precision

FT8 operates in 15-second cycles: 12.64 seconds of transmission, followed by 2.36 seconds for decoding. A complete QSO typically takes 90 seconds, vastly faster than older modes like JT65.

Each transmission carries a 77-bit message, limited to 13 characters—enough for callsigns, grid locators, and signal reports. A typical exchange:

1. CQ BH8GIS OM20
2. BH8GIS JA3KWJ PM85
3. JA3KWJ BH8GIS -2
4. BH8GIS JA3KWJ R-12
5. JA3KWJ BH8GIS RR73
6. BH8GIS JA3KWJ 73

This semi-automated protocol ensures rapid, reliable contacts with minimal operator input.

Why FT8 Is So Popular

- Works with Low Power: QRP operators (5–50 watts) regularly make global contacts.
- Urban-Friendly: Performs well with compromised antennas and high noise.
- Propagation Scout: Monitors band openings in real time.
- Accessible: Easy setup with a computer, interface, and accurate time sync via NTP or GPS.

Controversy and Criticism

Despite its success, FT8 faces criticism:

- Not a “Conversation” Mode: No real-time chat; exchanges are robotic.
- Clock Dependency: Requires ± 1 second accuracy between sender and receiver – critical for decoding.
- Band Congestion: High activity can lead to pileups and interference.

Variants like JS8 and FT4 offer more flexibility – JS8 supports free text, while FT4 is optimized for contesting.

Getting Started

1. Download WSJT-X.
2. Connect your radio via CAT control and audio interface.
3. Sync your computer clock.
4. Tune to an FT8 frequency and begin monitoring.

FT8 has lowered barriers to global communication, making it a cornerstone of modern ham radio—whether you're chasing DX, testing antennas, or simply exploring the magic of weak-signal propagation.

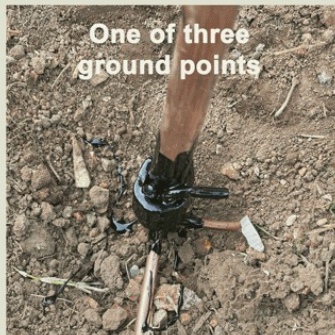
73!

NOTE: This article was written with Ask Leo AI.

It's OK Here!

By Foreign Correspondent
Rick Reichert, NJØP

Then the winds came. January weather tested the antenna and tower with high winds, frigid temperatures, and frozen precipitation. The system held up with no apparent issues. Forty mile per hour gusts made no perceptible movement in the tower. I'm sleeping better through storms now. A good ground system helps.



One of three
ground points

A Good Grounding. I gave it my best shot. I had three 8-foot long heavy-duty ground rods and great hope to sink all three well below the surface. After hitting flint rock between 3½ and 4 feet down, I ended up cutting the tops of all three rods. Fifty feet of 6-gauge copper ground wire in the soil connects the rods to the tower and shack. Various measurements show an effective ground, even in the dry soil.

Great Results - Beyond Expectations.

Shortly after the initial ground was added, I received a text from fellow club member Dave Rousseau, KØAVN. He said he would be in range for an HF QSO. He was my first HF contact from the new station while he was flying an American Airlines Airbus from the west to east coasts. It was a crystal-clear voice link-up and a very exciting way to inaugurate the new station. That same day, I received a 59 from 3B8WWA in Mauritius, an island off the coast of Dubai. Then I had a succession of contacts including, POTA and SOTA stations. I closed the log that day with a nice QSO with another fellow club member, Vic Henke, KEØSYO. Thanks Dave and Vic for being bookends for a perfect first day.



NJØP enjoying HF QSOs

Next Steps. I'll be trying my hand at the NA SSB Sprint on January 31st. The 4-hour contest will help me determine future customizations and get ready for the KS QSO Party. "First guest operator" is still open. Let me know when you plan to come by.

73 de *Rick* NJØP in Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Up Coming Events You Should Have on Your Calendar

January 15th 6pm build session

February 2nd KC Heart

February 5th PKARC monthly meeting

February 19th Build Session

February 28 Freeze Your Keys

March 2nd KC Heart

March 5th PKARC monthly meeting

March 19th Build Session

ARRL [Contest](#)

15 16 February [International Dx - CW](#)

1 – 2 March International DX - [Phone](#)

13 April Rookie Roundup - [Phone](#)

7 – 8 June International [Digital](#) Contest

14 – 16 June [VHF](#)

21 June Kids [Day](#)

Local area public service events [calendar](#) from Larrys List

Training links

[EMCOMM-Training.org](#)

FEMA [NIMS](#) training

[ARRL](#) Training

ARRL [On The Air Live](#)