

Harbor Beam

November 2026 Edition

President's Message

Fellow club members,

What a way to wrap up the outdoor season. After the green brush got the best of us at Field Day, we finally got a proper fire going at the bonfire on October 24th. Thank you to John Phillips KA9PGC for hosting, and to everyone who came out, including a couple of friends who made the drive from South Bend.

I also want to welcome our newest member, Jim Copler KE9FCP, who joined at his very first meeting in October. Jim, we're glad to have you.

Next up is the Christmas party on Saturday, December 12th. The club will provide the main dish, so just bring a side and come enjoy the evening. Looking further ahead, the Cabin Fever HamFest is February 27th, and we'll need plenty of help to make it a success. If you can give even an hour, please let Curt or me know.

Since there's no December meeting, our next meeting is Monday, January 11th. Have a wonderful holiday season, and I'll see you at the party.

73 de KC9DJP

Rich Oberle KC9DJP, LPCARC Club President

Upcoming Events & Meetings

Mark your logbooks! Here is what LPCARC has on the schedule in the weeks ahead. Monthly meetings begin at 7:00 PM local time at the La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church, 1480 Boyd Blvd, LaPorte, IN. Check lpcarc.org for any last-minute changes.

Date	Event	Location
November 21-22, 2026	ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes	On the air
December 12, 2026	Christmas Party, 6:00 PM (no December meeting)	La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church
January 11, 2027	Monthly Club Meeting	La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church
February 27, 2027	Cabin Fever HamFest, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM	La Porte County Fairgrounds



Fall Bonfire Recap

After the green brush beat us at Field Day, the fall bonfire at the tower site on October 24th finally gave us the fire we'd been waiting for. A bright moon and a cool fall evening made for a great night of radio talk and good company around the flames.

Thanks to John Phillips KA9PGC for hosting, and to everyone who came out: Curt Yeater AC9HO, Hayden David KD9HAY and his wife, Brian Jennings N9YOU, Jonathan Gross KE9BLG, Bob Smith N9ROM, Ryan King KD9WXK, and George KD9GXA and Lynn KC9GUC, who made the trip from South Bend. It was a great way to close out the outdoor season, and hopefully the start of another club tradition.








Welcome New Member!

Please join us in welcoming Jim Copler KE9FCP to the club! Jim joined at the October 12th meeting, his very first one. Welcome to LPCARC, Jim... glad to have you!



Christmas Party

The club Christmas party will be held on Saturday, December 12th, at 6:00 PM at the La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church, 1480 Boyd Blvd, LaPorte. The club will provide fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and water. It's a potluck, so we're asking everyone to bring a side dish to share. As always, there's no regular club meeting in December, so come out, enjoy the evening, and celebrate the season with fellow members and their families.

With no December meeting, the next official club meeting will be Monday, January 11th, 2027, at 7:00 PM.

Cabin Fever HamFest: Saturday, February 27th, 2027

The Cabin Fever HamFest will be held at the La Porte County Fairgrounds from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM Central. That's later than last year's 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM, so vendors and buyers both get a little more breathing room on a February morning.

We need volunteers for setup on Friday, February 26th, and to help run the event on Saturday. Teardown isn't needed, because a model train show the next day uses almost the same table layout. Any time you can give is appreciated, even if it's only an hour.

If you'd like to help, reach out to Rich Oberle KC9DJP or Curt Yeater AC9HO by email at cabinfeverhamfest@gmail.com, on the air, at a club meeting, or by phone if you have their numbers.

ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes This Weekend

A reminder that the ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes runs this weekend, from 3:00 PM Central on Saturday, November 21st, through 8:59 PM Central on Sunday, November 22nd. Stations across the US and Canada will be trying to work as many ARRL and RAC sections as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters.

Whether you chase a clean sweep or just hand out a few contacts, it's a fun way to spend some time on HF. Full rules are available at arrl.org/sweepstakes.

Getting to Know the LPCARC DMR Talk Group

Over the last two issues we looked at DTMF and AllStar, then at Wires-X on 441.950. This month we're covering the third way to reach the club's repeater system: DMR. The W9LY 146.970 repeater is linked to the LPCARC DMR talk group, TGIF talk group 31146. That means a ham with a DMR radio can join a conversation on the 970 from just about anywhere.

What Is DMR?

DMR stands for Digital Mobile Radio. It's a digital voice standard first developed for commercial and public safety radio, and it was later adopted widely by amateurs because the radios are affordable and plentiful. DMR splits each frequency into two time slots, so one repeater can carry two separate conversations at once.

Instead of tuning to a frequency and talking to whoever is listening, DMR users pick a talk group. A talk group is a numbered channel that can span many repeaters and hotspots across a network. Everyone tuned to the same talk group hears each other, no matter where they are.





What Is TGIF?

TGIF is one of several amateur DMR networks. You may also have heard of BrandMeister, the largest one. The networks are separate, and our talk group lives on TGIF, so you'll need a TGIF connection to reach it. Tuning to 31146 on a BrandMeister repeater won't get you to the club.

How the 970 Connects to DMR

Hayden David KD9HAY set up talk group 31146 on the TGIF network for the club. On our end, the link runs on the AllStar node at the tower site, the same system that connects the 970 to AllStar and EchoLink. Software called DVSwitch bridges the node to the talk group and converts audio in both directions.

When someone talks on the 970 in analog, DMR users on TGIF 31146 hear them. When a DMR user talks on 31146, the audio comes out on the 970 in analog. To everyone listening on the repeater, a DMR station sounds like any other station.

What You Need

To get on the LPCARC talk group, you'll need:

- **A DMR radio.** Plenty of affordable handhelds and mobiles are available.
- **A DMR ID.** It's free from RadioID.net and takes a day or two to approve. You'll need it before you can transmit on any DMR network.
- **A hotspot.** There are currently no TGIF-connected DMR repeaters in our area, so a personal hotspot is the way to reach the talk group. A hotspot is a small, low-power device that connects your DMR radio to the network over the internet. Many members already use one for other digital modes.
- **A codeplug.** This is the programming file that tells your radio which frequencies and talk groups to use. You'll need a channel set to your hotspot's frequency and talk group 31146.

Set your hotspot to connect to the TGIF network, select talk group 31146 on your radio, and you're in.

Operating Tips

Digital linking adds a short delay, so key up and pause a second before you start talking. Leave a gap between transmissions so analog and DMR users both have a chance to break in. Identify with your callsign just as you would on the 970, and remember that anything said on 31146 also goes out over the analog repeater.

Give It a Try

If you have a DMR radio collecting dust, or you've been thinking about trying digital, this is a great reason to get started. Program in TGIF 31146 and give the club a call. If you need help getting your DMR ID, building a codeplug, or setting up a hotspot, bring it to the January meeting. Plenty of members are glad to help.

On the Air Activity

Club Nets

LPCARC maintains the following regularly scheduled net. All licensed amateurs are welcome to check in:

- Wednesday Evening LPCARC Information Net, 7:00 PM Central, 146.970 MHz (-600 kHz, PL 131.8)





SKYWARN Nets

LaPorte County SKYWARN nets are held on the N9IAA repeater, 146.685 MHz, and are managed by the Indiana District 1 SKYWARN Net. Reports from LaPorte County are forwarded to the National Weather Service in North Webster, and you'll hear weather reports from the west before storms move into our county. If you can't reach the repeater, you can always phone your report in to the NWS.

Repeater Status

The club currently sponsors and maintains the following repeaters, all open to any licensed amateur:

- 146.970 MHz (-600 kHz offset, PL Tone 131.8), W9LY, AllStar node 635952, EchoLink node 193001, and linked to the LPCARC DMR talk group, TGIF talk group 31146
- 441.950 MHz (+5 MHz offset, PL Tone 131.8), W9LY, C4FM/Wires-X capable, Wires-X room Indiana Midwest 21421
- 146.610 MHz (-600 kHz offset, PL Tone 131.8), K9JSI, analog only

The 441.950 repeater's home Wires-X room is Indiana Midwest 21421. You're welcome to connect it to other rooms, like KC-Wide, but those connections run on a 60-minute timer. After 60 minutes the repeater automatically disconnects and returns to Indiana Midwest. The idea is to keep the repeater available for local C4FM conversations, since not everyone wants to talk around the country or the world all the time.

If you notice a repeater issue, please report it to repeatertrustee@lpcarc.org.

Membership Dues Reminder

Annual club membership dues are $20 per year. Dues for 2027 are now being accepted, with March 2027 being the deadline as outlined in the Club By-Laws. Dues can be paid at any club meeting or event.

Paying online is preferred as it makes record keeping easier for the club Treasurer. You can pay your dues online at lpcarc.org/Members/Members.html.

Around the Club

Thursday Breakfast

Join fellow members every Thursday morning at 8:00 AM at Mama T's Diner for coffee and conversation. All are welcome.

First Saturday Breakfast

The first-Saturday breakfast is held at 9:00 AM on the first Saturday of each month at Chappy's Stadium Inn in Michigan City. It's a good fit for those who work weekdays, and for siren test volunteers before the net opens. Good food at affordable prices.

EMA Siren Testing

LaPorte County EMA tests its warning sirens on the first Saturday of every month. The net opens at 10:30 AM on the W9LY repeater (146.970), with sirens activating at 11:00 AM. Dave W9DLP serves as net control. Volunteers are always needed to help monitor sirens around the county... reach out if you'd like to help.





VE Testing

Looking to get licensed or upgrade? VE exam sessions are held on the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM Central at the MAAC Foundation, 4203 Montdale Dr, Valparaiso, IN, sponsored by the Porter County Amateur Radio Club.

Facebook Group

Stay connected between meetings on our Facebook group, "LaPorte County Amateur Radio Organization," at facebook.com/groups/496694052638376.

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73 de LPCARC

