

Harbor Beam

September 2026 Edition

President's Message

Fellow club members,

Thank you to everyone who came out to the September 14th meeting and took part in this year's officer elections. I'm honored to continue serving as your President for 2027-2028, and I'm looking forward to working alongside our newly elected officers and board members. A special welcome to Josh Lain KE9BBB, who joins the board, and a thank-you to everyone who was willing to put their name forward.

Fall is shaping up to be a fun season for the club. We've got a picnic and POTA activation at Potato Creek State Park this Saturday, and John Phillips KA9PGC is hosting a bonfire at the tower site on October 17th. Come out, bring a radio, and spend some time with your fellow hams.

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. All 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
September 26, 2026	Club Picnic & POTA Activation	Potato Creek State Park
October 12, 2026	Monthly Club Meeting	La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church
October 17, 2026	Bonfire, 5:00 PM	Concrete Tower at HWY35 and Schultz Rd.
November 9, 2026	Monthly Club Meeting	La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church
December 14, 2026	Monthly Club Meeting	La Porte Seventh Day Adventist Church

2027-2028 Election Results

Elections were held at the September 14th meeting, and the results are in! Please join us in congratulating the officers and board members who will lead LPCARC for 2027-2028:

- President: Rich Oberle KC9DJP
- Vice President: John Phillips KA9PGC
- Treasurer: Curt Yeater AC9HO
- Secretary: Stacey Donnelly KD9ZGJ
- Board Members: Josh Lain KE9BBB and Travis Taylor KC9Twx

Thank you to every member who accepted a nomination and to everyone who came out to vote. A club is only as strong as the people willing to step up, and we're fortunate to have plenty of them.

Club Picnic & POTA Activation

Grab your portable gear and head out to Potato Creek State Park this Saturday, September 26th! Folks will start arriving between 8:00 and 9:00 AM Central for a relaxed club picnic combined with a Parks on the Air activation.

Whether you want to get on the air, help log contacts, or just hang out and enjoy the fall weather with fellow club members, you're welcome to join in. If operators want to stick around later in the day and keep the fun going, pizza may be provided to keep everyone fueled up.

New to POTA? This is a great chance to see how an activation works up close and ask questions from members who have done plenty of them.

Fall Bonfire at the Tower Site

John Phillips KA9PGC is hosting a bonfire at the tower site on Saturday, October 17th, starting at 5:00 PM. After the green brush got the best of us at Field Day, we're hoping for a little redemption this time around. Come out for an evening of good company, radio talk, and hopefully a proper fire!

W9LY Internet Update

Following the internet outage at the tower site reported last month, Curt Yeater AC9HO has been working to track down the root cause. It turns out the network switch was not the culprit after all. The issue appears to have been caused by two routers connected to each other, which would confuse each other whenever any device on the network rebooted, preventing other devices from regaining internet access.

The fix involved restructuring the network. The internet feed from the ISP now runs directly into the network switch. From there, a cable connects to the club router, and Danny Scheetz W9DWS's router is also connected to the switch independently. All club devices connect through the club router, keeping them isolated from any issues with the other router. So far the new setup is working as expected and internet service at the tower site is restored.

Getting to Know DTMF

If you've ever pressed a button on your radio's keypad to connect to a repeater link or trigger a function, you've already used DTMF... you may just not have known what it was called. DTMF stands for Dual-Tone Multi-Frequency, and it's the same technology that has been used in telephone systems for decades. Understanding how it works can open up a whole new world of capability on the amateur radio bands.

How DTMF Works

When you press a key on a DTMF keypad, your radio simultaneously transmits two audio tones... one from a group of four low frequencies and one from a group of four high frequencies. Each combination of tones corresponds to a unique character, giving you 16 possible signals using the digits 0 through 9, the letters A through D, and the symbols * and #. Because each keypress produces two distinct tones at once, receivers can reliably decode the signal even in less-than-perfect conditions.

The tones are transmitted within the normal audio range of your radio, so no special equipment is needed on either end beyond a standard keypad and a receiver capable of decoding DTMF audio. Most modern radios and repeater controllers have this capability built right in.

DTMF and AllStar

This is where it gets really useful for amateur radio operators. Systems like AllStar use DTMF commands to let you control network connections right from your radio, without needing a computer or smartphone nearby. When you key up and enter a DTMF sequence, the repeater controller decodes your tones and carries out the command.

On our W9LY repeater, AllStar node 635952, the basic commands are straightforward:

- *3 followed by a node number connects you to that node
- *1 followed by a node number disconnects that specific node
- *6 disconnects all connected nodes at once

So if you wanted to connect to a club or net on another node, you'd simply key up, enter *3 and the node number, and you're linked. When you're done, *6 clears everything out. It's a powerful system, and DTMF is what makes it possible to control it all right from your microphone keypad.

Weather Alerts on Demand

DTMF isn't just for linking nodes. The W9LY repeater also has a built-in weather alert feature. When there is an active watch or warning for the area, the repeater will automatically announce the alert so you don't miss it. But if you want to hear the full details of the watch or warning, simply key up and enter *841, then wait at least 10 seconds to give the node time to download the details, and the repeater will play the complete alert. It's a quick and convenient way to get the full picture right from your radio, especially handy during severe weather season when conditions can change fast. After the August 11th derecho, features like this serve as a good reminder of just how useful a well-equipped repeater can be.

Give It a Try

Next time you're on 146.970, give some of these DTMF features a try. If you have questions about DTMF commands or need help connecting to a node, bring it up at the next meeting or check in on the Wednesday Evening Information Net. We're always happy to help a fellow ham explore what our repeater system has to offer.

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)

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
- 146.610 MHz (-600 kHz offset, PL Tone 131.8), K9JSI, analog only

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.

Sugar Bowl Breakfast

The first-Saturday breakfast at the Sugar Bowl in Michigan City remains on hold while the restaurant itself looks for a new location. We'll let you know as soon as they're settled somewhere new and we can get back to it.

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.

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