

VarAC Wednesday

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Purpose:

In brief, Winlink Wednesday allows Winlink users the chance to send a test Internet email message to a Net Control station using the Winlink system via VARA every Wednesday. Some 800 hams from around the world participate.

We have the same need to practice the process of sending emails through the new Email Gateway. It is also a demonstration of the system under the situation where a number of users want to send emails on the same day.

Relationship to winlinkwednesday.net/

The original Winlink Wednesday is a weekly amateur radio digital net where check-ins use the Winlink system. To check-in, you send an email via the Winlink Express email program (or other method) to the Net Control who is currently KN4LQN. Messages formats are announced prior to that week's Winlink Wednesday on the website.

Currently, VarAC Wednesday has no connection or relationship with the original Winlink Wednesday or any other organizations who conduct Winlink testing.

However, the intent is to utilize the same message format that is announced for that week on their site with the exception of using the Winlink ICS-213 form on the third Wednesday of each month which is not available in VarAC. For those times, we'll simply use the "Standard Winlink Wednesday" check-in. This will allow you to use the same message for both Winlink Wednesday and VarAC Wednesday.

Just like Winlink Wednesday, VarAC Wednesday encourages check-ins from across the globe.

Since Winlink and VarAC both utilize VARA, you can utilize Winlink simply by downloading the Winlink Express email program at <https://winlink.org/WinlinkExpress>. After setting up the program, you are now ready to participate in the Winlink email network and Winlink Wednesday. *Please consider checking in to both Winlink Wednesday and VarAC Wednesday.*

VarAC Check-in Emails

The message format for a “Standard VarAC Wednesday Check-in” is:

To: varacwednesday@gmail.com

Subject: VarAC Wednesday Check-In

Message body:

call sign, first name, city or town, county, state (HF or VHF, etc.)

EXAMPLE 1:

WA8YNQ, Mark, Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH (HF)

EXAMPLE 2:

ZS1OSS, Daniel, Cape Town, South Africa (VHF)

EXAMPLE 3:

VE3XYZ, John, Toronto, Canada (HF)

If your check-in for Winlink Wednesday is different, use that for VarAC Wednesday as well.

On the first Wednesday of each month, a weather report is requested but not required. The emphasis is on brevity and communicating the information rather than applying a strict format.

Note: Weather goes on a second line.

EXAMPLE 1: At 0934 local time, it is clear, sunny and 51°F. Winds are out of the NE at 10 mph.

To: varacwednesday@gmail.com

Subject: VarAC Wednesday Check-In

Message body:

KB0US, Twin Falls, ID, (HF)

0934L, Clear, Sunny, 10mph NE, 51F

EXAMPLE 2: At 1317 UTC, it is overcast with light rain, 10°C, wind from the SW at 5 km/h

To: varacwednesday@gmail.com

Subject: VarAC Wednesday Check-In

Message body:

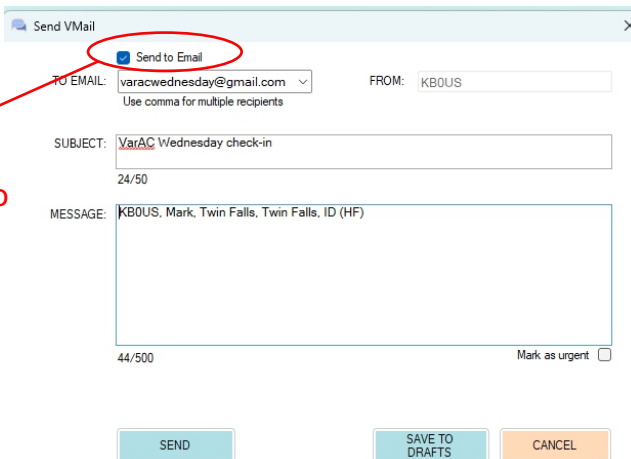
VE3XYZ, John, Toronto, Canada

1317Z, overcast, light rain, 5 km/h SW, 10C

Sending your VarAC Wednesday Message

Write an Internet email in VarAC addressed to varacwednesday@gmail.com. Click SEND to put it in your Outbox. You may also choose to copy yourself by adding a comma and your personal Internet email.

Remember to select Send to Email



Send VMail

TO EMAIL: varacwednesday@gmail.com
Use comma for multiple recipients

FROM: KB0US


SUBJECT: VarAC Wednesday check-in

24/50

MESSAGE: KB0US, Mark, Twin Falls, Twin Falls, ID (HF)

44/500 Mark as urgent ☐

SEND SAVE TO DRAFTS CANCEL

- Identify a clear slot to pass your email to a beacon. Using the Slot Sniffer in the CALL CQ menu is probably easiest although some will just look at their panadapter.
- Return to calling frequency.
- Connect to a beacon displaying the Email Gateway  symbol.
- Send a QSY request to the beacon for the slot you identified as open.
- You and the beacon both automatically move to the open slot.
- The email is automatically transferred.
- Disconnect when the email is transferred.

The entire process should look like this:

```
<<----- 2025-04-23 ----->>
17:53:19    CONNECTED TO KA3NAM (BANDWIDTH: 500 FREQUENCY: 14.105.000)
17:53:27 KA3NAM <AWQ> de KA3NAM <R+03> <E>
17:53:35 KB0US de KB0US <R-08>
17:53:36    THIS STATION SERVES ALSO AS AN EMAIL GATEWAY.
17:53:51 KB0US <QSYF>000014105750</QSYF>
17:53:59 KB0US <VW>
17:54:02    YOUR QSO PARTNER IS AWAY. YOU CAN LEAVE THEM A VMAIL.
17:54:09 KA3NAM <QSYR>
17:54:09    KA3NAM ACCEPTED YOUR QSY INVITATION
17:54:21 KB0US <TL>
             <SM><TME:2025-04-23 17:48:09><TO:VARACWEDNESDAY@GMAIL.COM><FRM:KB0US><SBJ:VarAC Wednesday check-in><MSG:KB0US, Mark, Twin Falls, Twin Falls, ID (HF)><EG>
17:54:27 KA3NAM <SMR>
17:54:28    VMAIL DELIVERED SUCCESSFULLY
17:54:36 KA3NAM <ER>
17:54:36    EMAIL WAS SENT SUCCESSFULLY
17:54:50    QSO SUMMARY: Frequency: 14.105.750 (20m) Duration: 00:01:30
17:54:50    DISCONNECTED FROM KA3NAM
```

NOTE: VarAC will likely display a number of information pop-ups that will clear themselves automatically. You do not need to manually clear these. In fact, if both you and beacon are set up correctly, you should not have to touch the keyboard after sending the QSY request; everything should continue automatically up until you need to click DISCONNECT or send a <DISC> to the beacon.

When Do I Send My VarAC Wednesday Email?

Send your email every Wednesday between 0000 and 2400 current Eastern Time (EST or EDT).

In the United States, Daylight Savings Time begins the second Sunday of March and ends the first Sunday in November.

For EST, 04:00 UTC to 03:59 UTC

For EDT, 05:00 UTC to 04:59 UTC

Use the weather email on the first Wednesday of the month (not required) and standard check-ins the rest of the month.

Testing Your Setup

Feel free to send test emails to varacwednesday@gmail.com on days other than Wednesday. Net Control, currently KB0US, will reply to these as time is available.

Posting Results

The Net Control, currently KB0US, will total all the emails received and post the results on Facebook and the varac-hamradio forums on Thursday barring a visit from The Sweet Meteor of Death.

Remember that you can add your own Internet email to the message as a verification that it was delivered to the beacon successfully. For example, varacwednesday@gmail.com, KX4YZ@arrl.net

Additional Information

- Check-ins who do not use a VarAC EMAIL GATEWAY will not be counted.
- You must be on V11.0.7 or greater.
- YOU DO NOT NEED AN EMAIL GATEWAY ON YOUR INSTALLATION OF VarAC TO CHECK IN! You will be using the EMAIL GATEWAY of the beacon displaying the ✂ icon that you connect with.
- In V11.2.0 and above, canned messages are available in the VMAIL dialog box making participation in VarAC Wednesday even easier!