



# The Wisconsin EC Newsletter

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The WEC Newsletter is published monthly in .pdf format to the Wisconsin ARES/RACES Web site <http://wi-aresraces.org>. It is intended to provide a forum for ECs to share ideas concerning the organization and training of their respective groups, and as a source of news concerning Wisconsin ARES and RACES. Comments, suggestions and articles (finished or in rough form) are solicited from the readers.

**Deadlines:** The newsletter is published between the 15th and the 31st of the month preceding the date shown on the issue. Thus, the February issue is published in late January. Articles and notices should reach the editor no later than January 1 to be considered for the February issue. Permission is granted to reprint articles from this newsletter provided credit is given as follows: "Reprinted from the Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator Newsletter, Bill Niemuth, Editor".

## **ARES Leadership Changes**

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI

**Jeananne Bargholz, N9VSV**, has decided to step down as ASEC for Marketing and Recruiting. Jeananne has held leadership positions in Milwaukee ARES and WI ARES/RACES for many years. I personally thank Jeananne for assisting me when I was new to this position and offering good advice. We will miss Jeananne, but wish her well.

I will be reviewing the organization over the next couple of weeks and determine what to do with Jeananne's responsibilities. They are extremely important to our organization and ARES/RACES as a whole.

**Ed Jacobsen, KB9KJE**, EC Burnett County, has been appointed Northwest Wisconsin succeeding **Wes Jones, N9PHS/SK**. Ed brings experience as a long time United Nations employee who has traveled around the world working in other cultures and as a town chairperson. I have asked Ed to bring the Northwest District closer together and fill the EC vacancies throughout the district. A search to replace Ed as Burnett County EC has begun. Please join me in welcoming Ed to the WI ARES/RACES Senior Leadership Team!

The repopulation of the Northwest District continues with the appointment of **Kris Larsen, KB9KRH**, as Washburn County EC! Kris, like Ed, is a long time member and officer of NorWesCo RACES. Kris also serves as deputy radio officer for Washburn County RACES. Welcome aboard, Kris!

**Dale Lash, KB9ZRO**, has decided to step down as Juneau County EC. Dale is pursuing more advanced education and needs to spend time with that. We will miss Dale, but he will continue to be active in ARES/RACES.

Replacing Dale as Juneau County EC is **Craig Smith, KC9FZD**. Craig has been an AEC and is not stepping up into the EC role. We look for the transition between Dale and Craig to be a smooth one. Welcome Craig!

## **RESCUE ON THE GO!**

By Peter Sweeney, WD9JIB, DEC Southwest Wisconsin

On June 18, the Southwest ARES/RACES (A/R) District was invited to work with a special rescue team for southwest Wisconsin called the Southwest Wisconsin Technical Rescue Team. The exercise was held at

Rockbridge, near Richland Center, is a challenging radio transmission place. The initial task was to observe, but as good amateurs will be, they soon wanted to be involved and found themselves working with the rescue teams. The A/R team consisted of members from five counties, from Dane to Crawford.

All we learned that day cannot be told, it was too much, but three tasks were observed and used by the team that are worth mentioning. These were intermediate communication, long-range communication, and area control. The first, intermediate communication, was from the hill to the ground, and to waiting agencies below who did not share the same radio frequencies as the rescuers. Yet another use of the intermediate communication was the need for certain supplies, which was directly transmitted and responded to.

Long-range communication was achieved with packet radio (digital transmission radio). Communication was established with Wisconsin Emergency Government in Madison with both packet and Winlink 2000 capabilities. This was thought to be important because it provided immediate radio contact with Madison for any special needs or services that might be required by the team.

There were people from the general public, so the third function the A/R team found was area control. This was simply keeping the public out of dangerous areas where things might fall or be thrown down. The teams on the hill could not see if someone was in harms way below.

Besides all of this, the A/R team learned some of the language and terms of the rescue team. They learned some of the dos and don'ts of safety when working in this special environment. They learned where a safe and useful place to be is when a rescue is occurring. The A/R team is grateful for the opportunity to work with this special team, and looks forward to training with them in the future.



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## **The Set Up For SET**

By Skip Sharpe, W9REL, ASEC for Training

In about 90 days, we'll be at the doorstep of another Simulated Emergency Test (SET). So, even though it's the middle of summer, it's not too early to begin preparations.

The idea of the SET is to test our strengths and identify our weaknesses. We know how we did last year. Hopefully, we have fixed the things that needed fixing.

This year's SET will take place on Saturday, October 1 beginning at 900 AM and ending at 1200 PM local time. The scenario will be the same as last year: Terrorists have implemented a computer virus that has crashed the national power grid, landline and wireless telephone systems, government computer systems, the internet,

and commercial communications systems. Essentially, assume that all large scale networks are down. Amateur radio is the only reliable communications resource still working.

While networks are down, local computers aren't. Your individual PC, or Apple (in the interest of political correctness), is okay. Your Packet, PacTOR, and other communications software will work. So will your logging program, so long as it doesn't rely on the internet. If you have a WiFi network at home, it will continue to link your home computers together. But, consider you have no access to the internet. So, your email won't work. And systems like EchoLink and IRLP are out. Winlink 2000 will be an exception for this exercise.

The only amateur radio resources available will be individual stations, and repeaters and digipeaters operating on emergency power. As a practical matter, repeater and digipeater owners and operators don't actually have to operate on emergency power. But, it would add to the exercise if they did!

Individual stations should operate on emergency power, if possible. However, maximum participation is a key objective of the SET. If your individual participation relies on commercial power, use it.

The SET is designed to: Activate as many stations and county and district nets as possible. The state ARES/RACES HF Net and the Badger Emergency Net will also be activated. Where possible, stations should operate on emergency power. Use as many modes as possible: FM, SSB, Packet, APRS, ATV, SSTV, PacTOR, PSK31, WinLink 2000, and others.

SET communications should move from individual counties, to their respective districts, then on to the state nets. Think of this as an Incident Command System exercise where span of control is an issue. If each county tries to independently call the state nets, bottlenecks will develop and the flow of communications will suffer. County ECs should activate their local nets and appoint a liaison to their district net. District ECs should activate their district net and appoint liaison stations to the state ARES/RACES HF net and the Badger Emergency Net, which will serve as gateways to the National Traffic System. Don't have a district net in your district? There's still time to implement one!

Each EC and DEC is encouraged to expand on the SET within their areas. Contact your local emergency managers and other served agencies like the Red Cross and local hospitals. Invite them to stop by and see the SET in operation. If possible, activate stations at your community and county emergency operations centers.

ECs and DECs should generate and send messages up and down the system. Include the words "Simulated Emergency Test" in each message to avoid alarming anyone listening. Remember, formatting is critical for messages headed for the National Traffic System. At a minimum, each EC, or AEC, should send formal messages to their District EC announcing the startup and closing of their local net. DECs should do likewise for their nets. And, did I mention that message formatting is important?

Document and report all SET activity. ECs and DECs should report: Their county, or district, name, the time their net was activated, the number of check-ins, the time of net deactivation, a description of any local scenarios or activities that were undertaken, any repeaters operated on emergency power, activation of emergency operations center or mobile communications centers, and, the use of any digital communications modes. Reports should be made to the ARRL using appropriate forms available from the SEC through the DEC.

DECs, I need you to fire up your ECs! ECs, fire up your membership! Conduct some training in the SET scenario and procedures, and formal message formatting and handling. I'll create a lesson plan for you. But, don't wait for me. Talk it up. Generate some interest. Draft some exercise inputs that will generate message traffic. Think of things to do locally that will test your capabilities. **HAVE SOME FUN WITH IT!**

## **Racine County Digital Communications Class**

By Dave Voss, WB9USI, EC Racine County

Seventeen hams attended the initial digital communications class at the Volunteer Center of Racine. This was a fantastic turnout. Beginning and overall packet communications were covered.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 4 at 7:00 PM at same location. There is only room for 20 participants. The participating hams received tabbed binders with handouts. We will be adding to the information as we move along.

There is no cost for this class. Attendees must be ARES/RACES members. Application forms are available at the class.

The primary goal is to have good reliable communications between all of the VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (VOAD) in Racine County during emergencies.

**Jim Markstrom, KB9MMA**, is the lead instructor.

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## **2005 Field Day Revisited**

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI

I had the opportunity to visit two Field Day sites this year.

The Wisconsin Valley Radio Association held its 2005 Field Day exercise just west of Wausau. The site was a public park, which was easily accessible to all participants and attendees. A number of stations were located in a tent and their antenna array was interesting. I spent a few minutes with **Myron Oestreich, KB9STB**, WVRA President, AEC Marathon County ARES/RACES and ADEC Northeast Wisconsin, who gave me a guided tour. I met some new folks as well as folks I have known for many years. I was really taken with the bicycle station and wondered how I could integrate the two activities. You might have some of your own ideas.



On Sunday morning, I visited my home club's Field Day. The Town of Neenah Fire Station was home to Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club's Field Day site. This site was selected because it was semi-private and adjacent to a served agency. Numerous ARES/RACES members participated in this Field Day and everyone had a good time. Club President **Brian Long, KB9LRD**, told me the food was especially good!



Next year, I am interested in visiting more Field Day sites. Every one is unique and the teams which run them invest a lot of time and energy for the good of the service. If you would like company next year, please let me know.

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## **2005 Simulated Emergency Test**

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI

The 2005 Simulated Emergency Test will take place this year on Saturday, October 1, 2005, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for the statewide component. **Skip Sharpe, W9REL**, ASEC for Training, has designed a PowerPoint presentation, which is meant to inform leadership and general membership about the SET and its components. We are interested in determining the level of improvement of your plan since last year. Skip will be e-mailing the PowerPoint presentation to the Leadership in early August, and it will also reside on our Web site in .ppt and .pdf protocols. Each ARES/RACES member needs to participate in some form or fashion to best train everyone.

Additional, the scenario will once again be the Take-Down virus. Although the scenario indicates all networks are down, we want you to use Winlink 2000 if you have it. One of the criticisms of Winlink 2000 is it uses the Internet for backbone communications. While this is true during normal times, it will function when the internet is down, but at greatly reduced capacity. Since the Internet has come into broad use in the early 1990s, it has not failed on a large scale. On September 11, 2001, it was the only reliable way to communicate commercially for two or three hours. Since then, the internet has become much more redundant and reliable. If the balloon goes up, as some put it, and the internet is down, we might be forced to use smoke signals, but that might never happen. If we can provide better communications during 98 percent of our communications service by using Winlink 2000 and the internet, we better embrace the opportunity!

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