



The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Newsletter



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Wisconsin ARRL/ARES Section Emergency Coordinator and ARES/RACES Newsletter Editor

RACES Chief Radio Officer

Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO

W8088 Hillcrest Court

Hortonville, WI 54944

920-779-0611

920-475-4819 (Mobile)

bniemuth@new.rr.com

The WI ARES/RACES 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 WI ARES/RACES leadership and members 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 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 ARES/RACES Newsletter, Bill Niemuth, Editor".*

ARES Leadership and Organizational Changes

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI

Believe it or not, there were no leadership or organizational changes this month! We are working on recruiting an EC in Florence County for the first time in history, but that is not final yet. I hope to report on that in July!

Northeast WI Hams and ARES/RACES Members Assist in Antenna

Work Safely

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI, with Contributions from Pete Johnson, AB9PJ, DEC NEW

It is true ARES and RACES are about emergency communications, but what is happening in Northeast WI and Southern Northern Michigan helps everyone.

The Marinette and Menominee (M&M) Radio Club have created a Ham Radio Assistance Team (HAT), which helps any requesting ham improve their equipment and operating station. They have had an incredibly busy schedule programming radios, fixing antennas and doing tower work. This tremendously benefits the entire ham radio community, as well as ARES/RACES.

The one thing I want to stress is the safety practices used by the team. Whenever we do this type of work we should use the appropriate safety equipment and precautions, such as this group.

Although this is not emergency communications, I thought it would be beneficial to share their program with you. It is also an excellent recruiting tool. Please pay attention safety precautions presented in the photos!



Break Tags

Submitted by Don Michalski, W9IXG, WI SM

When net communication gets heavy, someone may have a quick solution to a problem that is taking up too much valuable airtime for discussion, but can't break into the net to share it. We came up with "Break Tags" to deal with such a scenario.

These are simply seven one-word Break Tags. They are: "answer," "question," "info," "priority," "medical," "emergency" and your call sign. Most of these tags have been used with great success in large public & emergency services nets. Here is how they work: Instead of saying "break" between transmissions during a

directed net, the operator uses the word specified as a Break Tag without a call sign. They are to be used only when the operator's traffic will be appreciated by net control and results in more efficient communication. They are to be used wisely, as net control is directed to stop and turn over the net to the breaking station. The message that follows a break should be as short as possible.

Definitions and use:

"Answer" - To be used when you have the definitive answer to a question currently being discussed on the air.

"Question" - To be used when the answer of a question can't wait. For example, when the mayor is standing next to you and requesting you to get information using your radio.

"Info" - To be used when information needs to be transmitted rapidly but is not related to what is being said on the air. For example, if an event net control needs to know about is going to happen in the next few seconds or if waiting for the end of an exchange will negate the value of the information.

"Priority" - To be used to report an important, but not a life threatening situation such as a fender bender that just happened.

"Medical" - To be used to report a minor medical incident that affects the operator in some way. For example, having to leave his/her post for a few minutes to walk someone with a minor cut over to a med tent.

"Emergency" – this is only to be used to report an ongoing life, property, threatening or damaging incident.

"Your Call Sign" – This is an indication the operator has traffic which can wait, and does not require the cessation of the ongoing exchange. This tag is an expectation to be put on hold and in queue for transmission.

"Break Tags" takes very little training. Its use is contagious and comes very naturally. It will be a part of our communications from here on in.

(This great idea is from Connecticut SEC **Rod Lane, N1FNE**)

Southeast District Responds to Hartford Tornado!

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI

On Sunday, June 18, 2006, an F1/F2 tornado hit Hartford, WI and caused extensive damage to some homes and a school. Fortunately, there were no serious injuries, but there was a lot of damage. The Red Cross requested assistance from Washington County ARES/RACES. Unfortunately, **Larry Puza, WB9BVB**, was on a few days holiday, but the Red Cross was able to contact **Gary Payne, N9VE**, SEW DEC, who contacted **Dan Workenaour, N9ASA**, Milwaukee County EC, **Gregg Wolfe, K9ZZZ**, Waukesha County EC and **Skip Sharpe, W9REL**, ASEC for Training, to assist. By the time Gary made his calls, Larry was back on the job and together this group worked together to serve the Red Cross.

I am proud to report **D. Stephen Buck, N9EAL**, Communications Functional Lead for the Milwaukee Chapter of the American Red Cross, provided the most complimentary thank you note I have received as SEC. The type of service these gentlemen provided to the Red Cross is what brings respect to our organizations. When I speak about professionalism, this is the type of service I am referring to.

Thanks guys, and thanks for serving the unfortunate individuals who lost property from this storm. Keep up the good work!

Important WI ARES/RACES Dates

By Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, SEC WI

Please mark your calendars for the following:

Saturday, October 7, 2006 – WI ARES/RACES Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

In 2005, WI ARES/RACES finished 10th in the U.S. in SET points! I bet we can exceed that in 2006!

Saturday, October 28, 2006 – WI ARES/RACES Conference

Formerly the EC and the Leadership Conference, this year's conference is open to all interested parties. It will be held in Madison, WI for the first time in a few years and it will provide us the opportunity to tour the newly remodeled Wisconsin Emergency Management EOC! Stay tuned to the WI ARES/RACES web site, e-mail and this newsletter for more information.
