



# The Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator



VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1

JANUARY 1999

## WISCONSIN SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR AND EDITOR:

Stanley Kaplan, WB9RQR  
105 Martin Drive  
Port Washington, WI 53074-9654  
(414) 284-9346  
skaplan@mcw.edu  
WB9RQR@N9PBY.EN63BI.  
WI.USA.NA

The WEC Newsletter is sent monthly to all American Radio Relay League Emergency Coordinators in the State of Wisconsin. It 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 ARES activities in the state.

Comments, suggestions and articles (finished or in rough form) are solicited from the readers.

Permission is granted to reprint articles from this newsletter provided credit is given as follows: "Reprinted from The Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator Newsletter, WB9RQR, Editor".

## WB9SMM Retires, WB9RQR Appointed SEC

After many years of service, John Leekley (WB9SMM) has retired as ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator. While cutting back his activities at the state level, John will continue as District Emergency Coordinator for Southeastern Wisconsin and EC for Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. We owe our gratitude to John for his years of hard work as a statewide advocate for Amateur Radio in emergency service.

Wisconsin Section Manager Roy Pederson (K9FHI) has appointed Stan Kaplan (WB9RQR) to fill the post of SEC.

## New Kid on the Block

-by Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR

Well, maybe not a kid, but new on the block. Let me introduce myself and tell you what I can do for you and your ARES group.

I am an ex-medical school professor, retired (1995) after three years at the University of Florida College of Medicine in Gainesville and 26 years of service at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. A biomedical scientist, my area of specialization was birth defects. I taught over 5,000 medical students, graduate students and residents during my career, and published over 30 scientific papers and books in my field. I still do a little writing, and go to my office at MCW once a week. Three days a week I do something that I have wanted to do all my life, which had to wait until retirement. I work in a hardware store! Boy, is that fun!

Radio has always fascinated me, and I finally got my Novice ticket a couple of years after finishing my schooling. My Elmer was another med school professor who saw to it that I progressed toward my first license. I currently hold the Advanced ticket. I just love homebrewing and QRP, but have not had much chance to do much

of either since becoming EC of Ozaukee County.

My ARES group in Ozaukee County ("OZARES") has been just wonderful to work with. Those of you who heard me speak at the Governor's Conference this year know that I am very proud of it. Currently 49 members strong, the group has built a marvelous Emergency Communications Center in our county's Justice Center (OZARES is permanently attached to Ozaukee County Emergency Management, by mutual consent and to our mutual benefit). Even more important, after our building phase was completed for the new Justice Center facility, the group entered a training phase that continues to today. The members train in seven different areas:

1. OZARES/Emergency Management Operations.
2. Emergency Communications Center/Emergency Operations Center.
3. Boat Operations (we have a Lake Michigan Rescue Boat in the county).
4. Packet Radio.
5. Vehicular Traffic.
6. Hazardous Materials.
7. Severe Weather.

Members who have completed training and who pass any associated tests earn an icon for that area on their ID card.

You will note that there are some non-traditional areas among the

seven. Indeed, during the December meeting, the group began training in the Incident Command System, clearly a non-traditional consideration for a ham radio group.

How did all this develop? When it became clear that we were a reliable and useful set of volunteers, the county Sheriff began asking our Emergency Management Director for our assistance. The group has assisted in the search for a fugitive from justice, and has been trained to help Sheriff's deputies in closing on and off ramps to I-43 during, for example, major snowstorms or flooding conditions. The members have also been trained to the same HazMat (Hazardous Materials) level required of police officers and firefighters. Since we often communicate with or for first responders (fire, police, EMTs), it follows naturally that we should know something about how they manage emergencies. Hence the new training on ICS.

OZARES members also staff the Emergency Communications Center whenever the Rescue Boat is on a mission on Lake Michigan in heavy weather. They provide communications to and from the boat using 800 MHz public safety frequencies, marine radio, or ham radio. Incidentally, the captain and most of the crew of the Rescue Boat are hams and OZARES members, and the captain is OZARES AEC for Training. The Director of Emergency Management is also a ham and OZARES member, as are his two sons. How's that for shuffling the deck? By the way, I have been asked to continue as Deputy Director of Emergency Management for Ozaukee County, and will remain an active member of OZARES.

Clearly, we have a wonderful working relationship between

ARES and Emergency Management in Ozaukee County. It need not be the single model upon which all others are built, but it surely works well for us and can serve as a possible template.

I see my new job as SEC as an opportunity to help you build whatever relationship works best for your ARES group. To start, this monthly newsletter can serve to supply you with ideas as well as news, and can serve as a forum to share your ideas or questions with others. If you have information or ideas you would like to share, call, write or email your thoughts to me. I will be happy to take your rough notes and polish them up for publication here. I'll even send you a copy for checking before the final version comes out.

Meanwhile, I am your ARES support person at the state level of the ARRL. Do you have a county board that needs education concerning what hams can do for them in Emergency Management? Does your Emergency Manager need a bit of education, too? Perhaps I can help. Realize that these folks may accept my words as more credible because of my credentials as Deputy Director in my county. At least it won't hurt the case I can make for ham radio. And, I am willing to travel now and then to speak on the subject of Amateur Radio in Emergency Management. There you have it - an offer that may help your ARES efforts. What is that you say? Your ARES group is not associated with Emergency Management? It should be. How about having me there to speak to your ARES group (but don't forget to also invite your county Emergency Management Director, and perhaps your Sheriff, and Chairman of your County Board, as well).

Meanwhile, this is YOUR newsletter. As your Editor, I will fill the pages with what I think might

be useful and interesting material, but there will always be room for your submissions. Send me news clips concerning what is going on in your ARES group, or full-blown articles as you see fit. An excellent way for you to help your ARES group grow and flourish is to use the best ideas from those around you, and to share your own ideas with your peers. This newsletter is a way for us to engage in that sharing throughout the State of Wisconsin.

## Union City, CA RACES Drill

[Ozaukee County Emergency Management Director Bill Stolte (N9VBJ) came across this on the web, thought it interesting, and passed it on to your editor. Authored by Jack Mackinnon, K6TYF. Edited.]

On Saturday, 17 October, Union City RACES was activated for an emergency drill by Captain Connie Van Patten of the Union City Police Department. Shortly after 8:00 a.m. she telephoned Rich Martinez, KG6MH. The test was to determine whether Amateur Radio could handle the police department's radio traffic in the event that the 800 MHz trunking system were to fail.

Rich immediately put out a call on the 146.610 repeater for assistance. One ham responded immediately and agreed to make periodic announcements on the repeater while Rich made phone calls to others in the Union City RACES organization.

Within a few minutes, four hams arrived at the police department and began preparations to place an amateur station in the dispatch center, and to have hams ride in patrol cars with officers. Within an hour and twenty minutes, each patrol car was rolling with a ham

inside, and communications between the cars and the dispatch center was being handled via amateur radio. In all, twelve hams assisted. They covered all necessary police positions including the Sergeant's office and Animal Control.

During the next hour the repeater was used exclusively by RACES operators to handle all communications necessary to operate the police department. All hams were returned to the police department by 11.00 a.m., where they attended a general debriefing over doughnuts and coffee.

Several lessons were learned during the drill. First, it was found that an HT without an external antenna was useless in the dispatch center. The computers and other devices present generated a noise level of 40db over 59. We tried to solve the problem by placing a magnetic-mount antenna on a desk in an adjacent office. However, the widespread use of noise-producing devices in the building (generators, fluorescent lights, and computers) continued to prevent communications. Only when a length of RG-8 coax was used to place an antenna outside did the noise level drop to a level where the HT could be reliably used. We solved any future problems by mounting an antenna on the roof, with a 100-foot drop of RG-8 into the dispatch center.

One amateur riding in a patrol car had his battery fail. The car had to return to the police station so that he could obtain another radio with a fresh battery. This points out that it is necessary for everyone to be prepared with at least one spare battery pack. Alkaline battery packs are essential. Another excellent backup would be a cigarette lighter power cord.

Dispatch had difficulty hearing one ham when his car was on the far

fringe of the city. The gain provided by a magnetic mount antenna on the roof might have solved that problem.

The dispatcher using the HT (under supervision of the ham as Control Operator) had a difficult time holding the radio during transmissions while also entering data on the computer keyboard. A headset and boom mike with a foot-operated switch would have cured the problem. An operational problem arose because we had forgotten to explain the courtesy tone and squelch tail on the amateur repeater being used. The dispatcher thought the squelch tail was someone trying to call her. A quick explanation solved the problem.

In summary, we learned that we need a dedicated roof-mount antenna and a boom mike with footswitch in the dispatch center. We also need mag-mount antennas for mobile hams, and spare battery packs in the pocket of every operator. All in all, the drill pointed out to the officers that amateur radio operators could indeed provide adequate backup when normal communications fail. It also gave the hams a better appreciation of the trials and tribulations encountered by dispatchers and patrol officers during the course of their daily duties.

## Fall And Winter Weather Terminology Used By The National Weather Service

(Forwarded by Jack Morrison, N9SFG; Captain of the Ozaukee County Rescue Boat. Edited.)

**ADVISORY:** Advisories are used to ALERT the public of situations that may cause some inconvenience or difficulty to travelers or people who must be outdoors.

**WARNINGS:** The following terms WARN the public of more serious winter weather situations that may cause impossible traveling conditions and could pose a threat to life and property.

**BLIZZARD WARNING. Issued for** winter storms with sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable falling snow (Blizzard Warning) and/or blowing snow, reducing visibility to less than  $1/4$  mile. If there is only blowing/drifted snow occurring, then it is called a Ground Blizzard Warning. These conditions are expected to last at least 3 hours.

**HEAVY SNOW WARNING. Issued** for snowfalls of 6 inches or more in 12 hours or less; or 8 inches or more in 24 hours or less (lesser amounts early or late in the season). Light winds (less than 10 mph) generally accompany these situations, with the primary hazard being heavy snow.

**ICE STORM WARNING. Issued** when damaging ice accumulation is expected during freezing rain situations. Walking and driving becoming extremely dangerous. Ice accumulations are usually  $1/4$  inch or greater.

**LAKE SNOW WARNING. Issued** when accumulations of lake-effect snow squalls is expected to be 6 inches or more in 12 hours, or 8 inches in 24 hours in the southern Great Lakes region; and 8 inches in 12 hours or 10 inches in 24 hours over the northern Great Lakes region.

**SEVERE WEATHER STATEMENT. Issued** when the forecaster wants to follow up a

blizzard warning with important information on the progress of the blizzard.

**SHORT TERM FORECAST (NOWCAST).** A short-term forecast designed to give specific, detailed forecast information for the next 1 to 6 hours on a county basis. Non-severe, advisory, and warning information is contained in these forecasts which are routinely issued several times per day, and more often during busy weather periods.

**SLEET WARNING.** Issued when accumulations of sleet covering the ground to a depth of an inch or more are expected. This is a relatively rare event.

**SPECIAL WEATHER STATEMENT.** Issued when the forecaster wants to pass information to the public about widespread, developing or approaching weather that is not expected to be severe, but nonetheless is significant.

**WINTER STORM WATCH.** Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of hazardous weather elements such as heavy snow and/or blizzard conditions, or significant accumulations of freezing rain or sleet. These conditions may occur singly, or in combination with others. Watches are usually issued 24 to 45 hours in advance of the event(s).

**WINTER STORM WARNING.** Issued when hazardous winter weather conditions are imminent or very likely, including any occurrence or combination of heavy snow, wind-driven snow, sleet and/or freezing rain/drizzle. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued for up to a 12-hour duration, but can be extended out to 24 hours. The term "near-blizzard" may be incorporated into the "winter storm warning" for serious situations, which fall just short of official blizzard conditions.

## Please Check Your Data

A sheet with the contact information received from WB9SMM was in the envelope that brought you this newsletter. Please take a moment to check it, as well as the mailing label on the envelope itself.

This data is especially important in case of a wide-area emergency, and that is the reason we publish an updated roster of DEC's and EC's from time to time to share among our group. Insofar as I am concerned, your data is confidential and I will not share it beyond our group, except perhaps with a ham that wants to join ARES or an Emergency Management Director who wants to contact the EC in his county. Oh, yes, I need to make statistical summaries from time to time for reports I must send to the SM and ARRL. Beyond that, I will not share the data with anyone.

Please take a moment to make sure your information is accurate and complete. Don't forget the email address if you have one. Don't worry, I receive enough SPAM myself to know better than to send you floods of email!

## OZARES Aids in the Search for the Linda E

Members of Ozaukee County ARES took part in a search for remains of the missing fishing boat, Linda E, that might have washed up on the shores of Lake Michigan in the county. A two-day search was held in mid-December, which covered all 24 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline in the county. Pairs of hams walked the beach, reporting to a tracking mobile station on the bluff via 2m simplex. The mobile station then reported

findings back to the communications hub in the Justice Center via the OZARES repeater. Communications relays were necessary because the high bluff blocks radio signals along some areas of shoreline even for 800 MHz public safety radios.

Each walking pair also carried a GPS unit, allowing pinpoint location of the items found. The GPS units also permitted accurate mapping of the areas covered by the teams, as well as their exact locations along the way during safety status checks. The hams carried their HTs, spare batteries, snacks and drinking water, and each pair had binoculars for inspection of near-shore waters. The walking hams provided a visual scanning of the shore that could not be done by any other means, including air or boat observations. Milwaukee's Channel 12 TV covered the search and aired a short story on it.

Ozaukee County Emergency Management organized the search at the request of the US Coast Guard. The Civil Air Patrol, Cedarburg Emergency Government, Ozaukee County Water Safety Patrol and Great Lakes Search & Rescue - K9 also participated. The Salvation Army provided support.

## Do You Know What This Is?

It is important! A full story will follow next month.

