



The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator



VOLUME 4 NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2002

**WISCONSIN
SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR
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The WEC Newsletter is sent monthly to all American Radio Relay League Emergency Coordinators in the State of Wisconsin. 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 ARES and RACES activities in the state.

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

This newsletter and other important documents are posted on the Wisconsin ARES/RACES web page at:

<http://wi-aresraces.org>

in PDF format, shortly after each issue is published.

Deadlines: The newsletter is mailed on or about the 15th of the month preceding the date shown on the issue. Thus, the February issue is mailed on or about the 15th of January. Articles and notices must reach the editor no later than the 1st of January to be considered for the February issue.

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The 2002 Wisconsin SET

The main nationwide SET is scheduled for the week-end of October 5th and 6th (see p. 104 of the September 2002 issue of QST), but states are free to schedule their SET in a wider window. ECs, you can run your **local SET** anytime between now and the end of November (actually **1 Sep through 30 Nov**), a full three-month time span. Need help in designing a SET for your group? Our Assistant SEC for Training, Jack Morrison (N9SFG), would be happy to help. Or, perhaps, you just want to run your plans by him. Just go to our website (address listed in the masthead of every newsletter), find him in the Leadership Officials list and click the email button next to his name. Or,

find his phone number in the EC Roster and give him a call.

In addition to your local plans for the SET, there is a **statewide component**, described here. The window for completion is a bit smaller – **now through 31 Oct**. It is an information-gathering task, centered on the hospitals in your county. Gather the required information and send it so that it **reaches your SEC via email or packet**. However, the tickler is that it **must traverse HF** somewhere along the line. Thus, you can send it via the NTS with a request that it be emailed to Stan by the recipient. Or, you can send it via HF to a neighboring county, with the request that it be sent via packet to Stan. Two meters to HF to packet to email is just fine. Other permutations and combinations are acceptable, just so long as Stan receives the message via packet or email **on or before 31 Oct**, and that it **travels by HF** part of the way. Stan's home packet station is on 24/7:

WB9RQR @ N9PBY.EN63BI.WI.USA.NA.

During the EC Conference in November, we may describe the most unique message or the most unique pathway. Here are the six information items to gather and send:

1. How many hospitals are in your county?
2. Provide the name and address of any single hospital in your county. Pick one that you might want to (or be asked to) provide emergency communications services for.
3. Provide the name, title and phone number of a point of contact for the hospital picked in 2, above (Hospital Administrator, person in charge of the Emergency Room, etc.).
4. How many beds does the hospital have? *Note that you don't have to go count them!* This is a commonly used number that indicates how many patients a hospital is authorized to accommodate – your point of contact will know this number.
5. Is the hospital classed as Primary Care, Secondary Care or Tertiary Care? Again, your point of contact will know this. Tertiary care is the highest, and there are only three such in

Wisconsin (two in Milwaukee and one in Madison).

- Are there currently any Amateur Radio facilities in this hospital? For example, is a ham antenna installed? If such facilities exist, describe in a very few words.

If there is no hospital in your county, pick the largest health care facility (clinic, etc.) and use it.

A typical message might look like this:

- 4
- Healthy Heart Community Hospital, 523 E 4th Ave, Bratwurst, WI 54999
- Joan Smith, R.N., ER Head Nurse, 414-345-6789
- 23
- Primary
- Yes. A 2m antenna on roof with coax to ER; no rigs stored on site

ECs, have fun with this! If you have AECs, this might be a good time to get them involved – apportion some of the info gathering tasks among them.

EC Conference: Sat 9 Nov

Plans are final for 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Wisconsin Emergency Management, 2400 Wright Street, Madison. Need directions? Email a query to Mack Brophy, N9NTB at: aces@dma.state.wi.us and he will provide them. Stan will need several things from you, by the **absolute deadline of Monday, 4 Nov, in the noon mail**. First, provide your name and call and the name and call of any hams coming with you. Second, the make and license plate number of any car you will be parking in the WEM lot. WEM Security needs this info, owing to new security measures at the facility. When you enter the facility, you will need to stop by the Security Desk and initial a sheet containing your reservations for the event.

Third, Stan will need \$6.00 per person (the tax is included in that sum) for a box lunch. Coffee is free; soda can be purchased in the break room machine.

Finally, let Stan know your lunch preference from one of two possible choices of a Cousin's Sub:

SUB 1: Club Sub – ham, turkey breast, cheese.

SUB 2: Turkey breast and cheese.

COOKIE 1: Chocolate chip.

COOKIE 2: Macadamia nut.

Both come with tomato, onion, lettuce and oil dressing on the sandwich, potato chips and the cookie.

If you don't specify a choice, we will assume the Club Sub with a chocolate chip cookie.

An agenda will be distributed when you arrive. Of course, it is still being developed at present. The SET, the three EmComm Courses, the State Hamshack, ID Cards, the ARES/RACES HF Net, Government – ARES/RACES Relationships, NWS – ARES/RACES Relationships and a Unit Profile are just a few items being considered for presentation.

Remember, money, names, calls and license plate numbers by Monday, 4 November, to Stan. See the masthead for his contact information.

SKYWARN Recognition Day

Submitted from the Milwaukee Area SKYWARN Association (MASA)

The event is coming up on December 7, 2002, 0000 - 2400 UTC. The National Weather Service (NWS) and the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) developed this annual commemorative day in 1999. It celebrates the contributions that volunteer radio operators make to the NWS during times of severe weather, using ground-truth, real-time reports of life- and property-threatening conditions.

For SKYWARN recognition day, operators visit participating NWS offices and contact other radio operators across the country and world for certificates and endorsements. No severe weather on this day, just severe fun for all hams and a very appreciative NWS. Courtesy of <http://hamradio.noaa.gov>

A Hospital Experience in Wisconsin

By Greg Ramlow, KB9SZP, Assistant EC, Winnebago County kb9szp@aresaces.org

[Greg sent this to me in an email message on 27 August, and I asked his permission to reprint it here for all to share. The initial response of the hospital personnel to ham radio help that Greg describes is common all over the country, because hospital folks don't know what our capabilities are. Then, when they find out, they are eager to have us. The booklet Greg describes is just excellent in introducing our capabilities to hospital personnel. As I mentioned a while ago, I have a supply and will send one to any EC that requests a copy (at no cost to ECs, though they were \$6 each; I purchased a supply with proceeds from my First 100 CD-ROM). Just read it yourself, use the information to help your hams understand what might be expected of them, and then if so inclined, present it to a contact at your local hospital. Stan]

I have been made aware of the booklet you have titled "Amateur Radio: A Communications Resource for Hospital Emergencies", and would like a copy for use by our group. I thought that this book would not only help the hospital personnel understand what our role

could be, but also could be used for training our own operators as to what we may be called upon to do.

During the Outagamie County Bioterrorism Exercise this spring, I was the Winnebago County Hospital Liaison. The hospital folks were more than willing to let us set up and test our equipment for 2-meter voice and packet prior to the exercise. They wanted to be sure that we would cause no interference to their equipment or problems to the patients.

On the day of the exercise, they were reluctant to use us for the same old reasons. "We have our cell phones." "Security has their own radios." "We have runners to take messages between departments," and similar responses. During the hospital's exercise debriefing, many comments were made concerning the hospital staff having to be taken away from their departments to run messages. The hospital Security Department radios (their radios plus the ones from the construction company that they borrowed) didn't work because they either didn't have enough battery replacements or chargers or the time to recharge them. Although their cell phones worked, all agreed that during a disaster similar to the exercise, the coverage would be inadequate, let alone the interference problems caused by cell phone use within the hospital.

After all was said and done, I informed them that we had communications not only to the Incident Command Center, but also to ambulances, busses (each one had a ham on board), and to other agencies involved in the exercise. Furthermore, we also were talking to radio operators within their facility at their emergency room, ambulance entrance and on the hospital's patrolled perimeter. That turned the trick! Everyone thought we were a terrific resource and that we were clearly underutilized. They agreed that we should be integrated into future hospital training exercises.

Computers, Again

I have again had a small cache of computers donated – a few from The Medical College of Wisconsin and one or two from individuals. Those requests still on the list from last winter are being filled first. However, a promise of more to come from the government of Ozaukee County may swell the supply in the near future. If you can use one, let me know so I can put you on the list.

These are all Pentiums (I no longer rebuild 486 machines, except for laptops, which are particularly useful for packet in many situations). Each gets a thorough interior cleaning, followed by testing to make sure all hardware is functional. Then the partitions on the hard drive are removed and new ones installed,

followed by a complete format. This sequence insures that there are no viruses on board. Then, all installation files from the Windows 98 (Second Edition) CD-ROM are mounted on the hard drive. Finally, Win98 is installed from those files on the hard drive. This means that later on, if a Win98 file is needed, the Operating System will not ask for a CD-ROM. It knows all the files are already on the hard drive, since it was itself installed from that location, so it just goes and gets what it needs. Finally, the software is checked thoroughly, and the file system is defragmented. A Win98 Startup Disk is provided with each machine, as are a mouse, keyboard and power cable. Monitors are available if I have one, though I usually do not accept these donations because the demand is low.

These are useful machines for packet. Many have sound cards and CD-ROM drives, so they are also useful for PSK-31 or other digital ham modes. Or, use one in an EOC for logging or other administrative duties. They range in speed from 75 to several hundred MHz, and brands vary from Compaq to Dell to what have you. All will do the job. Get on the list!
Stan

The Not-So-Lazy Days of Summer

By Dennis Rybicki, K9LGU, STM

Now's a great time for Ham Radio activities - especially those that enhance our public service contributions. Not only is the weather conducive to antenna work, but a summer's eve spent tightening ground connections, checking cables, adjusting the VOX or CW paddle, and getting the most out of each feature of our equipment is time very well spent.

We can find plenty of operating practice in conjunction with parades, bike rides, fund-raiser walks for nonprofits, and weather spotting. The section traffic nets continue to meet every day, the ARES/RACES net meets Sunday morning, and local nets can provide the answers to questions and well as great camaraderie.

Summer is a good time to meet our neighbors. Learning who's who in a neighboring county can be of great benefit for ARES/RACES exercises as well as good mutual support for area or club activities. It's not too soon to start thinking of a fall presentation to your local club about traffic handling and the National Traffic System. Your STM will be pleased to help, and it can be tailored to your club's needs. Let me know so I can check my calendar early.

Can't think of the name of that operator on the net? Get a QNI roster at www.w9ixg.eboard.com or let me

know and I'll be glad to send one via email or U S Post.

Leadership Changes

Did you know there is an HF net on Sunday mornings at 7:45? Listen to 3.9935 MHz and you will find it in full swing, with typically around 25 check-ins from all over the state. Formerly the RACES Net, it is now the ARES/RACES net, and **Richard Polivka, N6NKO**, has been appointed as **ARES/RACES Net Manager** effective 27 August. Yep, you will find his entry in the latest EC Roster, page 7, under Special Groups and Individuals. Download a copy from the web site. Join the net some Sunday to see what it is all about.

While not a new appointment, **Mack Brophy, N9NTB**, is also listed on page 7 of the new roster as **Wisconsin State Hamshack Manager**. Mack has been doing that job for years, and it is about time we got his contact information in our roster!

Charles Buggs, KB9OUC, has taken over the position of **LEC for the Red Cross**, effective 9 September. Charles is a member of the Communications Committee of the Greater Milwaukee Chapter of the ARC, which is now the state lead chapter for disasters. He is a dispatcher for Public Safety at Milwaukee School of Engineering. Welcome!

After over 10 years as DEC for East Central Wisconsin, **Wayne Pennings, WD9FLJ**, is stepping down effective 15 September. Outagamie EC **William Niemuth, KB9ENO**, will replace Wayne on that day. Bill will continue as EC for Outagamie County for the present. A well deserved THANK YOU to Wayne, and a WELCOME to Bill in his new position.

EmComm I is Firing Up

For your information, if you have not already heard about it. The ARRL sponsors three Emergency Communications courses, EmComm I, II and III, designed to increase the capability of hams to respond to situations in which their communications capabilities can be used. These courses have been going on for a while now, and have undergone several revisions to make them better. However, a new factor has entered the situation – September 11th.

One of the results of the new Homeland Security efforts was the award to the ARRL of a grant totaling over \$180,000. The ARRL is using these funds in a concerted effort to train 1,500 hams nationwide in EmComm I, the “starter” course. Right now (early September), those of us who are online “mentors” (teachers who interact via the web with students as they progress through the course) are busy training 200 hams in both the course material and in the mentoring process. It is hoped that these 200 new men-

tors-to-be will complete their training and be ready to act as mentors themselves by the end of October. Then, they will begin their work in training the 1,500 hams nationwide.

Exactly how are those funds being used? That requires a bit of explanation. Before now, the individual ham was required to pay the \$45 course fee. The ARRL charged this fee because they wanted the EmComm program to be self-sustaining, and they do not run the web interaction directly. While hams author the material in the courses under the ARRL organization, a for-profit company that services many such courses on the web was hired to do the ARRL course. The change is, that while the individual ham still has to initially come up with the \$45 fee, upon successful completion of the course, the fee is refunded.

This system has three positive effects. 1. The individual ham gets top notch EmComm training for free. 2. The ARRL coffers are not drained in providing this important new program. 3. The USA gets a cadre of hams trained in emergency communications.

Now, this is definitely a “heads-up” for you ECs. After the end of October, if you haven't already taken the course yourself, **sign up!** It will cost you nothing when successfully completed, and it is darn good training. Keep an eye out on the ARRL website for announcements concerning the course in mid- to late October. Then, get yourself registered. Also, talk the program up in your unit meetings, and get your members to sign up, as well.

Is EmComm I tough? NO. A typical lesson consists of reading sometimes one, usually two, sometimes three screens of material (which you can print out and save, if you like). Next, you are tasked with a Student Activity, which varies in content. Sometimes you apply what you learned to a hypothetical situation:

“Create a jump kit list suitable for your area of the country. Make a list of contacts and resources to keep in the jump kit. Share your results with your mentor”

“Outline a communication plan for a three-mile fun run on a straight course that will introduce or test an EmComm skill or procedure. Send your outline to your mentor.”

In other cases, you may need to contact your SM or other official to obtain some information pertaining to the lesson. Sometimes, you are asked to send a message through the National Traffic System (after plenty of training to prepare you to do that).

Then you answer typically five multiple-choice questions covering what you just read. They are NOT difficult, but do insure that you understood the material

covered. Oh yes, there is a 25 question final exam after all lessons are done.

EmComm I has twenty such lessons, covering a variety of topics, all of which you complete in eight weeks. It is really very interesting, and useful. No matter how experienced an emergency communicator you are, you will learn from the course. Take it! It will be a Good Thing.