



# The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator



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**WISCONSIN  
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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 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the date shown on the issue. Thus, the February issue is mailed on or about the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. Articles and notices must reach the editor no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to be considered for the February issue.

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## Preparing for Future Terrorism

By Jerry Boyd, K6BZ

*[Jerry Boyd is a dean among emergency responders and hams, alike. He is a former police chief, fire chief, author of five books (two on law enforcement subjects) and countless articles on ham emergency communications. He is currently a public safety consultant and university instructor in the public safety arena. He is an ARRL VE, mentor in the EmComm courses, and an active EC, just like you. This is an important article, reprinted with permission from the April 2002 issue of WorldRadio. Please read it carefully!]*

Those who were paying attention instead of playing politics could have predicted the events of 11 September 2001. No, they could not have predicted the exact tactics used by the terrorists that horrific day. But, the fact that international terrorists were bent on

targeting United States soil should have been obvious.

Most in the intelligence, law enforcement, and military communities are certain that the WTC and Pentagon attacks which killed thousands will not be the last such acts of aggression to be experienced in our lifetime. While our nation and its allies are currently enjoying much success in ridding Afghanistan of the Taliban and al-Qaida, Afghanistan is not the only country to host terrorists, nor are the Taliban and al-Qaida the only terrorist organizations we need to deal with. In fact, for the foreseeable future we, as a nation, would be well advised to maintain vigilance at all times.

If one agrees that future terrorist attacks on our soil are possible (some think probable), then it is important for all of us to prepare to meet the effects of those attacks. Much has been learned from the 9-11 experience that will be helpful should future attacks occur. I read a number of police and fire professional journals and it is clear those professions have learned much from WTC and the Pentagon. Amateur Radio operators responded to those events, and the lessons learned and passed on by the Ham volunteers who assisted at those venues should lead to changes within Amateur Radio as well.

Hams were not the only non-paid volunteers to respond to the carnage of 9-11. There were reserve police officers, volunteer firefighters, and unpaid emergency medical responders as well. In the professional (law enforcement and fire) journals I have read and discussions I have had since that date it has been clear that some volunteers responded in inappropriate, and in a few cases harmful, ways. Certainly, they were well intended. However their lack of caution (the "John Wayne Syndrome") and lack of familiarization with the command system in use served to the detriment of their potential contribution. To the credit of Amateur Radio, I have not heard or read of the same criticism concerning the Amateur Radio response. That does not mean, however, that there are no "learning points" for the amateur community as a result of last September's events.

What should we in Amateur Radio be doing now to prepare ourselves for future responses to terrorist incidents? There are a number, of things. First, as

The Wisconsin EMERGENCY COORDINATOR has been discussed many times in many places, affiliate with an "official" Amateur Radio emergency communications (EMCOMM) group. In New York and Washington, it was the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and other legitimate groups that provided service. Very few, if any, amateurs acting as individuals were able to provide effective assistance.

Second, develop a survival-oriented "mindset." That is what paid, professional, emergency responders do. It is the correct mindset, i.e., the will, training, preparation, and attitude to survive and perform their tasks, that enables success. Third, be aware that terrorist acts are different from other natural or man-made disasters. With terrorist acts *one must constantly anticipate secondary/follow-up attacks!* I do not intend, in any way, to criticize or "Monday morning quarterback" my colleagues who lost their lives, heroically, entering the WTC to save lives. Had they anticipated the first airliner to crash into the structures would be followed by a second it is likely their actions would have been different.

Experience is often a cruel, but effective, teacher. We now know that one horrible terrorist act may well be followed by a second. As EMCOMM providers, we are "first responders" much like police, fire, and EMS personnel. We need to learn the lessons they have learned. Approach all incidents with caution. Take time to assess what has happened and to anticipate what might yet happen in the immediate future. Had NYPD, FDNY, Port Authority Police, and others thought of a second suicide plane they might well have held back on entering a doomed structure. The harsh reality is that had they done so, the death toll might well have been 350 less than it was.

One thing clear from the tragedy of 9-11 is the *absolute need* for all responders to such events to be intimately familiar with the "Incident Command System" (ICS). ICS was used exclusively by federal, state, and local agencies to coordinate the activity of responders who descended on the various scenes.

Amateur Radio operators are responders. We need to respond effectively. To do so we must be conversant with ICS and how it works. There are two easy ways to gain that familiarity. One is to enroll in the ARRL's Continuing Education EMCOMM courses. They are now offered "on line" or, in many places, in the classroom. The second is to take the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) home study course on basic ICS. It is available via the FEMA website: [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). A third, but slightly less convenient way to gain the necessary knowledge is for your ARES, RACES or other group to be trained by

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your local fire department or law enforcement agency.

Traffic handling is the major contribution, which amateurs will make at and near the scene of terrorist incidents. The ARRL numbered radiogram format, which, historically, has been what amateurs have learned, has a role to play. That role is in regards to Health and Welfare traffic passed on behalf of organizations such as the Salvation Army and American Red Cross. Participation in the National Traffic System (NTS) will help make you proficient in that type of message handling.

There are other kinds of communications (administrative, operational, and tactical messages) that are even more commonly used in the response to events such as we experienced in September. Those types generally do not use the ARRL format. For that type of traffic, "radiograms" are too cumbersome and our "clients" (agencies and organizations we serve), do not want more than brief, accurate, verbal messages. To be an effective communicator for those types of messages, you need to learn and practice "plain language" message handling skills. Your local ARES or RACES VHF net is an excellent place to engage in that endeavor.

The attacks on 9-11 "raised the ante" on past incidents (previous WTC bombing, USS Cole bombing, U.S. Embassy bombings, etc.) The next level, which we may well see, will likely include weapons of mass destruction (WMD). WMD events can be biological, chemical, or nuclear. We know from the anthrax mailings that biological assaults are both possible and deadly. The government of Iraq has used chemical weapons. Nuclear materials are available enough that terrorists can manufacture "dirty bombs". A dirty bomb is an explosive charge with radioactive materials attached. While not a nuclear weapon in the common sense, such a weapon can, nevertheless, contaminate the immediate area of the explosion with fatal doses of radioactive material.

It is now common practice in any suspected terrorist incident for specialists from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the military to respond immediately. One of their functions is to sweep the area for any evidence of WMDs and, if found, to implement the necessary precautions. Such personnel did respond to both the WTC and Pentagon sites. Fortunately the planes' hijackers carried aboard no contaminants.

What is the learning point here? In future terrorist incidents, Amateur Radio EMCOMM responders may be delayed in deployment to "ground zero" or elsewhere until scene safety can be established. Further, EMCOMM personnel may be required to wear issued safety gear (biohazard

The Wisconsin EMERGENCY COORDINATOR suits, breathing apparatus, etc.) perhaps for prolonged periods of time. That will require a level of fitness exceeding the level required in the past. Responders may also need to take prophylactic medications (ala the military's controversial anthrax vaccination) as a measure to prevent becoming victims themselves when working in a potentially contaminated environment.

There is much to be learned from the past if we are to adequately prepare for the future. It is indeed unfortunate that for Amateur Radio EMCOMM personnel the future may well include more responses to terrorist incidents. Now, perhaps more than ever before, it is time to take our preparations seriously.

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## Leadership Changes

**Jim Lackore, AD9X**, has stepped down as **DEC for South Central WI**. Jim is now fully retired and has less at-home time and on-call time for the DEC job. Thanks, Jim, for your past work, and good luck with the full-blown retirement!

Effective 14 July, **David J. Meyer, KB9VLH**, became **EC of Green Lake County**. Dave is Communications Officer for the Green Lake County Sheriff's Department, and previously worked as a dispatcher for the City of Ripon Police. He is a member of APCO and certified with the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch. Clearly, he is in a great position to help both fields with one foot in Emergency Dispatch and the other in ARES/RACES. Wonderful, we are pleased to have him! Of course, his data is already on the web site in the EC Roster, under the For ECs section. Surrounding county ECS (Waushara, Marquette, Columbia, Dodge, Fond du Lac and Winnebago), send him a welcome (KB9VLH@arrl.net)!

After 27 years of stellar service in ARES/RACES (yes, that is **27 years**, and it must be a state record), **Jack Lukes, WB9QXO**, has retired as EC for Wood County. He was present at the July 16<sup>th</sup> ARES/RACES meeting in Adams County, hosted by Adams EC Rosie Maybee, KB9PZK, where your SEC spoke, and I presented Jack with a Certificate of Appreciation for his long tenure and hard work. Taking his place as **EC for Wood**, effective 17 Jul, is **Michael Podawiltz, KF9X**, who is currently also President of the Mid-State Repeater Association, sponsors of the 146.790 repeater near Rudolph. Welcome, Michael, we are very pleased to have you on board. You only have 26 years more to go to match Jack's record! :)

**Mike Shoenfuss, N9GHZ**, stepped down as EC for **Clark and Taylor Counties**, effective 21 July. Clark is in the Central District, while Taylor is in the North Central District. We are looking for replacements for

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these two counties. Are there any current ECs in neighboring counties willing to take one under their wing?

**Mark Smick, N9UNW**, has become EC for both **Buffalo** and **Pepin** Counties, effective 28 July. Insofar as the SEC archived records show, Mark is the first EC in Buffalo in over 13 years, and the first EC in Pepin, ever! Mark served as a deputy sheriff in both Trempealeau and Eau Claire Counties, and was Associate Dean for Public Safety Services in Western Wisconsin Technical College for 32 years, where he was a trainer as well as Dean, managing over 150 part and full-time instructors for public safety courses. What a great background to interface ARES/RACES with first responders! Welcome, Mark. Neighboring ECs, send him a hello at marksmick@centurytel.net.

**Jim Staatz, KG9RA**, EC for Chippewa County is also picking up the baton for **Eau Claire County**, effective 6 Aug. Former EC Rob Indrebo, KB9SDF, has stepped down.

As of this writing (6 Aug), we have only seven unfilled EC slots in the state: Rusk, Clark, Taylor, Monroe, Florence, Langlade and Menomonee. We gain some and lose some! Your SEC sure would be pleased if all 72 counties were covered by year's end. Know some good hams in any of those counties? You are authorized to contact them and talk to them (a.k.a., arm-twist) about the position. Notify me, and I'll send them a packet of materials and application.

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## Annual EC Conference

It will be here before you know it. The keynote speaker for this year will be SE WI DEC (and past SEC) John Leekley, WB9SMM. John is a lawyer, and will speak on a subject of high interest to all of us: ham liability and Workers Compensation issues in Wisconsin. His title: **This Tort Is Not A Dessert!**

Mark your calendars now; Saturday, 8 Nov, beginning promptly at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 3:00 p.m. The conference will be held this year in Winnebago County, hosted by Dan Lenz, KB9IME and his Winnebago County ARES/RACES crew (thanks, guys).

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## Undocumented IC-2720H Data

By Greg Hammerel, W9GDH, Barron County EC

Did you know this model WILL cross-band repeat? While not in the instruction manual that comes with the rig, it will. Here is how: To activate the cross-band repeat function, push and hold **LOW** and **DUP** buttons, then press and hold **SET** for 2 seconds. Two flashing "L"s will show on the display, indicating cross-band operation is enabled. Now you've got a

The Wisconsin EMERGENCY COORDINATOR new tool for emergency communications. To reverse the feature (cancel the cross band repeat function), push and hold SET for 2 seconds. Now it will be back the way it was sent from the factory.



## Wisconsin's Dairyland Triathlon and Amateur Radio

By John Springer, KC9JS

HFP Racing and the Racine County Convention and Visitors

Bureau teamed up to sponsor the finest half Ironman distance triathlon in the Midwest and Chicago metropolitan areas on Sunday July 28, 2003. Racine Wisconsin, with its picturesque lakefront and harbor, was the perfect location for such an event. 1300 participants signed up for the event. The course entailed a 1.2-mile swim in chilly Lake Michigan (water temperature, 67°F), a 56-mile bike course and a 13.1-mile run.

The Kenosha/Racine Counties ARES Group, the Lakeshore Repeater Club and the Lake County (Illinois) RACES Group teamed up to handled the communications and



APRS (Automatic Position and Reporting System) operations from the Racine County Sheriff's Department Communications Van, located at North Beach, the site for

the triathlon. Using the Lakeshore Repeater Club's 442.000 MHz and 127.270 MHz repeaters, Lloyd Gorsiski, WB9RGO (pictured here on the left), and Mike Melnik, N9PMO, handled the NCS (Net Control Station) communications activities between 37 hams stationed along the course route, as well as with those traveling with emergency medical and support vehicles that accompanied the participants.



To enhance the triathlon race committees' tracking of participants, amateur radio operators stationed at specified points along the race course would report a competitor's racing number as he or she past that position. This information was reported to Net Control and then handed over to Kimberly Jackson, N9KKC

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(top of next column), who logged the competitor's position and time. A race committee member could re-



view the results at any given time during the triathlon and see the progress of the event. In addition to the logging of participant positions, the APRS system provided visual tracking and pinpointing of the lead

racer, as well as emergency and support vehicles.

Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, developed APRS. It uses amateur radio to transmit position reports as received by a GPS device. Pictured to the right is George Planic, W9GWP, from the



Lake County Illinois RACES Group staffing the APRS computer and radio system set up in the Sheriff's Department Communications Van. Pictured at the left is Larry McCalvy, WA9JMO, chairman

and lead operator for the Amateur Radio Communication Group.

## Western WI Meeting Notice

By Greg Hammerel, W9GDH, Barron County EC

The ECs from the Western part of Wisconsin are setting up a regional get together during the Eau Claire Hamfest on Saturday, 6 September. The meeting will be held in the main building at the hamfest. ECs traveling to the hamfest from any region are welcome. KMOX, Jim Richerson, Twin Cities NWS, will also attend and will discuss SkyWarn for the area his office covers. Other topics planned: 1. Grant funding. 2. Training. 3. SkyWarn. 4. Things that have worked well for ECs in their county. 5. Things that have not worked for the ECs. Hope to see you there!

**EC Conference**  
**Saturday, 8 November**  
**10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**  
**Winnebago County**