

	Chairman: Chris Tarr W9JOL Vice Chair: Jim Westover KB9KBK Secretary: Greg Braun N9CHA Treasurer: Jim Sheetz K9OQO	Frequency Coordinator: Dave Karr KA9FUR Newsletter: Gary Bargholz N9UUR Tech Advisor: Bill Becks WA8WG
	www.wi-repeaters.org	chairman@wi-repeaters.org

To: All Wisconsin Amateur Radio Operators
 From: Chris W9JOL, Chairman
 Date: March 21, 2016

re: Welcome! "Humans are allergic to change. They love to say "We've always done it this way."
 I try to fight that" -Grace Hopper

Greetings!

I'd like to start out by thanking our current board, as well as our past Chairman and Vice Chairman, Dave KA9WXN, and Pete AB9PJ for their service. I'd also like to congratulate Jim on his election as Vice Chairman. As I was kind of thrown in to the position, they've all extended offers of help which I'll be gladly accepting.

The reality is that spectrum coordination is more important today than it's ever been. The barrier-to-entry to becoming a repeater owner has never been lower. It's very easy to buy an inexpensive repeater online and have it up in the air in no time. While we should welcome those who want to put these resources on the air, there is no doubt that coordination challenges come about with all the new modes and technologies available.

We are extremely lucky to have, in my opinion, the best frequency coordinator in the hobby with Dave Karr. Other states look to him for his guidance, leadership, and knowledge, and it leaves us well positioned to meet the coordination challenges that will likely arise in the future.

I do believe that it's time to really focus on the road ahead. We're often reminded that coordination isn't mandatory, and nobody needs WAR's permission to put something on the air. They're right. However, there are many benefits to coordination - by being coordinated, you can be assured that you're protecting other systems, and that your system is being protected. Uncoordinated systems almost always bear the burden of resolving interference issues.

In my opinion, we need to continue to do our best to work with everyone who wishes to have a system coordinated. We need to be transparent about the benefits of coordination, as well as the challenges that exist in coordinating with our neighboring states. When we are unable to coordinate a system in the configuration that the applicant requests, we should be able to offer to work with the applicant to find options. I know that Dave does an excellent job with this - we just need to make sure that everyone knows that those options exist, and that we want our role to be seen as helpful rather than adversarial. I want potential repeater builders to automatically want to work with us to reach a common goal, rather than see us as a not-always-necessary evil.

I strongly believe that we, as an organization, should exist to serve as a resource to repeater owners - current and potential - from coordination, to interference assistance, to even connecting those who need technical help to those who may be able to offer it. We are not a governing body, rather we are a service organization.

I know we have some work to do. It's a big job, and no person can do it alone. We've had some very smart and passionate people hold positions in the association. It's easy to get burned out, and it's also easy to get a good bit of inertia going.

The rising tide lifts all boats. We need your help to do that.

The members at the annual meeting recommended that we put together a few working groups to come up with some educational information for the website, perhaps cover some topics on repeater building, best practices on installation, etc. In addition, I'd like to hear some ideas on what WAR can be doing for our members.

I would then like to take the ideas that these groups come up with and present them to the board for approval. While it's easy to suggest changes, it takes many hands to implement them. To that end we'd then solicit the help of the groups to get these ideas implemented.

Most of all, I just want to hear from you. What can we do better? What are we doing well? What are your thoughts and concerns?

My email address is chairman@wi-repeaters.org. I promise to reply to any email that you send me, even if it's just to let you know that I've read it. I'd especially like to hear from you if you'd like to help shape the future and become a member of one of our planning groups.

Nothing would please me more than to see that in a year from now we have a strong, vibrant organization that can be passed on to the next "caretaker".

Thanks and 73,

-Chris, W9JOL