

Wisconsin Association of Repeaters  
NEWSLETTER  
September 1999

Hello, I hope your summer has been going well.

Congratulations are in order for Nels WA9JOB. Nels was recently elected to a two year term as a Director on the Board of the National Frequency Coordination Council. I am very pleased to see Nels continue his involvement in his area. I am confident he will continue to serve all of us well on the national board. Thanks Nels.

Earlier this summer I had the opportunity to go to the Dayton Hamvention. This was only the second time I have gone, and I still am amazed at it's size, and all the fine "junk" you can find there.

While I was at Dayton, I attended a number of meetings as the Chairman of The Wisconsin Association of Repeaters, and had the opportunity to meet and hear Riley Hollingsworth K4ZDH, the F.C.C.'s chief "Enforcement Officer".

Mr. Hollingsworth spoke about, and discussed his priorities for Amateur Radio, especially its problems and his ideas for "cleaning up a few things". The first thing Riley wants to attack is the 80 meter band. Those of you who listen or try to operate there, know the problems, malicious interference, and bad language that goes on. Riley related a story of meeting a young amateur who had just received his extra class license, Riley said he must be proud, and happy that now he could operate on all the bands. The 14 year old replied it was very nice, but he still could not operate on "80". When asked, "How come?" he replied that his father felt it was best if he did not operate there. The problem is greater than that however, much greater. The HF bands reach internationally, others around the world hear this garbage, and it spreads a very bad image of U.S. Hams, and reflects badly on America in general. The U.S. is NOT generally loved overseas these days, and Amateur Radio MUST do its part as an International Good Will Ambassador, or at least not embarrass us overseas. Mr. Hollingsworth spoke about attending a recent ITU meeting in Europe where another country at the table brought in a recording of some of the activities on 80 meters, set a portable cassette player on the table and played back the tape. They then asked if the U.S. really needed more spectrum for such activities. The American delegation was quite embarrassed to say the least, and it made any further discussions on the advancements or even defense of the HF bands quite difficult.

Riley's second priority is 2-meter repeaters. Although not International in scope as 80 meters, the 2 meter problem has another side as well. Local interference on Repeaters is a problem across the country, with some notable "hot spots" in a few major cities. Milwaukee is one... And is known to Mr. Hollingsworth, enough said.

The hidden problem with interference on the 2 meter band, is the fact that this is the most active, and most known band in Amateur Radio. Many others listen to 2 meters, scanners enthusiasts, Media and News reporters, Government and Law enforcement agencies etc. Most new hams start off on the "Repeaters". If you want to show a friend or coworker "Amateur Radio" it's most probably in your car with a 2 meter rig, or with a 2 meter HT. Can you just turn on your 2 meter and not have to worry about anything that might come out of the speaker? Can you leave your 2 meter on while driving across town for a meeting with your boss or coworkers in the car? Would you let your 14 year old operate 2 meters? The point here is that we must all think about the future of Amateur Radio. If new or potential Hams are put off on our hobby by some garbage that comes out of your HT at just the wrong time... We all suffer, Amateur Radio suffers. Your Grandmother, and your daughter MUST be able to listen to 2 meters. We must all do our part to operate in a manor that will welcome the next generation of Hams, and ensure the future of amateur radio.

I found listening to Mr. Hollingsworth very insightful, and fascinating. He is a very knowledgeable person, quite friendly and personable, but focused and driven on dealing with a few bad operators who are spoiling Amateur Radio for all of us. The part 97 rules are there as "guidelines", the spirit of the rules is what needs to be reinforced. He recognized that the F.C.C. has not "been around" in the enforcement area for awhile, but that has changed. He also points out that Amateur Radio has, and still is self policing by design. The ARRL does have a place in the enforcement arena, as does the NFCC for frequency coordination and spectrum management. He does not suggest personal confrontation with the malicious jammers and malcontents, "Leave them to me...". He does leave to us the "general spring cleaning" that should happen continuously to maintain a welcoming and friendly atmosphere on all of the Amateur Bands. Our F.C.C. License gives us many privileges and rights, but common sense and courtesy should guide us as well. Maliciously interfering with another is of course wrong, and against the rules. Many other more "gray" situations happen every day. Your "right" to key up on any frequency to speak your mind at any time is given by your license, but it may not always be "right" to do so.

The next meeting of the Wisconsin Association of Repeaters will be held on Sept. 11, 1999 in Mequon at the Chalet Motel. The Chalet Motel is located at 10401 N. Port Washington Rd. just north of Donges Bay Road. From the south, take I-43 to the Port Washington Rd. exit and go north about one mile. Or from the north, take the Mequon Rd. exit, and turn south on Port Washington Rd. for one mile to the hotel. Dutch treat lunch at noon, with the meeting starting at 1:00 P.M. Remember, it's your lunch business that pays for the room. I'm looking forward to seeing you there!

73 N9UUR