

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF REPEATERS



*December 2001
Newsletter*

*Member: Mid-America Coordination Council
Founding Member: National Frequency Coordination Council*

From The Chairman N9UUR

The National Frequency Coordination Council has recently concluded its election of new members to the Board of Directors, and the new Board of the NFCC has elected its officers for 2002. I trust you will recognize at least one name on the list...

NFCC Officers for 2002

President, Nels Harvey, WA9JOB
Vice President, Dave Baughn, K4XI
Secretary, Dick Isely, W9GIG
Treasurer, Clay Freinwald, K7CR

Yes, our own Nels Harvey at it again! Congratulations Nels and Dick Isely! Wisconsin and Illinois continue to be involved and well represented on the national level.

My thanks again to Don Michalski W9IXG for setting up a meeting place in Madison for our last meeting. I would have liked to see a few more people from the SW area at the meeting... WAR is making an effort to move the meetings around the state to allow "local folk" to attend a meeting. But if the locals don't show up, it's a LONG drive for the officers.

The Madison meeting was well attended by officials however, Carl Bergstedt K9VXW the Frequency Coordinator for the Illinois Repeater Association, and the IRA Vice President Dick Isely, W9GIG were both there. Dick is also our ARRL Central Division Director, and as you read above, now the Secretary of the NFCC (talk about wearing a few hats!).

Next W.A.R. Meeting:

**1:00 PM
Saturday Dec. 8th, 2001
Milwaukee, WI**

**Brisco County - Wood Grill &
Saloon, Menomonee Falls WI
I45 and County Highway Q
N43d 11' 28.5" W88d 07' 6.7"**

We took the opportunity to ask some straight forward questions about what's up (or not) with the NFCC. It seems as if a lot of talk happened about a year or more ago, and not much has been seen since. Dick and Nels brought us up to date on a number of issues, and without dragging it all out to much, know that our NFCC representatives are aware of WAR's concerns with getting some movement on recognition of the NFCC by the ARRL and FCC. There were some meetings with the FCC in the past... But then there was a Presidential election year (anybody still remember Al Gore?), and our new President appointed a new Chairman to the FCC, Michael Powell. So the FCC has been up to "other issues", and we are now awaiting any policy changes, or different emphasis on the part of the FCC toward HAM radio. I surely hope that the FCC allows Riley Hollingsworth to continue to devote the time and effort he has over the last few years to the Amateur Radio Service, and that the FCC will follow through on the discussions and plans that the NFCC has started with them.

We also took the opportunity to express our concerns with Dick as an ARRL Director over the ARRL Repeater Directory. It's coming up on the time to report our data again, and there still is no plan in place to change the system, reflect local Band Plans, or make sure errors that got through in the Wisconsin listings last year don't happen again.

To All ARES and RACES affiliated Clubs and Repeaters: Stan Kaplan WB9RQR, the Wisconsin ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator and Chief RACES Radio Officer, has over the last two years, combined ARES and RACES into a single group in Wisconsin. This means that all ARES members (and ARES repeaters) are RACES members as well, and vice versa. WAR reflects an ARES or RACES affiliation note attached to many machines in Wisconsin in our database and publications. It is not WAR's intent to summarily change all the affiliation listings in our data as it is not really a coordination issue. But many of you may wish to (or should) change your affiliation listing to ARES/RACES, as you are now "one entity". If you're confused, contact your local ARES EC, or Stan WB9RQR, or look over the information and past newsletters on Stan's web page which can be found at: <http://www.execpc.com/~skaplan/index.html>

From WAR's point of view, simply send us a note, or wait for your next coordination renewal and note the change on your renewal form.

73, Gary, N9UUR
Chairman, W.A.R.

Greetings from the Coordinator's Desk
Dave Karr / KA9FUR

New 2m pairs?

In the last newsletter I made mention of a proposal to create additional repeater pairs on two-meters and solicited comments from interested parties. The motivation for doing this is to allow for shared-non-protected (SNP) pairs that can be used without concern of interference from established repeaters in adjacent states.

This summer we were approached by more than one ARES group seeking input on where they could setup portable 2m repeaters. While we have defined a SNP pair, the reality is that this particular pair has established occupants on it in neighboring states and the potential of interference to/from those incumbents.

The other part of the consideration would be to afford some relief to non-metropolitan areas that are otherwise inhibited from new repeater operation due to the saturation of repeater occupants in the more urban areas.

At the upcoming December meeting I will propose the following repeater pairs and usage:

<u>Output</u>	<u>Input</u>	<u>Use</u>
146.415	147.415	Coordinated
146.430	147.430	SNP - Itinerant / Portable
146.445	147.445	SNP - Itinerant / Portable
146.460	147.460	SNP - Any
146.475	147.475	Coordinated
146.490	147.490	Coordinated

The Itinerant / Portable repeater pairs would be used only for that purpose and are intended for use during emergency operations or special events. The other SNP pair would be the replacement for the existing 145.230 pair and would be available for use for permanent repeaters.

The pairs earmarked for coordinated repeaters would be used only to give relief to operators outside of urban areas and not for the addition of new repeaters in areas already well saturated by existing repeaters.

The proposal that I will make at the upcoming meeting will be to tentatively adopt, but not to implement this plan. The next logical step would be for the WAR board to open discussions with the adjacent states coordination entities for their input into adopting part, or all, of this plan.

Again, I would encourage you to direct your comments to either myself or any of the board members prior to the meeting if you will not be able to attend.

Renewals and such

In the last newsletter I indicated that after the September meeting that we would be de-coordinating repeaters that we had not heard from. I did hear back from a few repeater owners that received the second request letter that I had sent, but that had never received the original renewal packet sent in June. To those select few that I promised to re-send the information to, my schedule has not allowed me to regenerate the paperwork and send another copy out. While those repeaters do not appear in the directory, they are still considered coordinated.

My time demands for work have lowered and I expect to send the de-coordination notices as well as the re-requests for renewal over Thanksgiving weekend.

I am not planning another renewal cycle until early next year, and maybe we can use that cycle to get everyone back onto a regular renewal schedule. I do appreciate everyone having patience with me over the past two years. It was not humanly possible to get everyone's records updated in a single batch.

As we close out 2001, I can honestly tell you that I've gone over everyone's file at least once, and that the bulk of all the technical information is now stored in our database. All the paper files associated with each repeater having also been optically scanned into an image database. Somewhere between 6 and 7 thousand pages of documents are now available for our instant reference and span two CD-ROM's.

Time for an organizational change?

I knew this would be a tough job when I volunteered to do it but was caught a bit off guard as to how much time it really does entail to stay on top of things.

I estimate that the coordinator's job requires an average of 15-20 hours a week. In the latter half of this year, my time demands have not allowed me to necessarily stay on top of all coordination issues on a weekly basis. In general, I try to initially process new requests within two weeks. Depending on the type of request, it may take more than one month for me to be able to respond to a request. I have to work with coordinators in adjacent states, and then to again find a time slot where I can sit down and finish processing a request.

In the midst of this, I'm fielding e-mail and phone call request for information or status updates as to where I am at in processing an individual's request. On at least two of those occasions such requests reminded me that I'd forgotten to respond to a pending request.

The bottom line here is that in order to do this job correctly, there is more work than one unpaid volunteer can be expected to handle. Much of what I find myself doing tends to be more clerical than actual coordination related work.

Gary, N9UUR, and I plan to formulate a proposal for the December meeting as to how to best distribute the workload among the existing board members, or whether to create one or two additional assistant coordinators roles.

If you have good organizational skills, a good technical background with strong computer literacy skills and are interested in contributing your talents, please contact either Gary or myself and express your interest.

Trustee vs. Holder of Coordination

As I mentioned at the last meeting, I'm proposing changing whom we view as holding a coordination. The primary goal is to cut down on unnecessary paperwork for both you and I each time the legal trustee of a repeater is changed.

Presently our policy considers the legal trustee of the repeater as the individual that holds the coordination. From a coordination standpoint, WAR is concerned only with the technical operation of a repeater and to whom that coordination is associated. We have the freedom to issue coordination to a group, and that's how we rationally treat the coordination when it's clear that a club is involved anyway. However, as a matter of current policy, if the club changes the legal trustee, so must we change our records to indicate that new trustee.

This proposed policy change would simply reduce the paperwork for everyone and better align our policy with the end goals.

Coordination

I'm finding that this is a drum that I'm going to have to keep beating because despite our best efforts, the basis of coordination and the expectation of mutual respect and cooperation still isn't clear to some.

Here's a few examples of problems experienced within the past few months.

A coordination was issued this year for a new repeater. The coordination letters spell out specifically the conditions of the coordination including the location, antenna height, gain, pattern, power, etc. The coordination letter also contains the statement "*Changes to the above characteristics that affect the repeater's coverage area must be coordinated in advance of those changes.*" A few months ago, I heard back from the trustee that the repeater had been constructed and was now on the air... but in a different location.

Two independent renewals' were received this summer for repeaters that have been on the air for a number of years. The hitch was that the renewals indicated that the repeater's were now in a new location. Both were in metropolitan areas, both have co-channel and adjacent channel occupants to consider and in one of the cases the computer models showed that the potential for interference was increased. Both repeaters were already short spaced and no evidence was provided of any attempt to coordinate this move with the other co-channel user.

In all of these cases, I have no flexibility but to immediately drop the coordination's from our records. From the trustee's perspective I'm sure its easier to "beg for forgiveness" after the fact than it is to try and coordinate the move when it is first contemplated. Because I feel the need to help resolve such situations, what this does is add more to my workload than would have been required to deal with the situation on a proactive basis.

Sometimes these situations arise out of ignorance, however when they occur with long established repeater trustee's involved it seems a different view of coordination is being used.

Do I really have to say it again? Coordination is about cooperation.

The approach I've taken thus far is to de-list the coordination's involved and then on the lowest priority basis I have, to contact the affected parties and try to work out a solution. For such situations to take precedence on my to-do list is not fair to majority of the other repeater owner's. Take the extra five or ten minutes to pick up the phone and call me, or to drop me an e-mail, and let me know what it is that you propose to do. I can outline the steps needed based on the circumstances of a given situation.

We all share RF spectrum that is a multi-billion dollar resource. None of use "owns" a repeater pair. Your coordination is a recommendation from the coordinator, and the FCC has consistantly stood by the coordination entities in instances where the coordination was rescinded as a matter of policy. Any duly licensed amateur can operate an uncoordinated repeater, however if that uncoordinated repeater interferes with a coordinated repeater, be assured that the FCC is going to side with the coordinated repeater owner.

Please know that I am here to help anyone within the limits of reasonableness.

All for now. Comments invited,

Dave / KA9FUR

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by the Chairman, Gary Bargholz. It was held at JT Whitney's Pub and Brewery in Madison, Wisconsin.

Introduction of members and guests:

KF9CS Mark Heimmermann
K9OQO Jim Sheetz
WA9JOB Nels Harvey
N9QA Dave Knaus
N9VSV Jeananne Bargholz
KG9NG Sam Rowe
K9ITW Bill Lang
N9UUR Gary Bargholz
W9GIG Dick Isely
KA9FUR Dave Karr
K9VXW Carl Bergstedt

Secretary's Report:

There was one correction to the minutes as printed in the newsletter. Dave Karr said the call-sign listed for Rodney Pajula for the approval of the June minutes was incorrect and should have been N9GHE. Nels Harvey, WA9JOB, made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction. It was seconded by Dave Knaus, N9QA, and approved by the members present.

Treasurer's Report:

The balance for September 8, 2001 is 2171.67. There were no expenses outstanding at the time of the report.

The ARRL still has not sent money for the 2001 repeater directory. The ARRL is investigating the delay and will correct it.

Nels Harvey, WA9JOB made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. It was seconded by Dave Knaus, N9QA, and approved by the members present.

Newsletter:

Gary, N9UUR, reported that the newsletter is running smoothly. The Acrobat Adobe converter allows him to convert the newsletter for electronic distribution. The number of mailings sent out has been reduced. The only problem is that the email addresses are maintained in multiple databases and Gary has to merge them for email.

After some discussion we decided the newsletter will not be attached to the email. Instead the email will contain a link to the latest copy on the web page. Members can download the PDF from there.

Gary showed us a new rendition of the WAR emblem. It was created using vector graphics and placed in EPS. Now it can be resized without loss of detail. The members present gave Gary the okay to use the new rendition. Later Gary admitted that he had already used it in the last newsletter and no one noticed.

Frequency Coordinator:

Dave invested a huge amount of time investigating an interference complaint between the new Cambridge repeater and the Mt. Sterling repeater on 147.360. Dave presented his findings to the members present. Based on his calculations and observations both machines are operating as expected and within WAR's published limits. The problem was attributed to the unusual

conditions we have been experiencing for the past month. Dave documented all his data and will present this information to the repeater operators. The group agreed that the best thing to do right now is wait and see if the problem was attributed to conditions or if a technical solution is required.

Dave received a coordination for an ATV repeater with an input of 434. WAR's band plan does support coordination of ATV repeater inputs on this frequency. We decided that the input frequency of 434 is not coordinated under our band plan and therefore should not be listed in the repeater directory. The members decided no further action was required.

Dave expressed concern about the lack of communications from the Michigan and Minnesota repeater councils. The only current information WAR has is the data contained in the ARRL Repeater Directory. Gary is in contact with the chairman from Minnesota and working to resolve the situation.

Dave provided a list of 20 repeaters that will be de-coordinated because of failure to respond to multiple requests within the last couple years.

WAR needs to get the word out that it does coordination and not a repeater directory. The problem is that repeater owners notify us after they make changes. WAR needs to verify any changes before they are implemented. This is to ensure the changes do not interfere with any neighboring machines.

WAR's policy is to communicate all coordination details with the trustee of the repeater. We have had a few problems with this procedure in the past. Gary and Dave are working on a procedural change to handle the situations where the trustee is not the best choice.

The members have been made aware of the time commitment Dave has been putting into the coordination effort. Most of Dave's time is lost in doing clerical work and very little remains for actual coordination duties. Some ideas to reduce the paper shuffling included: renewals every two years, splitting coordination and membership payments, multiple coordinators, ... The board members will discuss this and propose a solution by the next meeting.

Dave has been requested to coordinate two portable repeater pairs. The repeaters are to be used in temporary/emergency situations. There is no standard with the neighboring states. No conclusion was reached. Dave will investigate further and report back.

Chairmen's Report:

Gary discussed the NFCC elections. Nels Harvey, WA9JOB, and Clay Freinwald, K7CR, have been nominated for the board. Gary moved that WAR second the nominations for Nels and Clay. It was seconded by Dave Knaus, N9QA and approved by the members present.

New Business:

WAR received correspondence from the Eau Claire hamfest committee. The 2002 hamfest is April 20. We discussed having our June meeting at the hamfest but the dates will not work. The location of the June meeting is unknown at this time.

The December 8th meeting will be at Brisco County - Wood Grill & Saloon, Menomonee Falls WI. Highway 45 and County Q.

Nels moved that the meeting be closed. Dave, N9QA seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Heimmermann (KF9CS)
Secretary
Wisconsin Association of Repeater

SAVE MONEY!

In an effort to reduce the operating costs of W.A.R., and "get with the year 2001". We can now offer you the option of receiving future W.A.R. Newsletters via e-mail attachment in Adobe Acrobat format.

If you would like to receive the Newsletter by e-mail rather than U.S. Postal mail, please drop me a note at:

n9uur@wi.rr.com

SEND US YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS!

W.A.R. maintains a list of e-mail addresses of our members and others interested in W.A.R.

Would you would like to receive information important to Frequency Coordination, W.A.R., reminders of our quarterly meetings, **or a copy of our Newsletter via e-mail?**

To be added, just send a request to:
n9uur@wi-repeaters.org

The most current and up to date listing of Coordinated Wisconsin Repeaters may be found at:

The Wisconsin Association of Repeaters www Home Page:
<http://www.wi-repeaters.org>

List of Officers & Appointments

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