

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF REPEATERS



September 2011 Newsletter

Member: Mid-America Coordination Council

Founding Member: National Frequency Coordination Council

From the Vice-Chairman

Hi all,

On July 26 I received an email from Bob Schmidt tendering his resignation as Chairman of WAR due to personal reasons. I want to wish Bob God speed in getting his life back in order and hope he will be able to rejoin WAR at a later date.

As Vice Chairman I have assumed the Chairman's role in Bob's absence. The first item on the agenda is to get a meeting setup for the election of Officers and to insure we do have at least one meeting this year. There are two positions open and need to be filled; Chairman & Vice Chairman. The other two positions, Secretary & Treasurer are currently filled and I have not been told they will not run again. I am also going to suggest that we hold one (1) meeting a year and hold it in early fall and suggest we hold it in Appleton at the Red Cross center.

I hope to see all of you at this important meeting and help us map out the future of WAR.

Cul, Dan Bolander...

W.A.R. wishes to express our condolences to the family of Larry Schroeder, KA9KDC, who was the Secretary/Treasurer of the Illinois Repeater Association.

On July 10th, Larry suffered a heart attack, and subsequently passed away. He was 52.

Larry was an asset to amateur radio, and the coordination community in general, and will be missed.

**Next W.A.R. Meeting:
Saturday, Sept. 10th, 2011
1:00 PM**

**Offices of the
American Red Cross
Appleton, WI**

1302 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Appleton, WI 54911

Due to the fact that the Spring Meeting (usually where we elect new Officers for the year) was not held, we will hold the "Annual Meeting" of W.A.R. to include the 2011 Officer Election at the September 10 meeting in Appleton.

Due to construction on Wisconsin Avenue, it is best to approach the Red Cross Offices from the NORTH.

From the Assistant Coordinator

In 2010 we handled 44 coordination requests. These requests added 24 new repeaters, 4 new links and 16 repeaters that moved to a different location. So far, in 2011 we've handled 19 coordination requests for 13 new repeaters, 1 new link and changes to existing repeaters.

Re-new (rinú:,rinjú:) v.t. To complete the yearly paperwork we all hate.

Overall I'd say the 2010 renewal process

went relatively well. On May 14th, 2010, 187 renewal forms were mailed. On August 25th, 2010, 45 renewal forms were sent out. Nine forms were not returned, which resulted in the following 13 repeaters and 2 links being de-coordinated. (Please see the listing below.)

Per W.A.R. policy the owners of these repeaters need to appear at the next W.A.R. meeting (Sept 10th) in person, or by proxy, to request re-coordination.

On May 11th, 2011, 172 renewal forms were mailed, due back by August 15th. Take a careful look at the repeater listings you received with this newsletter. If there's a "<" symbol by a repeater it means the 2011 renewal for that repeater has not been received. Bear in mind that this list was generated on August 4th when only 68% of the renewals had been returned. For an up-to-date status see the text file listings on the WAR web site.

The W.A.R. forms on the web site have been updated so that you are now able to enter your data on the form, print it to mail in, and then also save a copy on your computer with all your data present. Another change was on the ERP Worksheet and the repeater and link forms, which now calculates the ERP figure once you enter in the basic information. No more trying to do log and inverse log calculations yourself.

Milt Klingsporn, N9WSZ
Assistant Frequency Coordinator

Repeaters De-Coordinated in 2010

City	Callsign	Frequency	Coordination Date
Black River Falls	N9JCX	443.6000	6/3/1996
Fort Atkinson	N9DTT	224.4200	12/31/1984
Hales Corners	W9JOL	443.4250	10/19/2007
Janesville	KC9KUM	443.2250	10/22/2009
Manitowoc	W9DK	145.1100	4/18/2007
Manitowoc	W9DK	146.6100	4/2/1997
Milwaukee	KC9LKZ	442.46875	8/18/2007
Milwaukee	KC9LKZ	1290.050	8/18/2007
Oshkosh	KB9IME	147.2400	12/5/1979
Pewaukee	W9RCG	443.1250	11/28/2006
Sturgeon Bay	K9KJM	444.000 (w/links)	4/2/1998
Sturgeon Bay	K9KJM	920.000	7/1/1991
Sturgeon Bay	K9KJM	1282.100	7/1/1991

From the Coordinator's Perspective

When the Wisconsin Association of Repeaters was founded in 1972, personal computer ownership was in its infancy, and the ease and pace at which we would be able to communicate with each other electronically could certainly not have been accurately foreseen.

Four decades ago, the structural needs of the organization and coordination methodologies utilized, were both necessary and appropriate. Over the years, as the relative cost of technology has decreased, the organization's ability to improve the quality of work product has likewise increased, in no small part due to the quality of data we have on hand for each coordinated repeater or auxiliary station, not only here in Wisconsin, but in most of the neighboring states.

Since accepting the role of coordinator in late 1999, I have contributed countless hours to improving the technical side of the organization, always with a forward looking eye as to where realizable improvements could be made.

In 1999, I was surprised in the difficulty in obtaining a current policy document, and that there was no published band plan. Among my first efforts were resolving those issues. The next several years were spent auditing the database records and working with the repeater owners to determine just exactly what the technical parameters were for everything currently on the air, and similarly figuring out what was no longer in use. As my efforts then turned towards making the renewal process easier for both of us, Gary/N9UUR, identified Milt/N9WSZ to lend much needed assistance with coordination related record keeping.

In 1999, I also saw opportunities to improve the level of communication we had with the adjacent coordinators, especially in the area of data exchange. Fast forwarding to the present, most of our adjacent states have adopted the use of the coordination software tool set that I wrote for WAR's use, a project I had originally started in 1996 when Dave/N9UNR, was coordinator and had asked for help.

The use of this software allows us to mutually share all of the data related to each coordination request. This means that we not only operate in a transparent fashion, but also help each other find the best solution to each request we, as a collective group of coordinators, receive. In operating in this fashion, the possibility of any one coordinator to hoard frequencies for "their" members no longer exists.

The most congested area of Wisconsin is adjacent to the most congested portion

of Illinois, and we have been fortunate to have such a well run organization to work with in finding solutions for amateurs in this region. Over the past decade, both the board and membership of the Illinois Repeater Association (ILRA) have welcomed my presence, and input, at both their annual board and general membership meetings, and from my perspective would say that the resulting discussions have always been open and productive.

The ILRA has structured their organization with 3 officers, 4 directors, a frequency coordinator, a technical committee chair, and a newsletter editor. The seven board positions are elected, and provide greater opportunity for geographic diversity, allowing the board members to remain aware of what may be more localized concerns.

The meetings are always well attended, which by my estimate, tends to range from about 60 to 90, with most attendees representing one or, by delegation, more repeater owners. Attendees check in with the Secretary/Treasurer, who issues ballots to those qualified to vote, and tellers are chosen to tabulate votes.

It's all very professional and proper, and safeguards that the organization is acting in the interests of its members.

During my tenure as coordinator, my focus has clearly been more on the technical rather than the operational aspects of WAR. Occasionally, when I have provided operational input, particularly on how loosely WAR has been operated, it led to several disagreements and no productive resolution to issues I see placing the sustainability of this coordination group in jeopardy.

As to sustainability, I don't think that WAR is alone in this regard. It is not only difficult to place demands on the degree of participation a volunteer should make, but also to recruit the volunteers in the first place. In some of the areas represented by adjacent coordination entities, we have received a few requests from amateurs in those areas for coordination assistance because they are not seeing timely responses from their local coordinator. Correspondingly, we have seen prolonged periods of no communication from these same areas.

I'll be the first to admit that in recent years, my response rate has been unacceptably slow, and tends to vary quite a bit. I recognize that the problem stems from higher priorities being given to family, friend, and work related activities, all taking time away from our volunteer work.

The point I'm working towards here is that the administrative side of local coordination, in general, is in need of an over-

haul, and that what those changes may be, should be a topic of interest to all of WAR's members.

At past ILRA board meetings, and this year during ILRA's general meeting, I spoke with the group at large about the mutual inter-dependence our respective groups have with each other and that it is in our collective best interest to see that coordination within our region remain viable. I then put the question to the membership as to whether the ILRA would be willing to have its board members discuss the possibility of participating in the formation of a larger coordination entity that represented members in a larger geographic region and set aside the division by geopolitical boundaries.

The SouthEastern Repeater Association, Inc. (SERA), which was founded in 1971 and is now responsible for coordination in 8 states, was cited as an example of how such an organization has been successfully operating. Local representation in the form of district directors, along with localized frequency coordinators, form the foundation of their organization, and represent a more cohesive pool of resources than if each area were staffing independent organizations.

Without any predisposition on what a mid-western version of a larger coordination group might look like, or to what level of interest other states might have in this, the ILRA members voted to allow the ILRA board to discuss the possibility of combining their resources with others in the region.

For the very few that have attended WAR meetings over the past few years, you will recognize the topic above as one that I have raised in the past, and the members present similarly agreed that WAR should be open about having such a discussion if it was to the mutual benefit of everyone.

I understand the perspective that as long as you don't currently have a problem, then maintaining the status quo represents the lowest impact to your participation in coordination. If you think that's the best approach, then it is an approach in which we respectfully disagree.

Whatever the outcome of WAR's upcoming election may be, we do need some volunteers who are both interested in ensuring the organizational aspects coordination here remain viable, as well as actively participating in the fundamental output of this organization, which are recommendations which avoid interference between repeater and auxiliary stations.

Thank you for considering my viewpoint.

--Dave / KA9FUR

**Wisconsin Association of Repeaters
October 30, 2010
Meeting Minutes**

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The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm. by the Chairman, Bob Schmidt. The meeting was held at Fire House #2 in Greenfield, Wisconsin. Bob thanked Dave Schank, KA9WXN, for arranging the meeting and thanked the Greenfield Fire Department for allowing us to use the facility.

Introduction of members and guests:

KF9CS	Mark Heimmermann
N9GMT	Bob Schmidt
N9WSZ	Milt Klingsporn
KA9FUR	Dave Karr
N9BMH	Marty Rotta
AB9CD	Mark Tellier
KA9WXN	David Schank
WB9BWP	Dave De Febo
WA9JOB	Nels Harvey
KC9HYQ	Beth Clark
KC9HBO	Doug Clark
N9QIP	Len Kreyer
WA0AFB	David Felland
WB9WNF	Dave Hegyera

Secretary's Report:

There were two corrections to the minutes of the newsletter. Under Communications, Raymond Staiduhar's call-sign should be KA9QMD and Steve Sundquist's call-sign should be N9FSE.

Nels Harvey, WA9JOB, made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. David Schank, KA9WXN seconded the motion. It was approved by unanimous consent.

Treasurer's Report:

September 2010 Balance	
\$5193.23	
YTD Income	\$1869.00
YTD expense	\$1034.60
YTD net	\$ 825.40

Less newsletter costs and travel expenses.

Nels Harvey, WA9JOB, made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by David Schank, KA9WXN, and approved by unanimous consent.

Assistant Frequency Coordinator:

WAR has received complaints that there is not enough time for the renewal process. So it was changed. Now the members are given 3 months to reply to the 1st renewal. The 2nd notice is

sent out at the end of September. A response to the 2nd notice had to be received by November 15. Those not received by November 15th are subject to automatic de-coordination. After the system is de-coordinated, they must request re-coordination at the following WAR meeting.

WAR sent out 187 renewals by mid-May. By October 141 replies were received. Then 46 2nd notices were sent. As of today's meeting WAR has received only 32 responses to the 2nd notice.

This year we have received 32 coordination requests. The requests are for new, moved repeaters, links and 5 requests for D-Star machines.

There was a discussion on current renewal procedure. The final conclusion: It works, Keep it.

Frequency Coordinator:

I have been working on issues with narrow bandwidth. This has involved D-Star in particular. The narrow bandwidth places signals 10kHz apart. WAR is working with two systems in the Madison area. This situation is not working out. The problem is with the consumer mobile receivers. The mobile receiver is de-sensed 30-40db by the near repeater. It appears a minimum of 15kHz may be required for D-Star machines operating in urban areas. I need to work closely with the Madison and Milwaukee fields tests to determine a working solution for this issue.

Questions:

Q: repeater owner has had issues with ker-chunkers in the evening. His question "is it ok to shut down the repeater during the night?" WAR policies and FCC rules have no issues shutting down a repeater during such situations.

MRC:

Milt attended the Minnesota Repeater Council meeting. Previously the MRC coordinated strictly by miles. Now the MRC is coordinating based on signal modeling.

Old Business:

Data storage site for coordinators:

The amount of data exchanged between the coordinators is about 4GB, the amount of data stored on a DVD. Bob was hosting the exchange for a while

until his internet tube was plugged by the coordinators bits and bytes. It became clear that the data exchange cannot be hosted by an individual's site. WAR is looking for a commercial hosting site to handle the data transfers between. Bob determined the price of this service ranges from \$30 to \$50 per month. One possible solution is to find a site that supports Rsync to only transfer the data blocks which changed since the last time and reduce the bandwidth requirements.

Currently Dave, KA9FUR, is hosting the file exchange on his companies' hosted site. This is a short term solution and may end at any time.

Over recent years the dues collected averages about \$1200. We discussed different ways to reduce expenses and help fund the cost of a hosted site. The biggest WAR expense is the newsletter. The April newsletter cost was about \$636 for printing and shipping. A breakdown of the newsletter just emailed:

Total Mailed	347
Complimentary	47
Paid	144
Unpaid Total	156
Unpaid 1-2 years	56
Unpaid 3-4 years	40
Unpaid > 5 years	60

A discussion of alternatives to the newsletter included: opting for a PDF version, send via email, placing the PDF on the web page, using a hosting provider with forums.

Dave, KA9FUR made this motion to fund an internet site:

"Whereas it's in the best interest of Wisconsin Association of Repeaters to provide an internet site capable of disseminating information to the membership and to facilitate the exchange of information between Frequency Coordinators, I move that the Wisconsin Association of Repeaters authorize the expense of up to \$50 (fifty) US dollars monthly to fund said internet site. The server that contains the site shall not be owned by any officer or appointee, unless its use is provided free of charge. The hosting service will be selected at the discretion of the executive committee and the frequency coordinators."

The motion was seconded by David, WB0AFB, and approved by unanimous consent.

Proposed change to the WAR By-Laws as published in the October 2010 newsletter:

That the last paragraph of ARTICLE III officers, Section D. Duties in the WAR By-Laws be changed

From:

W.A.R. officers shall be reimbursed for fuel to travel to meetings that are more than 60 miles from home. The per-mile amount shall be based on the published IRS standard rates to calculate the costs of operating an automobile.

To:

W.A.R. officers and coordinators shall be reimbursed for fuel to travel to meetings that are more than 60 miles from home. The per-mile amount shall be 35% of the published IRS standard rates to calculate the costs of operating an automobile.

Nels, WA9JOB, made a motion to accept the changes as printed in the newsletter. Marty, N9BMH, seconded the motion. It was approved by unanimous consent.

Proposed change to the WAR Polices as published in the October 2010 newsletter:

That paragraph XIV. Definitions, H. SIGNIFICANT CHANGE in the WAR Policy be changed.

From:

H. SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

A significant change is defined as moving the station location, a change of Holder of Coordination or tone access, or increasing antenna height and/or ERP power.

To:

A significant change is defined as moving the station location, a change in bandwidth or tone access or increasing antenna height and/or ERP power.

Len, N9QIP, made a motion to accept the changes as printed in the newsletter. Nels, WA9JOB, seconded the motion. It was approved by unanimous consent.

New Business:

Meeting Attendance. An open discussion about concerns with meeting attendance, ideas for improvement. Some highlights from the discussion. The attendance is about the same as in the past. The attendance varies where the meeting is held. It is a good idea to have the meeting in different locations. It allows better access to hams

throughout the state. One idea is for WAR to test having a virtual meeting. The meeting would be broadcast over the internet with phone in capabilities.

Would you participate if WAR started hosting a virtual meeting?

WAR is asking for any suggestions from the membership to improve membership involvement, methods to facilitate the exchange of ideas and communications between the membership, board and appointees.

Meeting locations:

We have had some good places to meet in the last couple years, especially today in the Greenfield Fire House #2 training room. The problem with restaurants is the noise, pa-systems or a minimum purchase requirement. We need a location which fits a ham's budget (free).

By-Laws committee:

Bob wants to clean up the By-Laws. Correct wording errors, holes in the logic and sections which conflict with one another. If you are up to fixing the issues or a complete rewrite of the By-Laws contact WAR. The Executive committee will appoint members of this committee. Compare the Illinois IRA group's By-Laws to WAR's to understand the effort required. The changes will be published in the April 2011 newsletter and then voted on at the following November meeting.

Proxy Voting System:

We discussed implementation of a proxy voting system. The system should allow more members to participation in the direction of WAR. This will prevent the organization from being driven by a small group of folks who are able to attend the meetings. Some of the ideas included: a proxy post card, a web based system or teleconferencing. No final decision was reached. We are looking for input from the membership.

Other:

Should WAR become 503-c:

After the discussion, the consensus is WAR does not meet the requirements for 503-c. WAR can become a non-stock, non-profit corporation. The expense is a yearly fee of \$25-\$35. Once incorporated WAR could open a bank account in its name. The Executive committee and its appointees would be protected from liabilities. The recommendation is for WAR to access

it's need for incorporation and report back to the membership.

NFCC:

The group is in disarray. There is no interest in rebuilding the organization at this time.

Under Construction:

Milt brought up the issues with the construction of new repeaters which are never completed. WAR's policy is that repeaters under construction are expected to be completed within 6 months. If the construction is not finished after 6 months an extension can be requested. WAR is pretty open with the policy. Just keep us informed. In some states after 6 months you're automatically de-coordinated. There is some repeater construction dating back to 2007. Milt plans to send out a letter to inform the owners that their coordination will be terminated unless WAR receives proof the machine is operational and on the air.

Public Service Announcements: none

The next WAR meeting will be sometime in March. The specific date and location are TBD.

Nels, WA9JOB, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Len, N9QIP.

Bob, N9GMT, closed the meeting. We adjourned at 3:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Heimmermann (KF9CS)
W.A.R. Secretary

List of Officers & Appointments

Chairman - Vacant

Vice-Chairman - Dan Bolander WB9TYT
N16909 Love Lane, Pembine, WI 54156
(715) 324-6701 vice-chair@wi-repeaters.org

Secretary - Mark Heimmermann, KF9CS
1523 E. Moonbeam Tr. Appleton, WI 54915
(920) 749-9024 secretary@wi-repeaters.org

Treasurer - Jim Sheetz, K9OQO
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(920) 757-9457 treasurer@wi-repeaters.org

Frequency Coordinator - Dave Karr, KA9FUR
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