

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF REPEATERS



November 2006
Newsletter

Member: Mid-America Coordination Council

Founding Member: National Frequency Coordination Council

From The Chairman

Over the course of the last few meetings, a few e-mails, and my general travels, some questions and topics have arisen that I believe deserve comment, or at least some clarification.

I believe W.A.R. currently has good working relationships with the other Coordination entity's around our state. We must work with, and interact with the others around us in a timely and understanding fashion, with the goal of mutual cooperation and the "Advancement of Amateur Radio". A good idea is a good idea wherever it comes from. That being said, it does not mean that your current Officers or Coordinators say "yes" to whatever comes across our desks. There are no secret agreements or agendas' we do not treat one state around us better or differently than any other.

There are no "pet" repeaters, Clubs or people out there. Milt just sent me a "Second Notice of Renewal" on my own damn machine cause I'm a slackard and couldn't find a stamp, didn't send back the first renewal notice in time, and I'm the Chairman! (And no, I'm not making this up.)

Coordinations are not made for life. YOU must renew each and every year. If we don't hear from you, the Coordination is gone, and the frequencies are made available to whomsoever submits an application. I didn't make up these

Next W.A.R. Meeting:
Saturday Nov. 11th, 2006
1:00 PM

Brisco County Wood Grill
N96 W16865 Cumberland Ct
Menomonee Falls WI

US Hwy 41/45 and
Hwy Q EXIT
Lunch gathering at Noon,
Meeting starts at 1:00PM

rules, YOU did. The membership votes the rules and policy, the Coordinators are simply following the rules WE gave them. YOU de-coordinate yourself. So don't get mad at the Coordinators or Officers when you get a "Second Notice" or a registered letter, BEGGING for you to respond before we must, by the rules, de-coordinate your repeater. It's actually the thing we like to do the least. The Coordinators report that MOST of their time is spent wasted on trying, or begging the few folk who can't seem to find a few minutes to update their form, sign and return it.

And oh by the way, there is no such thing as being "Coordinated" but "W.A.R. just doesn't list my machine"... Duh? (Unless you have told us you're off-air for repair, or still under construction.)

W.A.R. has nothing against ARES. Most of the W.A.R. Officers ARE ARES members. This does NOT mean however, that a request from an ARES organization has any

more weight than any other request that comes before us.

On that same issue, I, the Board and the Coordinators all agree that when a Coordination request comes in, a blind eye is put toward WHO it's from, it's the order received, and the availability of frequency in the requested area that is of concern.

Of course, if someone repeatedly requests Coordination, but never seems to get a machine on the air, or never renews the Coordination, they make themselves "Questionable" as to the effort they deserve.

"Why should I fill out all these forms and stuff, what do I really get for it?"

Well here's how it all works. In my opinion, my Coordination of the frequencies for my repeater is the most important part OF my repeater. I can always fix or replace the gear, but without a "Clean" frequency to operate it on, it's not much good. Coordinating my repeater puts the frequencies into a live shared database, that ensures that if someone else (who plays by the rules) asks for a Coordination near me, W.A.R. makes sure that I will not be interfered with. This all happens in the background, and I'm not even aware of it. I just get to sleep happy in my bed, knowing that "I'm Coordinated". So why in heavens name would I not want to keep my Coordination in place and promptly renewed each and every year (have I gone too far on this yet?). OK, so if somebody does not "play by the rules" and puts

up a repeater near me without Coordination, W.A.R. will stand behind me throughout any dispute. The F.C.C. has ALWAYS sided with the Coordinated repeater in these cases, and ordered the non-Coordinated operator to resolve the issue.

On the other hand, there is NO RULE that demands a repeater be Coordinated. Any properly licensed Amateur is well within his or her right to put a repeater on the air. I would STRONGLY suggest that they read the above paragraph however. But W.A.R. is NOT an enforcement entity, please do not look to W.A.R. to go out and knock of the door of a "rogue repeater operator". That's not our function, or concern (unless however there is an interference issue, we can help you through the proper processes in that case).

"The current W.A.R. folk are just a little clique", "a regime". I have no real response to this one, except to say I'm sorry anyone has that attitude toward me or W.A.R. I honestly do try to listen to all input, balance that with my (limited) experience, and surround myself with people I do feel are knowledgeable about Amateur Radio in general and Repeaters in particular. I try to make the best decisions and suggestions possible for Wisconsin repeater owners, and all Amateurs. That's all I can do. My style is direct, maybe too much so. I hope you find my articles straight forward, and even find my humor in them. They are not meant to be angry, condescending or demeaning to anyone. I apologize if anyone of you has taken offense.

I do hope to see you in Milwaukee on Nov. 11th. Please come and make your voice heard.

Gary, N9UUR

From the Assistant Coordinator

In mid-August 187 renewal forms were mailed. Only 117, less than 2/3's, were returned by the requested date. An additional 18 were received by the end of September, at which time 52 "second notice" renewal forms were mailed. I hope I won't have to send any third letters. As I pointed out last year, the W.A.R. policy states "Renewals of frequency coordination are not automatic and renewal will be extended only upon return of the Annual Update Form".

To those of you who responded promptly, thank you. To the rest, we have tried making renewals a simple process. In years past you had to complete the two-page coordination form for the annual renewal. Now we're generating the renewal form with the pertinent data about your repeater from our database. All you need to do is review it, correct it if needed, sign and return the form.

Speaking of returning the renewal forms. We need you to return the original form, not a copy you made, not an e-mail with a scanned image, but the original form that was mailed to you. Notice the bar-code symbols on the form? Those enable us to rapidly access your repeater's entry in the database. The W.A.R. database currently contains well over 300 repeaters and around 200 links. Copies and scanned e-mail attachments do not preserve the resolution needed to read the bar code, which then makes for a lot of hand entry work on our end.

If you're concerned about your coordination, please view the listings on the W.A.R. web site. I update the on-line listings periodically (note the date at the top of the page), more often while processing the renewal forms. In the text file listing, the "<" characters

to the right of the "Update" date indicates the repeaters whose renewals are "out of date". If your repeater's not listed, you either failed to notify me when it was put on-the-air after you received your coordination letter, or you told us it was temporarily off the air and failed to let me know when it was again made operational. Telling us it is now off the air but should be back up by "the end of the month" isn't sufficient. Too many things can happen between now and the end of the month. You need to contact me when the repeater is in fact again operational. Note, Renewal forms are sent for operational repeaters only. If you feel you should have gotten a Renewal form, maybe you forgot to let us know when your repeater went on-the-air.

For coordination purposes W.A.R. recognized the "Holder of Coordination". Sometimes the same person as the trustee, sometimes not, depending on circumstances. (The trustee of a repeater is between you and the FCC.) Any changes to a coordination require a letter from the Holder of Coordination. If a club is named as Holder of Coordination, then a letter signed by an officer of the club is sufficient,

Again, every time you contact me regarding a repeater's coordination, please identify the repeater by callsign, output frequency and city. Then I won't be guessing as to exactly which repeater you're referring to and we'll know that we're both talking about the same repeater. The program I use to access the database can only sort on those three parameters. Identifying your repeater by a club name or a portion of the frequency (e.g., 67) does not help me at all. There is no way to search the database based on a club name. Please help me to help you.

Milt N9WSZ

**Wisconsin Association
of Repeaters
July 15, 2006
Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by the Chairman, Gary Bargholz. It was held at Connell's II Restaurant, at the Eau Claire Airport.

Introduction of members and guests:

N9UUR Gary Bargholz
N9VSV Jeananne Bargholz
WB9TYT Dan Bolander
N9WSZ Milt Klingsporn
KI9H Jim Staatz
KA9OMC Steve Hart
KC9AMC Ron Larson
(Sorry if we missed any others, the sign in sheet was lost.)

Secretary's Report:

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes as printed in the newsletter. Jeananne, N9VSV, moved that the minutes be approved as printed in the newsletter and Milt, N9WSZ, seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Treasurer's Report:

Jim Sheetz (the W.A.R. Treasurer) was unable to attend the meeting, he did provide a report via e-mail, and Milt filled us in. The bank reports a balance of \$4124.42, minus the one outstanding bill for the Newsletter of \$554.43, which would leave us a balance of \$3569.99.

Some discussion was had on a number of topics:

Milt reminded the group that though not required for Coordination, there is a request for Dues to W.A.R. on the Coordination and Renewal forms. Renewal time is Dues time too.

Given the cost of fuel these days, the idea of reimbursing the Officers and Coordinators for gas money to attend our meeting was discussed. W.A.R. has paid for the travel expenses in the past for our Officers and Coordinators to attend meeting out of state. Having our meetings move about the state is a good idea, and allows the membership a voice within W.A.R. It was the consent of the group that we should adopt a policy that "Reasonable expenses", such as the cost of fuel, as opposed to a per mile amount, be reimbursed to the Officers and Coordinators for long distance travel.

Dan, WB9TYT, made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented. The motion was seconded by N9IH seconded. The treasurer's report was approved by unanimous consent.

Communications:

If you have an article for the newsletter, please submit it to:
n9uur@wi-repeaters.org
Remember to submit the article 30 days before the next meeting date.

WAR maintains a reflector at war@mailman.qth.net. The reflector allows for general discussions among the membership. There has been little activity on the reflector except for newsletter and meeting announcements.

Frequency Coordinators: Dave Carr (the W.A.R. Frequency Coordinator) was unable to attend. Milt provided an update from the Coordinators.

W.A.R. has received a number of coordination requests this year and Dave is currently working on three or four.

W.A.R. had received an inquiry asking if the frequencies posted included repeaters that weren't on the air. It was explained that only on-air repeaters are included in the lists posted.

Milt announced that renewal forms would be mailed late August and early September.

Dan asked if W.A.R. has had any recent communications with the Iowa Repeater Association. Milt replied that communications are good with all the associations in the surrounding states. When a repeater coordination is in the works, the proposed frequencies are communicated with the surrounding states and they are given thirty days to comment. W.A.R. hadn't heard from Iowa in a while then there was a flurry of communications and then nothing, again.

Dan asked if W.A.R. has been approached by Wisconsin ARES/RACES regarding coordination of their FEMA-linked state-wide system. Gary said that he is aware of ARES/RACES looking at commercial repeater sites and added that W.A.R. has not been approached for any Coordinations yet.

Chairman's Report:

Gary thanked Jim Staatz for arranging the meeting location.

Gary commented about the low attendance at the meeting. About two years ago, W.A.R. went from four meetings a year, to three. There have been issues with others over the years but things are fine now. Coordinators are working well with each other. Issues on the agendas are few and issues brought to the meetings are few. Gary asked if W.A.R. should only be meeting twice a year; adding that a special

meeting or an increase to three – or four – meetings could always be possible, if needed in the future. The board is open to comments but will consider this change for the 2007 meeting schedule.

Gary passed out information on the W.A.R. Bandplan which reflects current uses and technology in Wisconsin. (It could change in the future.) The frequency lists have always been published but Gary has added bar graphs for each band. The board will be reviewing the information and it will be published soon. (ed. note: a PDF document is now on the www site)

New Business:

In light of the high cost of gas, a new policy was proposed: "W.A.R. officers and appointed officials may request reimbursement for attendance at meetings over 100 miles from their home." Those attending thought this was a good idea and called for a vote on the new policy at the next meeting.

Steve Hart, KA9OMC asked if packet digis of APRS beacons will be coordinated. Dan replied that packet digis will be controlled but not coordinated.

Old Business:

None.

The next meeting is Saturday, November 11th in Milwaukee, WI.

Gary, N9UUR closed the meeting. We adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeananne Bargholz (N9VSV)
Wisconsin Association of Repeaters
Secretary *pro tem*

W.A.R. PDF Forms

What some of you may have missed is that the forms on the W.A.R. web site (www.wi-repeaters.org/forms.htm) can be filled in on your computer and then printed with all your information. In fact, print two copies, one to send in and one for your records.

Depending on your computer's settings, when you click on the form's link it will either open up on your screen or prompt you to open or save the file. If it opens you can then click on the icon that looks like a floppy disc and save the file, then you can complete the form offline from the Internet. If you save the file you can then open it in Adobe Reader. If you don't have Adobe Reader on your computer there is a link on the W.A.R. forms page for you to easily get Adobe Reader. (It's free.)

With the form opened you can click on the check boxes to put a check-mark in, or click on the box again to turn the check-mark off. Then click on the line in the form where you want to enter data. When your mouse pointer changes to look like an "I-beam" you are in a field to enter data. Move the mouse to the next field and click there, or merely press the tab key to move the pointer to the next field.

Most fields have a prompt that will appear if you move your mouse over the field. This prompt is there to help further identify the field and what data is to be entered there. Some numeric fields have validations that will not accept invalid numbers. For instance, when entering the latitude or longitude seconds or minutes you can only enter a number from 0 thru 59. Numbers lower than 0 (negative numbers) or numbers higher than 59 will not be accepted and you will be prompted as to the appropriate number range.

You will notice that there are several buttons on the form. These will perform various functions but will not be on the printed page. Some will clear the data you've entered in one specific area of the form; one will clear all the data on the form.

There are three contacts (name, address, etc.) that must be supplied: Holder of Coordination, Sponsor and Primary Contact. Since these are often the same person, there are buttons to copy the fields between these three. That way you don't have to keep typing the same information over. Or you can easily clear the information on one contact without having to re-enter the entire form.

Once you have all the fields entered, you can press the print button or use the print icon in the program's tool bar.

Wisconsin Association of Repeaters E-mail Reflector

W.A.R. has an e-mail list serve for Wisconsin Coordination issues, and Repeater Building. Please sign up at:

<http://mailman.qth.net/mailman/listinfo/war>

List of Officers & Appointments

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