

Wisconsin ARES/RACES Announces New Leadership Bill Niemuth retires following five years of exemplary service, paving the way for Gary Payne Wisconsin Rapids, WI October 24, 2008: Bill Niemuth announced his retirement at the annual Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (ARES/RACES) conference in Wisconsin Rapids. Bill served for five years as the Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator for Wisconsin ARES, and the Chief Radio Officer for Wisconsin RACES. In Wisconsin both groups combine to provide seamless support to served agencies in case of emergencies or disasters. The most recent need came with the late spring flooding that required historical communications support. Bill has been active in emergency management and disaster response through the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). Since 1990, Bill has held increasingly responsible volunteer positions with the organization. In January 2004, he was appointed to ARES State Emergency Coordinator and RACES Chief Radio Officer for Wisconsin. Bill holds multiple FEMA certifications in emergency management and incident response. He is also president of two nonprofit, tax exempt organizations, which provide communication networks to local and state ARES teams. When not volunteering for Amateur Radio, Bill is the Global Security Manager for Kimberly-Clark Corporation. When asked what parts of his five-year tenure as the head of ARES/RACES he is most proud of he replied "I led the largest activation in WI ARES/RACES history for the response and recovery of the June 2008 Flood. This activation included nearly 130 members, 2208 personnel hours and 7251 miles driven in nearly three weeks. Mutual aid was successfully used. We created a great partnership with the Department of Health Services and nearly 200 hospitals in Wisconsin. This program, made possible through a Hospital/Bioterrorism grant, helped WI ARES/RACES: more Wisconsin ARES/RACES Announces New Leadership Page 2 · Write activation plans for 70 percent of Wisconsin hospitals · Provided ham radio equipment in those hospitals to aid in communications service · Succeeded in getting hospital employees licensed as Amateur Radio Operators · Attained a grant, which led to the formation of WeComm, Ltd. and its developing communication networks I helped create WeComm, Ltd., a nonprofit, tax exempt organization which is building voice and data networks in Wisconsin for improved statewide communications capability for WI ARES/RACES teams. We were able to make Wisconsin a Simulated Emergency Test (SET) power house finishing in the top five in participation in 2006 and 2007 and number one in the United States for Net participation in 2007." Gary Payne will take over leadership of Wisconsin ARES/RACES on January 1, 2009. Gary has been interested in Amateur Radio since childhood, but delayed becoming licensed until 1993. He progressed from Technician class to Extra Class in less than six months. Gary joined Milwaukee/Waukesha ARES/RACES in early 1994, and became the Emergency Coordinator for Walworth County soon after. In that role Gary developed a relationship with the County's Emergency Manager, developed a Skywarn Weather Spotting team, and a strong local ARES/RACES group. Gary was appointed District Emergency Coordinator for Southeast Wisconsin in September of 2004, When appointed DEC a major goal of Gary's was to make ARES/RACES more visible and active in District-wide served agency meetings and activities, so he attends SEWCRSG (Southeast Wisconsin Communication Resource/Support Group) meetings. Gary said, "I contacted the Regional Director of WEM (Wisconsin Emergency Management) and arranged to attend their Southeast Region meetings at least quarterly. I also participate in the Southeast Wisconsin COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disasters) serving five counties in the area." He has continued to refine and improve a program of mutual aid among the counties in the Southeast District which was used to provide support to the ARES/RACES response to the Hartford Tornado in June 2006, the flooding in

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Racine County in August 2007, and the flooding in Jefferson County in June 2008. Gary developed the E-Sponder sites for Wisconsin ARES/RACES and has been managing the program of expanding its use throughout Wisconsin ARES/RACES including the District and county levels. Gary has also been President of Lakes Area Amateur Radio Club (of Elkhorn) for the past several years. Don Michalski, Wisconsin Section Manager for the American Radio Relay League, when asked about the transition said "It is with thanks and regrets that I accept Bill's request to retire. He has served Amateur Radio and the people of Wisconsin well. I am pleased that Gary has accepted the duties of Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator, and I know he will do well also." Amateur Radio Emergency Services is a branch of the American Radio Relay League, and operates under its jurisdiction.