

# Madison County Emergency Management Agency

## Communications Division

Tom Ecker, Executive Director

Steve Riley, Director of Communications

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December, 2020

Our December meeting is Tuesday, December 1, 7:00 PM at the EOC. Please plan to attend. Masks are required for all visitors and social distancing (6') must be maintained. Should the situation change you will be notified on the Sunday net.

SKYWARN Recognition Day 2020 is Saturday, December 5. Usually amateurs operate from the various NWS offices around the country, but due to Covid there will be limited operations from those sites. Amateurs are encouraged to communicate to others this year. Operation is from 0000 UTC to 2400 UTC. Additional information is available at: <https://www.weather.gov/crh/skywarnrecognition> .

I'm sorry to report that Bill Griffin, N9XXT, is a Silent Key (October 17). Bill has been a very active member of the Communications Division and the ARC since 1994. We will miss Bill's (and Vera's, KB9JFS) cheerful checkins on the Sunday night nets.

Again, I'm sorry to report that Tim Galbraith, KB9VE, became a Silent Key on October 22. Tim has been a very active member of the Communications Division since the '70's and one who we could always count upon. In addition to being the Trustee of the .09 repeater Tim was a key player in keeping the weather stations going. Tim will be missed.

Yet again, I'm sorry to report that Derek Hammontree, KI4JMJ, became a Silent Key on November 6. Derek was an active member of the Communications Division and also the Field Support Team from 2013 until he moved to Fairmount in 2018. He left our group when he moved out of the County.

Our group of Amateurs has been fortunate over our entire life to have a county CD/EMA EOC. That benefit has been the result of our steadfast support of the mission of EMA in support of our county. Our new EOC is one of the best in the State, and our County Director has provided strong support of amateur communications with a fine **Emergency Communications Center**, MCU-1, MCU-2, storage space and most importantly tower space for our repeaters. Our EOC is used frequently by other local and statewide organizations. In October Tom hosted the State DHS Director, and District meetings are regularly held at our site. In fact, the facility is used daily by groups other than our membership. Those visitors should come away with a very positive view of our facility and our organization. Our **ECC** is a frequently visited part of our EOC preparedness resources. Unfortunately, it's not always up-to-snuff when it comes to appearance. In fact, it is sometimes an embarrassment. There is no reason why we cannot leave the ECC room in a condition that we'd be proud to show to others. One chair per operating position, the appropriate log and notepads in front of each radio, the radio equipment itself ready to be turned on and used

and other items removed from the room if not a direct contribution to the communications mission is what should be expected. **It's up to every member and every other user of the ECC to make certain that they leave the room in better shape than it was when they walked in. If we do we can continue to say we support the EMA organization 100%. Otherwise, we are not responsibly doing our part.**

The Run-The-Mounds Communications Exercise was held on Sunday, November 1. This was perhaps the coldest event (about 40° with some wind) that we've had in our 27 years of using the Anderson Road Runners event as our communications exercise. This was again an excellent comm exercise utilizing **146.580 simplex** and all observation points had good signals to all others. There were nearly 300 runners/walkers that we observed for safety and basic timing. We had 11 communicators participate over the 3 hour time period: **WA9CWE, KC9DJU, N9DR, K9DYR, N9EOT, W9GDH, KD9NAU, KD9NAW, N9PVI, N9VZL, KV9W**. We utilized **MCU-2** as the Net Control location at the Start/Finish, and the Chesterfield Fire Dept. and EMS provided 3 vehicles on-scene in case of problems (we had none again). Thanks to all who came out to support our exercise. We've posted the map of our observation points in the EOC for all to review. By the way, we had a couple of instances of radios that weren't pre-programmed. In one case we got it on frequency with minimal effort. In the case of the mobile that we had planned to use as the net control station we couldn't get it to program (no manual), so we fell back on another that I brought that was pre-programmed. Another lesson learned! We also had one case of a radio being "bumped" off channel. The Lock function helps prevent that from occurring. Every exercise is a learning opportunity.

From ARRL ARES newsletter:

"A Red Cross nationwide emergency communications drill was held on Saturday, November 14, with ARES and other operators asked to demonstrate the ability to deliver digital messages to specific addresses via Winlink. Participants were tasked with sending one message to the Red Cross Divisional Clearinghouse for their geographic area."

Locally, a formatted message was sent from the Madison County EOC and was accepted. This was in the format of the American Red Cross 213 (ARC-213) Form. We demonstrated our ability to communicate effectively using a mode commonly used in emergencies and to communicate with a Served Agency. EMA is able to demonstrate capabilities that keep us prepared and trained for potential threats and hazards in Madison County.

From Wayne Robertson, Red Cross:

Hello, we are still tabulating the results (sound familiar? ☺) and hope to have an Event Summary out before Thanksgiving but here's what I can tell you so far:

1. Overall, a smashing success!
2. Over a thousand messages were passed
3. Forty-seven states were involved as well as Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Canada.

Thank you for being a part of this and keep an eye on your inbox next week for more information.

Best Regards, Wayne

Thanks to all Communicators in Madison County EMA for continued participation in training, exercises, and skill enhancement. We are a successful and well prepared group and that is because of your participation.

73  
JEFF

Also from Jeff: The Santa Net is held every evening between Thanksgiving and Christmas on 3.916 MHz at 7:15PM Central Time.

See you on Tuesday,  
73, Steve

### **Notes from Communications Division Meeting October 6, 2020**

1. The meeting was called to order at 1900 by Jeff, K9DYR. He led us all in the Pledge to the Flag.
2. All signed the attendance sheet (14 present).
3. All reported having received the Newsletter.
4. As an update on the group we have 44 members on the Active List. There are 58 ARES members listed on that organization and includes all current members of the MCARC, ARC and EMA.
5. We have recorded 1,786 man-hours year-to-date including nets, meetings and training events. This is significant since we've been limited in outreach and other events due to the Coronavirus.
6. Jeff reported 142 Independent Study Courses completed by the active members (SK's removed from count).
7. 24 have completed IS-100/200/700/800. The first 3 are needed by all, and 800 is encouraged for ARES members and the EOC Team so that there is a complete understanding of the ICS.
8. 5 have the Task Book Levels completed (all should have Level 1 as those requirements are met).
9. The Task Book is not a requirement, but it identifies important skills and areas to be proficient in. If you need a book pick it up from Jeff.
10. Activities reviewed: There have been 8 Tone Alert Tests on Sunday with an average of 24 check-ins. There have been no StormNet alerts and the White River Run Communications Exercise had 19 communicators for a total of 57 volunteer hours.
11. There has been 12 hours of MCU training in the last 2 months.
12. There has been 14 hours of Project Lifesaver training over the last 2 months.
13. November 1 is the Run-The-Mounds Communications Exercise. We reviewed the map of the course and briefly discussed the event. Information will be sent out next week.
14. There are no EOC activities planned.
15. There was no Warning Division report.
16. Director Tom, KA9SYP, emphasized that the EOC or MCU training is important to the understanding of the Incident Command System. The major State Exercise cancelled this year is rescheduled for next year here in Madison County. We will activate the EOC for 3 days. A lot of experience has been gained about staging areas as a result of the distribution of Covid supplies to the District 6 Counties from our EOC. In the exercise we'll open PODS and distribute to the public. This is not a simple event and requires a lot of planning in detail. We have been surprised at the manpower required for this to be successful. We now know how many we can service in 1 hour Tom is going around the State to share the experience and explain the Florida Model that is being used. It takes 27 semi loads/day of product to handle 30K people.
17. Tom recommends that everyone look into the Independent Study courses. There are many of interest. You can figure on it taking about half the time that they estimate.
18. Our County has been working with Purdue on the use of UAV's to document crash scenes. Our county is in the forefront of this work. What we are doing and how the County Team does it is a model for the Purdue Team and also other Counties (lighting, equipment, processes).

19. Tom is in charge of the CARES Act for our County.
20. Jeff discussed the items in the Levels of the Task Book. Also the ARRL Courses EC=001 and others can now be taken independently. The Skywarn Spotter basic course can be had on-line thru the link found on the repeater club web site.
21. The Boy Scouts Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) is on October 17. The communicators will be set up at the Fortville Park on SR13 to demonstrate Amateur Radio to the scouts camping out there. Operate from noon until everyone gets tired. All are encouraged to attend.
22. Doug, N9DR, showed his DXCC plaques that he has earned and recently received.
23. Tom explained his observations of the Florida communications network that is activated for hurricanes. The hams do a lot with shelters. Volunteers must be self-sufficient, radio wise, and documented in their system. You can't just show up to assist. Must have WinLink and know how to use it. This is required for a Level 3 Task Book.
24. Jeff passed out a sheet on the various on-line resources:

**FEMA Student ID:** This ID is required for you to get credit for any FEMA courses you take.

<https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid/>

**FEMA Independent Study Courses:** Landing page for all Independent Study courses. Take any you like, but specific courses are recommended (IS-100, IS-200, IS-700, and IS-800)

<https://training.fema.gov/is/>

**ARRL Continuing Education:** (EC-001, EC-016, and PR-101)

<http://www.arrl.org/online-course-catalog>

**ARES** (registration)

<https://www.inarrl.org/index.php/public-service/indiana-ares>

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/fsd98.pdf>

**Skywarn Training:** 2020 National Weather Service Skywarn training session is presented through the Anderson Repeater Club website as well as other Spotter information and training:

<https://www.andersonrepeaterclub.org/sw.html>