

ALLOUEZ

Couple pitches in for Y2K trouble-shooting

A husband-and-wife team with 17 years of amateur radio experience between them were prepared Friday night to help get Allouez through any Y2K problems.

The village didn't have any problems, but the Public Safety Director said he appreciated the presence of Madeline and Dennis O'Connor.

"It's been nice to have them here, but I have every confidence that we're not going to have a problem."

The O'Connors were happy to be available.

"They figured they could use our help," said Dennis O'Connor. "If there were any problems, we'd be the backup communications."

That backup communication came in the form of a 20-watt ham radio transceiver that boasted a 50-mile range.

"We could talk to Suring for example or a little bit south of Manitowoc," Dennis O'Connor said.

Half an hour before the stroke of midnight, the atmosphere at the Allouez Fire Department was relaxed and jovial.

"I think I'm slowly but surely losing my crew to naps," Melchior joked. "I'll be gone by one o'clock because nothing's going to happen."

"But if it did happen, we were here," Madeline O'Connor said. Melchior was confident the village could have handled any problems if they had occurred. "We would have tried to communicate with people to stay calm."

None of that was necessary however, as evidenced by Dennis O'Connor's exclamation: "We made it."

— Femi Cole



Holly Balsis/Press-Gazette

Dennis and Madeline O'Connor test their ham radio system just before midnight New Year's Eve at the Allouez Fire Department.