

# Central Wisconsin Repeater Association, Inc.

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## March 2009 Newsletter

With this newsletter we'll bring everyone up to date with what is currently happening with the CWRA and the two repeaters.

### The Repeaters

**Baraboo 28/88, WR9ABE** – 2008 saw some big equipment changes for 88.

- 1) A replacement repeater went on line in April; it is a Motorola MSF5000, 125 watt continuous duty (set at 100 watts) that was formally owned by the Utah Department of Transportation. This repeater was purchased with CWRA funds and replaces the loaner MSF5000 that was put on line at 88 back in December 2007. See the 88 system pictures on page 2.
- 2) In June, a new Decibel Products DB264 antenna was installed that improves the coverage pattern to where 88 can now be reliably heard in the Milwaukee area once again. It was noted by several different users that the antenna installed after the WOLX tower collapse did not have the same coverage that 88 had before the new tower was built and the new (in 1997) antenna was installed. So the board wanted to specifically address that issue, and to also replace the existing antenna to positively remove any questions whatsoever about the antenna itself possibly causing the crackle noise heard on 88 from time to time. Unfortunately the tower noise problem is still present on occasion, and we have once again ruled out all possibilities of any the CWRA equipment itself as being the source of it.
- 3) And finally big thanks go to Matt, N3IVK and Rich, KC9FNM of CSI Portage for being the shipping point, and for the setup and installation of the repeater. And another big thanks goes out to Al, KB9DRZ of Empire Tower for the new antenna and its installation. The great work and efforts of these gentlemen has allowed CWRA to make these repeater changes very economically.

And a Skywarn Weather net update. Late last fall CWRA was approached by the Sauk County ARES group about possibly using 88 for the Sauk County Skywarn weather nets. This request was made because of some planned changes to the other Baraboo area 2M repeaters. The CWRA board did give the Sauk County ARES group the go ahead to use the 88 machine if they need to. At the time of writing this newsletter we have not had any confirmation whether 88 will be actually be used by Sauk County or not for this coming WX season. So just be aware that 88 may once again play an active role in area WX spotting. I also want to mention that CWRA had given Columbia County ARES permission to use 88 as a backup to the Columbia County ARES repeater a few years ago. This agreement is still in place and the Sauk and Columbia groups will coordinate between themselves any issues regarding 88's usage.

**Madison 34/94, WR9ABE/MSN** – There have been no changes to this machine again this year. But we are looking into making some changes to the 94 system in 2009. We are currently evaluating some different equipment choices to upgrade the repeater itself. The goal is to update the repeater with a more modern repeater. Newer vintage used repeaters are now readily available; and quite inexpensively, so we do plan to take advantage of that situation in order to upgrade 94 like we did 88. The specific choice of repeater model is still to be determined.

And once again a general reminder to those involved public service events in the Madison or Western Dane County area. Please keep in mind that this machine provides great coverage in the Madison area and is always available for such use.

**Trustee for the repeaters** - Ralph Pellegrini, N9BDR.

#### **Pictures of the new 88 repeater:**



The picture above is an interior view of the repeater itself. It has a very large PA heatsink, but yet the repeater is really quite compact.

The picture to the left is the 88 repeater sitting on top of the antenna duplexer for the system.

## Other Items

**A few comments about the CWRA** – And some about ham radio in general. Many of you I'm sure have noticed that the activity level on all repeaters in this area is not as much as it used to be in years past. This is not unique to this area, and is in fact common throughout the country. The reasons for this can be debated at length and in great detail that we really don't need to go into here. But what is pertinent about this is how this impacts the day to day operation of groups like CWRA. To put it simply less activity equals less membership; less membership equals less income to run repeaters. So that leaves groups with a few possibilities: 1) Cut back on what they provide. 2) Raise dues. 3) Engage in membership recruitment efforts, and numerous nets. 4) Hold fund raising functions like hamfests etc. 5) Maintain a low cost overhead. Various groups do some degree of all or some of them. The CWRA has been primarily doing number 5 for years. To achieve that CWRA has been extremely fortunate to have some key people connected with it that have access to vital resources and expertise to keep both the 88 and 94 machines going inexpensively. As a result of that our finances have been holding at a mostly steady level for a long time now. But in 2008 we did make some capital expenditures to update the repeater used at 88 and anticipate doing some updates to 94 in 2009 as well. These kinds of upgrades cause a significant drop in our treasury balance. So in an effort to bring the balance back in line with where it has been hovering at for many years we would like to see those who have not been renewing their memberships over the last several years to make it a point to do so this year. And those who may use the machines occasionally but have not been members to consider joining now.

**Sunday Morning Swapnet** – From time to time there have been comments made about how people are missing the Sunday morning swapnet. I want to remind everyone that the CWRA board will fully support any efforts to restart the Swapnet on 88. If you are interested in restarting it, just contact any one on the CWRA board.

**Email Address** – CWRA now has a new dedicated email address of **wr9abe@yahoo.com**. ***Please note the email has aggressive spam filtering setup on it that the subject line must have "CWRA" included in it.*** Any email without CWRA in the subject line will be filtered out. It is unfortunate that we must have that restriction, but due to the enormous amount of email spam out there we have no choice. Also note that this email address is checked only once a week or so, so you may not get an immediate response to an email that you send.

**Dues** - Remain at \$20. If you want a membership card, be sure to include a SASE with your dues payment. A membership card may also be picked up in person at the annual Association meeting. It is still not too late to send your dues in time for the annual association meeting. Please send them to the CWRA, PO Box 0013 if you haven't already done so.

**Annual Association Meeting** – Saturday March 21, 2009. The meeting location will once again be at Leystra's Venture Restaurant, 200 Phillips Blvd (HWY12), Sauk City.

Leystra's Venture Resturant is located just across the Sauk City, HWY12/78 bridge next to Kwik Trip. This is the same location as the last few years.

A 12 noon lunch with the Association meeting starting at 1:00 PM.

For those who may not have received your membership card, you will be able to pick it up at the annual association meeting.

Hope to see you all at the annual meeting on March 21.

73,  
Duane Grotophorst, N9DG  
President - CWRA

**BOD Elections** – This year there is just one CWRA Board of Director seat up for re-election. This seat is currently held by Elton Paus, K9PE who is filling out the remainder of the BOD seat term for Bob Garske, K9JMP.

**Voting:**

Since there is only one nominations for Board of director seats there will be no balloting this year.

## **BOD Candidate Biographies**

**Elton Paus, K9PE, Biography:**

I've been a Ham since March of 1991, and hold an Extra Class with a Vanity Callsign... Have served on the CWRA board for the past three years...Will accept nomination if called upon...

When in the working world years ago I did hold various offices in the local union, with the Paper Workers Union and also at the University of Wisconsin local 171...