
KDØCI's Radio Newsletter

Volume 2 Number 8 - Supporting Amateur Radio in East Central Minnesota - June 25, 2007

A MIX OF GOOD NEWS AND BAD OVER THE PAST MONTH

The past month has been a mix of good news and bad news. Here are the details.

After having been off the air for the past several months, the NØGOI two meter repeater near Foreston [146.745 MHz, PL 107.2 Hz] is back on the air again, and appears to be working well. The repeater custodian, Terry Londroche, had not been able to perform maintenance on the repeater until now due to a severe back problem that had laid him up for some time.

The return of the Foreston repeater to the airwaves helps to fill the coverage void in the area on two meters that was created by the absence from the airwaves of both the Foreston and Milaca repeaters. The Milaca repeater remains off the air, and there has been no indication within the past month of any effort being put forth to get that repeater back on the air. Meanwhile the situation is being monitored, and testing of the repeater will continue indefinitely.

In other repeater related developments, the Emergency Repeater Network Project continues, but at a very slow pace. Engineering plans continue to be stalled as issues arise, and details change. A breakfast meeting between WBØOBF and KDØCI has been scheduled in Mora for Wednesday June 27th to discuss further what is needed to push the Mora repeater effort forward. In the meantime, coordinates have been gathered for potential system link installation sites at Mora, Ogilvie, and Foreston.

Along with the effort in Mora, a positive discovery may have changed some of the engineering requirements that were thought to be needed for Mora. The Giese repeater operating at 146.865 MHz was discovered and could be a very useful repeater for Skywarn coverage. This repeater has excellent coverage over all of Kanabec County, and it was found through field testing to be easily accessed by mobile rig from the most remote parts of the county. With a UHF link into Hinckley, the Giese repeater would provide the desired Skywarn coverage into Duluth for Kanabec County.

Another positive development on the regional two meter front was the recent installation of a station at the Mora Public Health facility in Mora. The station, operated by Kathy Burski, KCØZNC, checked into the Tuesday evening net for the first time on June 19th.

On the Packet side, that effort received a huge setback with the sudden passing of Tom Jameson, WØKGW, on June 13th. It was as recently as May 17th when Jameson installed the new Two Meter Packet Node in Askov, operating on 145.67 MHz. Jerry Whitaker, WBØOBF, has vowed to carry on with Jameson's work.

In Milaca, Dave Winn, KBØYBX, and his son Aaron KBØYUE continue to experiment with a possible Packet Node for Milaca, to be tagged MNMLCA.

HAM CLASS SCHEDULED –

A two night class Amateur Radio class has been firmly scheduled for the evenings of July 9th and 11th at the Hinckley Ambulance Garage in Hinckley. This class is the same one that had been originally scheduled in March, but had to be postponed due to a snowstorm. Efforts to reschedule the class bogged down when no instructor could be found to replace Jack Maus, WØMBD, who became ill. When KDØCI agreed to help, efforts to reschedule became a problem until now. The classes will be from 6 to 10 PM each evening.

There apparently is also an effort underway in Kanabec County to get the Sheriff Department involved in Amateur Radio. Although there has been no official word yet, a class is thought to be in the works.

Meanwhile, results from the recent testing in St Cloud were very positive. Four of the students from KCØEQE's recent class who took the June 9th exams passed.

RESULTS OF THE PACKET NET SURVEY

As promised, here are the results from our recent Packet Net Survey, beginning with question number 2. Although the response to our recent survey was less than I had hoped, it produced some interesting answers and comments.

2. If you participated in a regularly scheduled Packet exercise, where would you operate from?

The results were a mixed bag. In other words, from just about anywhere, which is a good thing really.

3. What day[s] of the week would be most suitable to you for participating in the Packet exercise?

Wednesday seemed to be the most popular choice, followed closely by a tie between Tuesday and Thursday.

4. What time of day would be most suitable to you for participating in the Packet exercise?

This answer was all over the map.....however the majority seemed to prefer early afternoons.

5. How long should this exercise last?

By an overwhelming majority, a half hour. No one said it should last more than an hour.

6. How often should this exercise take place?

It was a virtual tie between semi-monthly and monthly.

7. Would you be able to participate on a regular basis? How often?

There seemed to be a lot of uncertainty in many of the answers here, much of which depended on access to, or availability of equipment. Most respondents seemed to be willing.

8. Have you had any training in Packet radio?

Everyone indicated having had at least some training, but this varied of course.

9. Would you be willing to participate in a Packet Radio training session?

Everyone responded positive to this, some wanting to learn more and some willing to help with training others.

10. What other comments or ideas do you have regarding any on-air exercises and nets?

Here are just a couple of comments that were submitted.

“They [the nets] need to be practical, simple, short, but real.”

“Once a packet station is set-up the station operation is pretty simple. To get into the commands is quite complex. I would imagine most operators don't want to mess with the set-up so I don't think the packet 'training' needs to be extensive. One can always read more about the stuff on their own so the training sessions on the air would amount to sending a few messages and playing with 'mailboxes', etc.”

In other words, the answers were pretty much what I had envisioned, except many of our new operators actually DO want to know about setting up the equipment. This is especially true for the equipment at hospitals and public health centers, and the main reason for the recent Packet workshop held at the Public Health Office in Milaca. I have to say I've been impressed by the desire of people to learn about the equipment they are using.

So, let's see where this goes from here. Hopefully someone will have the incentive to get a net started, and soon.

Any volunteers?

UPCOMING VE TESTING – Courtesy of ARRL & QST

21-Jul-2007

Sponsor: SOUTH EAST METRO AREA RC

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: DENNIS J ACKERMAN
(651)769-0358

Email: KB0OQQ@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: FIRE STATION #2-LOWER LEVEL
8641 80TH ST S
COTTAGE GROVE, MN 55016

28-Jul-2007

Sponsor: BLOOMINGTON OFF/EMERGENCY MGMT

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: DANIEL J ROYER
(952)888-9756

Email: KE0OR@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: [HTTP://WWW.BLOOMINGTON-VE.ORG](http://WWW.BLOOMINGTON-VE.ORG)
1800 W OLD SHAKOPEE RD
CITY HALL - POLICE DEPARTMENT
CALL AHEAD, WALKINS UNTIL 9AM
BLOOMINGTON, MN 55431

18-Aug-2007

Sponsor: SOUTH EAST METRO AREA RC

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: DENNIS J ACKERMAN
(651)769-0358

Email: KB0OQQ@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: FIRE STATION #2-LOWER LEVEL
8641 80TH ST S
COTTAGE GROVE, MN 55016

25-Aug-2007

Sponsor: BLOOMINGTON OFF/EMERGENCY MGMT

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: DANIEL J ROYER
(952)888-9756

Email: KE0OR@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: [HTTP://WWW.BLOOMINGTON-VE.ORG](http://WWW.BLOOMINGTON-VE.ORG)
1800 W OLD SHAKOPEE RD
CITY HALL - POLICE DEPARTMENT
CALL AHEAD, WALKINS UNTIL 9AM
BLOOMINGTON, MN 55431

UPCOMING HAMFESTS

Saturday July 14th 2007

Sponsor: Brainerd Area Amateur Radio Club

Time: 9 AM – 2 PM

Place: Brainerd National Guard Armory, 1115 Wright Street, Brainerd.

Talk-In: 147.225+ [no tone]

Tickets: \$5.00 at the door, children under 12 free.

NET INFORMATION - [Post near your radio for handy reference]

EAST CENTRAL MINNESOTA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NET

Every Tuesday Evening @ 7 PM – 146.565 MHz [Simplex]

Preamble and Format for the Mille Lacs County Emergency Preparedness Net

[Updated on May 25th 2007, and supersedes all previous issues]

Preamble:

This is [your call sign] calling the East Central Minnesota Emergency Preparedness Net. This net meets each Tuesday evening at 7 PM Central Time on a frequency of 146.565 Megahertz for the primary purpose of operator training. This net also provides dissemination of Amateur Radio information and bulletins. All stations are welcome to join the net, and are asked to check in by the use of their call sign only. This is a directed net. Transmit only at the direction of the net control, and please pause between transmissions so others may join our group. Each station will be recognized in the order they check in, and they will be given an opportunity for informal comments. Again, your net control station is [your call sign], my name is [your first name], and I'm located at [your location].

Format:

Standby for Emergency Traffic

Standby for check-ins from Mobile Stations only [Follow by asking for any relays on mobiles]

Standby for Announcements or Bulletins

Standby for general check-ins

Training and/or Informal Session [Standby periodically for any additional check-ins]

Close the net:

Thank all participants; return the frequency to general amateur use.

Other Area & Regional Nets

CENTRAL REGION EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NET

First Wednesday of every month @ 1 PM – 147.015 [WØSV Repeater, St Cloud]

UPPER MIDWEST TEN METER NET

Every Thursday Evening @ 8 PM – 28.475 USB [Net Control KBØHDA]

NEWCOMERS NET

Every Monday Evening @ 8 PM – 147.015 MHz [WØSV Repeater, St Cloud]

EMERGENCY & SKYWARN FREQUENCIES

Mille Lacs & Kanabec Counties: 146.565 MHz Simplex

Regional Packet: 145.670 MHz

National Weather Service [Duluth]: 146.94 MHz [Duluth], 147.00 MHz [Mahtowa], 146.865 MHz [Giese].

National Weather Service [Minneapolis/Chanhassen]: 146.64 MHz [Cambridge], 146.835 MHz [Sauk Rapids].

National Weather Service [Duluth]: 75 Meter Net: 3.810 KHz LSB. Alternate: 3.820 KHz LSB.

KDØCI ANTENNA MAINTENANCE COMPLETED

The KDØCI Amateur Radio Tower Project was successfully completed recently. The Cushcraft AR270 Dualband vertical that had topped the tower was found to be defective, with a 4:1 SWR at the antenna feed point. It was replaced with a Comet GP-3 Dualband vertical.

An additional observation made was the unexpectedly excellent condition of the LMR-400 Ultraflex coax cables. These cables were installed when the tower was erected in August 1996.

Also, KCØYBX and KCØYUE continue to experiment with j-pole antenna designs. Below is a pic of their most recent effort.....THE MONSTER J-POLE!



Information On The World Wide Web

Information on this and more local and regional Amateur Radio activity is posted on the following websites:

St Cloud Amateur Radio Club	www.w0sv.org
Arrowhead Radio Amateur Club	www.thearac.org
Brainerd Area Amateur Radio Club	www.brainerdham.org

KCØYUE Hospitalized

Aaron Winn, KCØYUE, was hospitalized during this past weekend following an accident while working on a motorcycle. According to his Dad, KCØYBX, the handlebars on the bike landed on him when the motorcycle fell, injuring his Spleen. He was hospitalized in Princeton, but was later airlifted to North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale where he is recovering.

The accident was reported to us during the Tuesday's evening net on June 26th.

You can send him your best wishes via this newsletter email address kd0ci@arrl.net

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Permission is granted to subscribers to reprint this newsletter for distribution to others. Material herein may be used elsewhere, as long as this newsletter is referenced as the source. Your comments, questions, etc for this newsletter are welcome.

Please take note of the new email address as the old one will be discontinued soon. Send your comments, as well as any "newsworthy" items for inclusion to either of my new email addresses:

kdzeroci@q.com

kd0ci@arrl.net

73,

Kenny Broshofske KDØCI