



# WSPAA QUARTERLY

Volume 4

June 2012

## WSPAA CONTINUES TO GROW

As the Wisconsin State Patrol Alumni Association (WSPAA) approaches its 1st anniversary, our membership is 140 members and is growing every month. We first started offering membership at the 2011 Retiree Day at the WSP Academy in September 2011.

I am pleased to announce the 1st WSPAA Annual Meeting will be held at the WSP Academy in conjunction with the WSP Retiree Day on September 14, 2012. The day will start off with lunch/networking at 11:30 am. There will be Welcoming/Opening Comments by Supt. Fitzgerald/Col. Mendez at 1:00 pm. Capt. Neuman will give an Academy update starting at 1:15 pm followed by some WSP demonstrations and a Q&A session. The WSPAA will have a brief presentation at 2:30 pm followed by the WSPAA Annual Meeting. We hope all will stay and participate in the Annual Meeting.

Because the announcement of the Annual Retiree Day and all WSPAA information is distributed by email, please help spread the word to those who are not WSPAA members or you know do not have email access. We encourage anyone who is a WSP retiree, was a WSP employee but left for other employment before retirement OR is a current WSP employee (as long as you have completed your initial probationary period, to become a WSPAA member. The annual membership fee is just \$15.

I also encourage you to search the WSPAA website for more organizational information and past newsletters. The website can be found at: [www.wspalumni.org](http://www.wspalumni.org)

We have some interesting social events planned this summer. Please check these out as you go through this newsletter. These should be a great deal of fun and fraternization.

We continue to seek regional and project coordinators. If you have a special interest in an area, please contact me at: [w401@aol.com](mailto:w401@aol.com). The more member participation we have, the better the WSPAA will become.

Thank you for your support and participation.

Bill Harvey

WSPAA President



Early Radio Shop

WSPAA is pleased to have the support of Col. Mendez (left) and Supt. Fitzgerald (right). Bill Harvey presented them both with Honorary WSPAA membership.





## WSP COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS by Neal Sieglaff

I would imagine some of you will recall the days when radio communications was something you had when you found high ground in your sector. My time as a trooper was when a “portable” was hanging the microphone out the window and turning the outside speaker on. We were still operating on low – band frequencies (42 Megahertz).

One of the amazing details of the State Patrol communications system, even back then, was the microwave system our early technicians and engineers committed to. What made that interconnection of our towers so amazing was the flexibility it gave our system as it grew. Many agencies leased telephone lines to connect their towers to the communication control center. To get another base station on the air required leasing another phone line. The microwave links allowed many channels to ride on the same path making expanding simpler and in the long run less expensive. The State Patrol continued to invest in the microwave system, updating the equipment through the years to keep the system in good shape and expand the number of sites.

One example of the flexibility this provided was in my early days as a technician. Late in the 1980's the treaty lawsuits allowing Native Americans to spear fish resulted in protests and the State Patrol was called on to provide security along with local agencies. A wide area communications network throughout the north was needed to allow troopers at landings to be able to communicate back to a central command post. To keep the district frequencies clear for regular and emergency traffic, base stations were moved into place at tower sites throughout the area and microwave channels were added to connect back to the central command post.

In the latest updates to the microwave system the ability to provide both voice channels and data channels across the State made the State Patrol infrastructure an ideal backbone for the new WISCOM statewide interoperability system. In addition to a statewide technical staff, the modern microwave system was an economical choice for this Internet Protocol based radio system.

So what is WISCOM and how does it differ from the radio system we all operated on for so many years? The WISCOM system is one of the latest forms of trunking radio systems that best uses the radio spectrum. The systems we used were conventional systems where a frequency, or pair of frequencies, was licensed for an agency to use. If you had five agencies in the same area, that meant that five channels were used in that area. One agency may have been so busy their users had trouble getting a clear channel to call on, while another agency may have had little going on and their channel was almost unused. Trunking systems allowed the same amount of spectrum (five channels in this case) to be shared by these five agencies, spreading the traffic load out among the channels. The systems are computerized and use one channel as a data or control channel to facilitate the sharing. The user now selects a talk group instead of an actual channel. The system responds when the user presses the Push To Talk button on their radio. It determines that the radio is a valid radio on the system, where other users on that same talk group are located, and if there are resources (channels) available to set up communications. It assigns a talk channel on all towers where a user of that talk group is located all in a split second. A chirp of some kind (depending on the users' radio) is heard to let you know the call is set up and you can go ahead. If the resources are all in use, you hear a lower bloop sound to warn you of the queue; if a channel opens up soon after, then you get the go ahead chirp. There is no “walking over” another user in this system because the second person to PTT will get the reject or bloop sound. The communications console usually gets preemption on a call so they can interrupt if higher priority traffic needs the talkgroup.

You may recall the evolution of interoperability channels in Wisconsin from the Nationwide Law Enforcement Emergency Channel (originally called WISPERN in Wisconsin, now called VLAW31) to the Mutual Aide Radio Channel (MARC) which was for all public safety users, and allowed us to set up area repeaters to expand the range of coverage. With WISCOM it is possible to assign public safety units from various agencies to talk groups based on the task they will be performing. Because the system is P25 compliant (P25 is the Project 25 digital radio standards), many manufacturers radios will operate on the system so agencies that operate on their own VHF system will be able to program the WISCOM trunking system into their radios allowing them to switch to a mutual aide talk group when the need arises. All counties in the State were given the opportunity to connect their communications center console to the WISCOM system to allow them to get access to interoperability talk groups when the need arises. Attempts are being made to provide interconnects to systems in our neighboring states as well.

WISCOM, which stands for Wisconsin Interoperable System for Communications, is managed by a board of directors representing various public safety agencies in the state. The Office of Justice Assistance provides program support to the board and sub-committees. For more information check out [www.interop.wi.gov](http://www.interop.wi.gov)

About the author: Neal Sieglaff began his 35 year career with the State Patrol in October 1975. He has served as police communications officer, in Tomah and Fond du Lac, as State Trooper in Lafayette County, and as a technician mostly in the Fond du Lac shop. After retiring January 3, 2011, he returned in March 2012 in a WISCOM project technician position at Fond du Lac.



1976 Dodge with minimal radio equipment



Microwave equipment at Chilton Tower



Typical Motorola radio console (1970-80's vintage)



Enforcement Division Records Section, keying in citation and accident information—early 1960's



PCO Mary Rajek, Wausau Comm Center



Madison central comm center

# 2012 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER RENNOVATION

## by Diane King

State Patrol Communications Centers have a “new look” in 2012! Teams were formed in early 2011 to work on purchasing dispatch console equipment and furniture as part of the project to migrate to the new WISCOM radio system. New dispatch console furniture was installed in March and April 2012.

The furniture team included dispatch and radio tech representatives. Input was sought from dispatchers during in-service and team members also contacted/visited around 20 local dispatch centers. This feedback was invaluable when developing specifications for dispatch desks that would fit our existing space and meet our business needs both now and in the future.

Initial plans included flooring repair/replacement but it soon became clear more was needed. Dispatch supervisors coordinated facilities work at each post and it was no small task! In addition to new flooring, electricians ensured each desk would have adequate power/cable access (in some instances drilling holes through the thick concrete floor). As needed, walls and ceilings were also repaired/replaced, air ducts were cleaned, etc. You could sense the growing level of excitement as comm centers were transformed. The biggest visual change occurred with the furniture installation.

The new Watson dispatch furniture is specifically designed for 24/7 use and provides ergonomic features our previous furniture couldn't offer. The monitor and keyboard surface at each desk can be independently raised/lowered giving the option to sit or stand while dispatching. Also included are dimmable LED task lights, cooling fans and heated floor mats as well as technology features for equipment and cable management. Each desk also has eight 22" LCD monitors enabling each desk to be fully functional (reducing shared computers) and two touch screen monitors that allow both the current and new radio systems to be in place for training/transition purposes.



Eau Claire Comm Center showing a dispatch desk in the raised position (prior to touch screens and other equipment being installed)



Wausau Comm Center after moving back into their “new” comm center! Wausau volunteered to be the first post to get the new furniture installed.

Although the dispatch desk configuration was standardized statewide, each post worked with the vendor to design a unique room layout to meet local space and equipment needs including various storage organizers, lockers, etc. Combined with different flooring choices and paint colors, each comm center has a distinct look and feel.

Radio techs did an amazing job preparing the temporary “surge space,” moving dispatch operations, and removing the old desks to prepare for facilities work and furniture installation. Posts reported everything went smoothly during the moves, with little to no problems -- a great demonstration of teamwork from everyone involved!

Visit our website: [www.wspalumni.org](http://www.wspalumni.org)

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW

by Bruce Bishop

Bruce Bishop talks with Eleanor Mull, thirty-five year administrative secretary of the WSP Academy.

If you were a member of any Academy class between 1955 and 1988, you certainly remember Eleanor Mull. She was the administrative secretary at the Academy for those thirty-five years and very involved in the setting up of the original office procedures and practices that endure today. Not in her job description, but willingly accepted and compassionately carried out, she served as unofficial housemother to every class. She still stays in contact with many members today.

When it was decided to build a new Academy, Eleanor was often consulted on administrative design and location issues. She played an important role in the transitioning of the Academy from the old World War II style building to the new facility in 1987. She retired in 1988.

Eleanor was born in 1925 in Black River Falls. She married Edwin Mull in 1947. They had two daughters. Ed died in 2001. They traveled widely and participated in many Sparta community affairs. Two years ago, health issues precluded her from maintaining independent living. She is now comfortably enjoying life at Mary Crest, an assisted living facility in Sparta. She is still active in her church, the Monroe County Historical Society and the Deke Slayton Memorial Space and Bicycle Museum in Sparta. During the early stages of the WSPAA's creation, she provided guidance, counseling and input. She is now a WSPAA member.

Eleanor would welcome hearing from old WSP friends and associates.

Her address is: 402 South Water St #107, Sparta, WI 54656 Telephone: 608-269-3561

Email address: [norskemull@centurytel.net](mailto:norskemull@centurytel.net)



Eleanor Mull at the Academy—1950's



Christmas gathering Dec.  
2011

**Correction:** In the last edition of the WSPAA Quarterly, Howard Furhmann was highlighted in the "Where are They Now" section. Unfortunately, his name was spelled incorrectly in the article. Our

## ATTEMPT TO LOCATE

In April, 268 summer printed paper activity flyers and WSPAA applications were sent to State Patrol retirees who do not have email addresses registered with the Division of State Patrol. There were a number of envelopes returned as the US Postal Service was unable to forward them. We need your help in locating these individuals. Should you know where they are, please provide the current address to the WSPAA Office, 7801 Brule Street, Madison, WI 53717-1833 or email; WSPAlumni.Association@gmail.com. Thank you for your help.

John M. Anderson

Thomas J. Brah

Steven Brulport

Donald G. Fisher

Michael Foltman

Darrell Hill

Douglas Jorstad

Malcolm Kautz

Walter Krivinchuk

Robert Leece

Thomas Loeffler

Jeffrey Miller

Herbert Mueller

Robert Nichols, Jr.

Wilmer Peil

Nick Pierce

Edwin Smith

Lola Sparby

Richard Swanson

Alvin Vandrell

Donald K. Vinger

John Voss

Jerome Vraniak

Thomas Walsh

Jerry L. Weber

Fred Zimpel

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Beginning with the September Edition of the WSPAA Quarterly, only WSPAA members will be receiving copies via email. This is the last edition of the WSPAA Quarterly to non-members. WSPAA members will continue to received the Newsletter by email.

## NGA ANNUAL MEETING RETURNS TO WI

**By Lt. Tim Carnahan**

For some who participated in the 1998 National Governor's Association (NGA) Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, the oft-heard phrase that this was a "one in a career opportunity" rang true. For others, not so much. That's because for many current employees who were around in 1998, they will have a second shot. The NGA has selected Milwaukee to host the organization's Annual Meeting in 2013 and once again the Wisconsin State Patrol has been given a leadership role in security and VIP transportation.

While much of Milwaukee remains the same, the challenges associated with providing effective security in a post 9/11 world are different. However, success will still depend greatly upon forging successful partnerships with various federal, state, county, and local public safety agencies and private entities with a stake in ensuring that the 1,600 or so attendees arrive, visit, and depart our fair state safely and soundly. Another commonality between 1998 and 2013 is the underlying theme for the security team, which is a "Zero Defect" performance.

Captains Tim Carnahan (Waukesha) and Jeff Frenette (Eau Claire) have been selected to co-coordinate security operations and have collected a talented and vibrant team that will plan and manage this major undertaking.

Opportunities may be available to those interested in volunteering to assist. Stay tuned to future newsletters for additional information.

**Visit our website: [www.wspalumni.org](http://www.wspalumni.org)**

# WSPAA REGIONAL SUMMER SOCIAL EVENTS

By Lucy Harvey



## WSPAA 2012 SUMMER SOCIALS

Get out your map and prepare for summer regional fun the WSPAA way. Each month we will visit one of Wisconsin's pretty areas to enjoy an activity and to spend time together reconnecting. Members are invited to cross regional boundaries and go anywhere in the State. Come on along!

### SO MUCH TO DO SO LITTLE TIME — JUNE 26 &/ OR 27 FUN AT CHULA VISTA

June will take us to the lovely Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Folks will have time for socializing, a ride through Lost Canyon, a thrilling ride on the amphibious Original Ducks, or nine holes of golf at Chula Vista. We'll make time for an early dinner together before we head home or to our suites at Chula Vista. Contact Mike Jennings at: [mikeandjudy@merr.com](mailto:mikeandjudy@merr.com) 608-437-8210 or Phil Wenzel: [wenzel@dwave.net](mailto:wenzel@dwave.net) for more details.

### TAKE TO THE TEES — or — TOUR HISTORIC TOMAHAWK ON JULY 20

In July the Northcentral Region invites you to Tomahawk for a golf outing at Inshalla Country Club and/or to a tour of historic Tomahawk. 10:00 a.m.-Arrive at Inshalla Country Club in Tomahawk. Folks may head out for 9 holes of fun on Inshalla Golf Course (\$ 28.50) Trophies anyone ? While others enjoy a tour of historic Bradley Park and the Tomahawk Historical Museum.

1:00 p.m.- We'll regroup for buffet lunch (\$11.25) and then continue socializing at the Club House.

Contact: Bruce Bishop at [blpabish@yahoo.com](mailto:blpabish@yahoo.com) or 715-453-3683 to let him know how many will be participating in each activity ~ golf, tour, buffet lunch.

### BED & BREAKFAST TRAIN RIDE IN SPOONER AREA ON AUGUST 16

On August 16, join other WSPAA members on a unique bed and breakfast railroad adventure in NW Wisconsin. Reserve your spot on the Spooner Train Ride. Their web site is: [www.spoonertrainride.com](http://www.spoonertrainride.com). Ask for WSPAA discount.

Check in 4 – 5:30 p.m., 4 drink tokens ~ cash bar, complimentary hors d'oeuvres, 6:00 p.m. departure. 3 - 4 hour train ride, dinner on a moving train, 5-course Meal ~ 4 entrée choices, relax in private lounge, private upper & lower double bedroom, hot breakfast in morning, 10 a.m. check out.

If we can get a group of 5 couples or more, the price would be \$239/couple. This looks like a great outing, rather inexpensive. Leave depot at 6 p.m. Limit 18 couples.

For more information, contact Tim Heffernan at: 715-822-8124 or e-mail: [tprtim@charter.net](mailto:tprtim@charter.net)

We hope you will join other alumni for some or all of these activities that have been organized just for you.

### Save the Date:

**WSP Alumni Reunion luncheon and WSPAA First Annual Meeting on September 14, 2012—Wisconsin State Patrol Academy**



# EVENTS

**June 26 &/ or 27, 2012** - Visit the lovely Chula Vista Resort, WI Dells. See page 7 for additional information.

**July 20, 2012** - Golf or Historic Tour of the Tomahawk, WI area. Join the golf outing or take the Tomahawk tour. Both groups will gather for an early dinner. See page 7 for details.

**August 16 - 17, 2012** - Bed & Breakfast Train Ride in the Spooner Area - Board the train in Spooner. Have an evening train ride and dinner on the train. Enjoy a night on the train with breakfast the next morning before departing for home or wherever you travel from there. See details on page 7.

**September 14, 2012** - WSP Alumni Luncheon and 1st Annual Meeting of the WSPAA, Wisconsin State Patrol Academy.

## Regularly Scheduled Gatherings:

First Thursday of the Month - Anyone retired from the State Patrol is invited. This is an informal gathering, no reservations needed, just show up at 9:00 am at the Green Lantern, McFarland, WI.

Last Thursday of Even Numbered Months - WISDOT/DNR Retiree Breakfast at 9:30 am at "The Prime" in Trego, WI. Contact Tim Heffernan (tprt@charter.net).

Monthly— ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating Out) - contact Larry Doxrude for date, time and location. Everyone welcome. Larry Doxrude: ldoxrude@charter.net

If you know of additional events or gatherings of State Patrol alumni, please let us know so we can post it for all to see or attend. Send these items to byoung@charter.net. Send items in as soon as you hear of them. Thank you.

## WSPAA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Current DSP Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ Retired/Separated: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues Paid : \_\_\_\_\_ Full Member OR \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Member:  
\$15/year - (Check one)

ALUMNI



ASSOCIATION

Return to WSPAA, 7801 Brule Street, Madison, WI 53717-1833

Membership Contacts: Janet Sabatke: 608-833-5580 Lyle Bliss: 608-931-4060

Email: WSPAlumni.Association@gmail.com

Visit our website: [www.wspalumni.org](http://www.wspalumni.org)