

## **NI4CE Verna Site Get New Repeaters**

Two brand new ICOM IDAS analog-digital repeaters were placed into service at the NI4CE “Big Stick” repeater site in Manatee County Saturday, October 8, 2011. The new repeaters were made possible by a grant received earlier this year from the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay – Sun City Center Chapter. Additional RF filtering was also installed as part of the upgrade.

An ICOM FR-5000 VHF repeater (pictured left) now powers the 145.430 MHz repeater while an ICOM FR-6000 UHF repeater is now operating on 442.950 MHz. Both repeaters will normally operate in 25 KHz analog mode but are capable of passing digital voice and messaging signals using ICOM’s 6.25 KHz ultra-narrowband NXDN digital mode.



Earlier this year, the West Central Florida Group, Inc. put its first FR-6000 repeater into service on 442.550 MHz at its Riverview site in Hillsborough County. A new FR-6000 repeater is expected to go into service in the near future at the new NI4CE Repeater site in Holiday (Pasco County). The Riverview and Holiday repeaters will also operate in mixed Analog and Digital NXDN modes.

“We are grateful to the Community Foundation Sun City Center Chapter” for helping us implement these improvements at Verna”, stated Paul Toth-NB9X, President of the West Central Florida Group, Inc. Toth added, “These improvements will enable us to continue our community service and support for the National Weather Service’s SKYWARN severe weather spotter program and other disaster mitigation communications support.” Many of the Amateur Radio operators who live in the Sun City Center area use the NI4CE Repeater System on a daily basis and are active in the SKYWARN, ARES and National Traffic System programs.

The NI4CE System also includes repeaters in Pinellas and Polk Counties. The West Central Florida Group, Inc. also operates automated, digital weather stations at the Verna and Riverview repeater sites as part of the nationwide APRS network.

The West Central Florida Group, Inc. is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization.

