



The REACTer

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January-February, 2003

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On the Cover:
Evansville, Indiana
Site of Convention 2003
(Photo courtesy Tucker Publishing)

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From the President

by Charles A. "Chuck" Thompson

In a few weeks, the 2003 Annual Board Meeting of *REACT* International, Inc. , (Feb. 7-9) will be over. This meeting will mark the fifth anniversary of what might be called the "new era" in RI governance.

It was February 1998, in Wichita, Kansas, when Jack Murrell (of Indiana) and I were appointed to the Board to replace two Field Directors who resigned during or after the meeting. Most will remember that *REACT* was experiencing tumultuous times then, and the survival of *REACT* was in question. Jack and I had different viewpoints on a number of things, but we both agreed that changes were in order. Along with Field Directors Jim Bear (Pennsylvania) and Lee Besing (Texas), and Director at Large (and Chairman) Bob Stone (Arkansas), we embarked on the first order of business — moving the office from Wichita to Suitland, Maryland, and finding (and training) several new employees.

At the Convention Board Meeting in Janesville, Wisconsin, that summer, Fred Lanshe (Pennsylvania) was elected to replace me, Jim Bear resigned, and I was appointed to replace him. The Board elected Jack as President, Lee Besing as Vice President, me as Secretary, Fred Lanshe as Treasurer, and Bob Stone remained as Chairman of the Board. The Board adopted significant changes to the By-laws and the Convention was positive and approved our actions.

The Bylaws amendments were overwhelmingly approved by the Teams, and a new structure, consisting of nine newly created regions and a Director for each, became effective in February 1999. Bob Stone resigned and Frank Jennings (Washington) was elected Chairman of the Board. Harry Hawkins (Michigan) replaced Jack as President in July 1999, and I replaced Harry in January 2001 with Dick Cooper (New Jersey) becoming Executive Vice President. In the process, we have separated the duties of "officer" from those of "Director," with the officers in charge of day-to-day business and the Board setting policies.

Under the guidance of the Board, and with the support of our Teams, we have continued to make progress. Under the supervision of Exec. VP Cooper, our *REACT* International Committees have been revitalized, and significant contributions have been made in Training, Membership, and Publications Review, and the chairs of each of these committees are frequently involved in management. We have filled most of the other committee chairs and these committees have begun functioning again.

We made it much easier for a new Team to join *REACT* (and reduced the two-year dues for new Teams), we greatly simplified the annual Team renewal process, we established an outstanding Web site, we adopted E-mail as our preferred way of conducting business, we opened all Board meetings to the Membership, and made many other major or minor improvements in the way we do things.

Most importantly, after the significant loss of Teams and individual members in 1998, we have halted the annual decline in members, and stabilized our numbers, with new members offsetting losses. The number of members for 2002 was virtually the same as the number of 1999 members! In the financial department, despite dire warnings from some that we were headed for bankruptcy, we have operated "in the black" for the past four years. Our officers and Directors have contributed greatly to that, having absorbed almost all of their personal expenses (including travel expenses) of office.

I'm proud of the part I've played these past five years, and trust that my record is generally positive, despite errors made along the way. Regardless of who is President for 2003, I'm confident that your Board and your officers will continue to serve *REACT* well. My personal thanks go to each of these gentlemen who have worked so hard and contributed so much to *REACT*.

Texas Team Helps Hospitals Connect

by Roger Wines, W5WIA,

Vice-President for Emergency Response, Travis County *REACT*,

and Lee Cooper, W5LHT,

Travis County ARES Coordinator

When disaster strikes, the need for rapid, effective communications extends far beyond the immediate disaster site. In particular, hospitals need to know how many casualties are on their way, with what kinds and extent of injuries, to mobilize their personnel and resources. Depending on the scale of the emergency, they may need to coordinate their resources and direct patients to the facility that can meet their needs.

In Austin, Texas, amateur radio operators and Travis County *REACT* have joined forces to connect the city's nine major hospitals with the city-county emergency management agency.

The Amateur Radio Communications Hospital Emergency System (ARCHES) is the outgrowth of a long-term relationship between the Austin-Travis County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ATC ARES), the City of Austin Office of Emergency Management (OEM), and all nine local area hospitals. ARES members began working with the OEM several years ago by using packet radio to gather information on the number, type, and status of patients being admitted to the hospitals during a mass casualty event. The data allow emergency managers and first-responder commanders to have a better grasp of the scope of the event and give them better logistical in-

formation in managing or mitigating the effects of the emergency. Also, basic victim information is available at the EOC, enabling the emergency staff to answer inquiries about specific individuals from worried family and relatives.

Last year the Joint Hospital Accrediting Commission (JHACO), the agency that accredits its medical facilities and allows them to operate, mandated that all hospitals have in place a means of alternate communications when normal means failed during emergencies. The Austin-Travis County ARES proposed the installation of permanent voice and packet ham radio stations at each of the hospitals, the OEM Emergency Operations Center, and the American Red Cross. The OEM and hospitals agreed to the proposal; using donated equipment, we are in the process of installing stations in all locations.

Most of the members of Travis County *REACT* are also members of ARES; the two groups work closely together and with the other ham organizations in the area. Three-fourths of TCR's members have ham tickets, and are also members of the local clubs. *REACT*'s part of the ARCHES program is to help provide operators and equipment. Recently a member of ARES secured a grant from the Hewlett-Packard Corporation to purchase coaxial cable to complete the ra-

dio installations. Because ARES is an informal, ad hoc organization, it doesn't have a bank account, so Travis County *REACT* agreed to manage the grant funds.

In the past, periodic disaster drills have been held, and the ham radio operators brought their own stations and antennae to the key communications points. It took hours to get all stations up and running. Now, thanks to ARCHES, these stations are able to be manned and on the air within minutes, in some cases, of an activation notice. In fact, we are actively encouraging hospital staff to become licensed so that they can operate the stations themselves while waiting for assigned volunteers to respond as needed.

We are also working with other agencies, such as the local airport emergency managers, the university health centers and police, and medical support facilities, to get them to participate in the program. Once ARCHES is complete, we hope to have an established network of voice and digital data stations in place and ready to go within minutes of being needed. Thanks to the vast, independent infrastructure of ham radio, we will not have the single points of failure that commercial systems suffer. In any community emergency, the people who are ready to help will be able to communicate.

Waterloo *REACT* Shines in the Spotlight at “Emergency Services Day”

by Rick Weisler, Coordinator

At the annual fall fair in Cambridge, Ontario (a city in Waterloo Region), the fair committee sets aside a day to recognize those who put their lives on the line every day. September 8, 2002, was chosen as “Emergency Services Day” and Waterloo Regional *REACT* was asked to be a part of the day’s events, to be recognized for the services they provide to the community.

The day started with a variety of emergency vehicles from various groups: everything from ladder trucks to Army Jeeps and ambulances were there as the public watched and children waved with excitement as sirens wailed. *REACT* was not outdone; we brought out our Command Center, Argo, Gator and Lighting

Unit for everyone to see. “It was a proud, noisy procession of people committed to the community, whatever the crisis, whatever the cost, and often they do pay the price, putting their safety and their lives on the line,” according to the report on the local TV news.

After the parade ended *REACT* and the other agencies had their equipment on display and talked with the public about who they were and the services they provide to the community. We had several people interested in memberships, and the Oshweken Police from Six Nations Indian Reserve expressed interest in using our services.

Later that afternoon, Waterloo Regional *REACT* president Kirk Walker

participated in a ceremonial flag exchange with New York State Trooper Investigator Dale Fair. Inv. Fair received flags from many jurisdictions and dignitaries; to each of them, he gave the Stars and Stripes in return.

Inv. Fair said in a small speech, “The flags will go into the New York Police Academy Museum in Albany, but they are a symbol of something much deeper – mutual respect and admiration, not just in times of tragedy, but every day on the job.”

Waterloo Regional *REACT* will be displaying the American flag we received from Inv. Fair in our Command Center, and will continue to strive and promote community support and assist the Emergency Services in every way possible.

Calendar

- January 1** Deadline for proposed changes to RI Bylaws (to be submitted to Bylaws Committee)
- February 1** Deadline for committee reports to Board of Directors
- 3** Deadline for submissions for March-April *REACTer*
- 7-9** Annual Meeting of Board of Directors, *REACT* International
- 15** Deadline for nominations for Regional Director (Regions 2, 4, and 7)
- April 7** Deadline for submissions for May-June *REACTer*
- June 2** Deadline for submissions for July-August *REACTer*
- July 21-24** *REACT* International Convention, Evansville, Indiana
- August 11** Deadline for submissions for September-October *REACTer*

Convention 2003

Preview!

by Jack Murrell, George Lynn,
& Lee W. Besing

Both the Indiana State *REACT* Council and Vanderburgh County *REACT* Team C-296 welcome you to the **2003 *REACT* International Convention**. The convention will be held July 21-24, 2003, at the Executive Inn Convention Center in downtown Evansville, Indiana.

Get ready to fly, drive, ride the train or paddle your boat up the Ohio River, but be sure to find your way to Evansville. However you plan to get there, it's time to start making your vacation plans now! It just won't be the same without you!

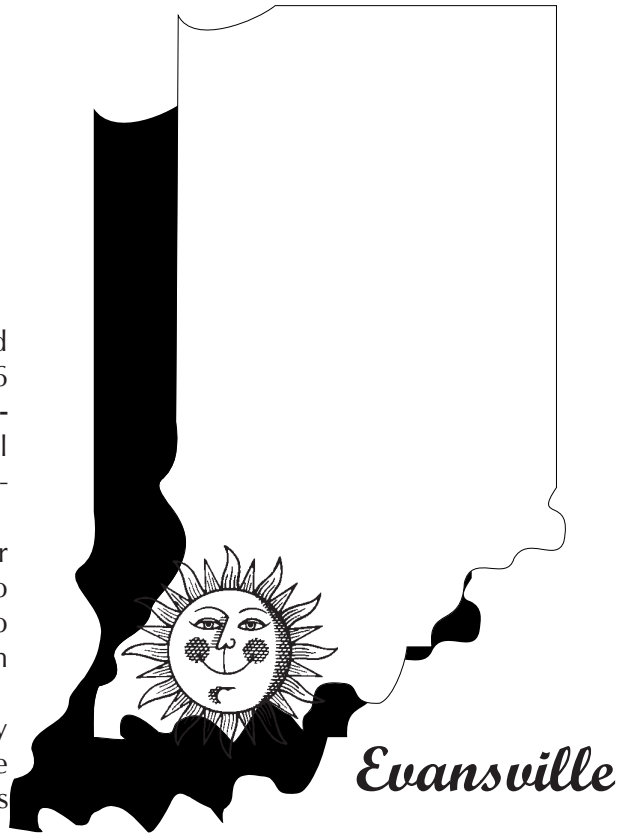
The Convention will be focused primarily toward disaster response and training issues. We are lining up qualified speakers to talk on issues affecting most every *REACT* Team, plus some training that you simply won't get by staying at home!

* Learn how to find and work with your local ARES ham group. Learn how best to approach your local American Red Cross, Salvation Army or other agencies to offer your help.

* Learn how your Team can and should expand your radio services into such areas as GMRS and Amateur. How can the FRS and new less expensive GMRS or MURS radios help your Team reach the public? Should you get a commercial license for your Team?

* Learn how to build and use a Team Website to promote your Team's activities and attract new members.

* Learn how to publicize your Team with press releases, a Team newsletter and other techniques.



* Participate in round-robin discussion groups with experienced *REACT*ers from all around the world. Learn how another Team raised funds for their new repeater or how they were able to attract and keep new members.

* Learn how a group of 15-year-olds (now 18-20 years old) in Ohio formed a new Team and grew into the Team they are today with area-wide coverage in their newspapers about their activities!

What you learn at this convention is limited only to the questions you think to ask. If you don't ask the right question, you may not get the right answer!

Junior Members can sign up to become an "Official Junior Reporter". Official Junior Reporters will

be expected to snoop around during the day's events looking for photo ops and interesting news to put in the nightly "Porthole Newsletter" delivered to your room before morning each day. Applications are now being accepted. Adult supervision will be provided. Other special activities could be planned for the Juniors like a tour to the Zoo, Train Museum, Water Park, bowling or miniature golf depending upon participation and the Junior members' interests.

Plan now to take a leisurely two-hour dinner and cruise on a paddle riverboat up the Ohio River. Depending upon participation, cost could be as low as \$15-18 per person to cover both the dinner and the cruise! Wonder if the riverboat captain would let us set up a radio station from his ship during the cruise? (Fee not included in basic registration.)

The Convention Host Committee is working hard to make this convention affordable for your family. For instance, the Amateur Breakfast will use the Hotel's \$6.95 Breakfast Buffet instead of a more expensive catered meal. The same idea has been applied to the Life Member Luncheon, at the same low price! No more \$20 special meals at this convention! (Other than the banquet, of course.) This is a family-oriented event, so bring the entire family. The hotel room costs the same for 1 person or 4 persons, so pack them in!

Drawings will be held for three *free room nights* from those who register as "Early Birds." Limit of one free room night per name. Deadline for Early Bird registration is May 15, 2003. Registration rates change after that date as well, so don't delay.

Local GMRS and Amateur Repeaters will be available for use by licensed users. The GMRS repeater is on the standard 462.675 (141.3 tone) and has great coverage all over town, even from the airport.

To make flight arrangements, use destination airport code "EVV" for Evansville. Most flights arrive from St. Louis, Chicago, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Louisville or Atlanta. Visit < www.evairport.com > for more information about the Evansville Airport.

More information will be made available on the REACT International Website at < www.reactintl.org/conventions/2003 > .

Copy the forms below and on the next page. Send the hotel reservation directly to the hotel, not to the Convention Committee.

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Please complete the form and mail or fax it directly to the hotel. Do not send this form to the Convention Committee.

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***REACT International Convention – July 21-24, 2003
Registration deadline is June 18, 2003.***

Name _____ Telephone(____) _____

Address _____ Apt _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Postal Code _____ Country _____

Number of Rooms: _____ Prefer Smoking [] Non-smoking [] Need Handicap accessible []

Arrival Date _____ Estimated Arrival Time _____ (Check-in after 3 pm)

Departure Date _____ (Check-out time 12 noon) All rooms \$72, single or double

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ Exp Date _____ Type of Card _____

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE _____

REACT International, Inc.
Convention 2003

July 21-24 -- Evansville, Indiana

Please use this form for your Convention Registration; mail or fax it to the Convention Committee at the address below. "Early Bird" Registration ends June 1 -- don't delay!

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Address _____ Apt _____

City _____ State/Prov _____ Postal Code _____ Country _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____ @ _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Emergency Contact Phone No. (_____) _____ Alternate No. (_____) _____

Radio License/Call Sign: GMRS _____ Amateur _____

Other License: Type _____ Call Sign _____

Team Name _____ Team No. _____

Council Name _____

Check if you are Team Delegate [] Alternate [] Council Delegate [] Alternate []

Fees

Registration Fee (*before* June 1, '03) On-site \$70 Off-site \$80* _____

* "On-site" means that you are staying at the Convention hotel; "off-site" means you are staying elsewhere.

Registration Fee (*after* June 1) On-site \$95 Off-site \$105 _____

Junior REACT Registration Fee (no discounts) \$55 _____

Optional items:

Convention Shirt (circle size needed) S M L XL XXL XXXL \$20 _____

Extra Convention photo \$10 _____

Extra Banquet Ticket (for guests not registered for the Convention) \$25 _____

Life Member Luncheon \$6.95 _____

Amateur Radio Breakfast \$6.95 _____

Total Due (Please pay with your registration, US\$ only) _____

Make checks payable to: Convention 2003
PO Box 3226, Evansville, IN 47731

Remem

As the free world mourns the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, we do well to pause and thank each of the *REACT*ers who responded to that disaster, immediately and in the days following. They did *REACT* proud.

Our Teams paid a price for their dedication to the safety of others. One Team in the Carolinas lost a member to a heart attack shortly after sudden illness forced him to return home from New York City. Another Team had an emergency vehicle damaged or destroyed in the tower collapse.

REACT personnel remained in New York City for six weeks, supporting Salvation Army disaster operations with communications, until they were eventually released. *REACT*ers from several other states arrived to assist their New York colleagues.

Thank you to each *REACT*er who contributed in whatever way to aiding first victims, and then the rescue workers as they toiled around the clock. Your actions in the best *REACT* tradition make us honored and grateful.

-Ron McCracken

This morning I was in Columbus, Ohio, at the invitation of Governor Taft. The event was a memorial to honor those who lost their lives, as well to thank those who responded. I was proud to have been asked to be in attendance, and proud to have been able to volunteer my time.

I went as part of the American Red Cross Disaster Services system. But my road to being



in that system started with my being a *REACT* member. In Henry County, Ohio, the Red Cross DAT (Disaster Action Team) is made up mostly of *REACT* members who provide communications locally in disaster situations, as well as have been trained in damage assessment, mass care, and other functions.

I am nobody special, I just enjoy helping people.

In closing I will say: September 11 was an emotional day for me, both last year and today. I lost two close friends that day, and had several others injured there. I am still trying to come to terms with my feelings, and memories of the days following.

It is a privilege to be part of an organization like *REACT* because of the teamwork and cooperation shown.

-Keith Hosman
Vice-President, *REACT* of Henry County
(Ohio)

bering 9/11

The photo at left was taken on September 11, 2002, on the first anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City. The photo was taken at “ground zero” in “the Pit,” the actual place where the World Trade Center stood.

“The Pit” encompasses the entire seven-building complex that was destroyed, along with the subway and PATH train stations that were seven stories below ground.

As we stood in “the Pit” we could see the actual tubes that the trains used to travel through. The structure in the background of this photo is the underground parking facility that used to serve the Trade Center; it was about six or seven stories below the complex.

Also in the background is the “Ring of Remembrance” that the families and loved ones turned into a makeshift memorial, for the anniversary ceremony. The grieving families and friends placed flowers and other mementos inside the ring. The people behind us are the families, friends, and members of the emergency services that lost loved ones; they are facing the ring.

The photo does not depict the pain and anguish that were expressed by most on this day. Paul and I are EMT’s and we were at “ground zero” on Sept. 11, 2001, shortly after the attack. I was off from work that day and arrived shortly before the second tower collapsed. Paul was in school and left against the wishes of the principal.

I was able to help in the rescue efforts until the Verizon Building, across from the WTC (in the upper left corner of the photo), began to have bricks and mortar fall, and I was slightly injured.

Paul was at “ground zero” for many days, resting in a local church and returning to what was then a recovery effort.

Sam, on the other hand, lost a beloved family member in this tragedy. Sam is also an EMT and *REACT* member. Although Sam is able to save the lives of perfect strangers, day in and day out, he was never afforded the opportunity to save his sister-in-law’s life on 9/11.

Seeing the pain and suffering of this gentle family was very hard for all of us. We also had to deal with the loss of David LeMagne, a New York-New Jersey Port Authority Police Dept. paramedic, whom we all worked with, and Lt. Robert Cirri, also of the PAPD and a former *REACT* member. I was also acquainted with the only FBI agent killed in the attack, Lenny Hatton, whose son worked for me.

The Emergency Services *REACT* members in the photo are (left to right) Paul Urquijo, Greg Gully, Sam Nunez, Vincent Carlomagno, and Milton Mejias.

-Greg Gully
REACT Emergency Services
Hudson County, New Jersey

Editor’s Note: The sign reads, “In Loving Memory/ Nereida DeJesus/1970-2001/A Daughter, Mother, Sister and Friend/We Love You and Miss You!”



Dallas County *REACT* Hosts Texas Special Olympics

by Terry Allen,
Special Events Chairman
photos by Thomas Celentano

After successfully parking the Special Olympics teams' buses, Terry Allen, Larry Powell, Bernie Parker, Rick Short, and Chuck Thompson strategize - and eat pizza -- before the next rush.



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When more than 3,000 Special Olympics athletes -- plus coaches, parents, and spectators -- come to town, communications and security are vital issues. Special Olympics Texas (SOTx) relies on *REACT* to make sure that everything goes according to plan. Last May, the state Summer Games were held in Arlington, home of the Texas Rangers and the Six Flags Over Texas amusement park. Dallas County *REACT* took care of traffic, crowd management, access control, and safety.

Dallas Co.
REACT's Martin Schneider is ready to direct traffic at Texas' Special Olympics Summer Games.





Ohio REACT Council President Paul Jackson sets up a display at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The display was seen by an estimated 100,000 people over six days.

Ohio Council Adds Five Teams

by Paul Jackson,
Ohio Council President

How do you start new Teams? There's no one way. In Ohio, we've formed five new Teams in the past year. This is due to many people promoting REACT all over Ohio by television, radio, parades, word of mouth, and displays such as the one in the photo. The mention of REACT in last year's Radio Shack catalog also helped. So do the Internet, the e-mail list, and REACT publications. **How** you do it isn't the important thing. What matters is to never stop encouraging people to get involved, join a Team or start one.

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REACTivities Team, Council & Region News

Cedar-loo (Iowa) REACT

Cedar-loo REACT participated in the Sturgis Falls Festival in Cedar Falls, Iowa, the weekend of June 28-30. The Team helped with traffic control for the Children's Parade on Friday evening. On Saturday, we participated with the Cedar Falls CB Club and Cedar Falls Police to handle traffic control for the parade. On Sunday we helped with the 10K run, also.
-Craig Hoepfner, Secretary

Valleywide REACT (Boise, Idaho)

We were very busy with Fourth of July events in Boise. We provided traffic control for the July 4th Parade, while at the same time continuing our holiday Safety Break on Interstate 84 at the Blacks Creek rest area. We served approximately 2,000 travelers and local drivers that weekend.
-Tom Jenkins, Sr., President

Medina County (Ohio) REACT

On July 4th we participated with the local ham club to provide traffic control for the YWCA Twin Sizzler, a bike race that runs throughout the southeastern part of our county.
-Jason Boone

Forsyth County (N. C.) REACT

When Bonnie Stanley's mom, a former REACT member, asked our Team for help with overwhelming medical expenses, we knew we couldn't just give her some money. Instead, with the help of two other REACT Teams, we were able to conduct a fundraiser for Bonnie. She is eight years old and needed therapy that her insurance wouldn't cover.

With the help of the money we raised by selling hot dogs and hamburgers in front of a shopping center in Winston-Salem, Bonnie got the therapy. She now walks without the walker and braces.

The photo shows Bonnie with Cheyenne Cody, one of our



Junior REACT members who is always a great help to the Team.

The trailer behind Bonnie belongs to Burke County (NC) REACT, one of the other Teams that helped with the fund-raiser. Special thanks to Terry Houston, Burke Co. president; they're always ready to help when we need them!

-Robert Bankins, President

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REACTivities Team, Council, & Region News



Oklahoma County (Okla.) REACT

What do Vince Gill, Amy Grant, three Miss America's, and central Oklahoma REACT Teams have in common?

On November 16, 2002, all were performing at the Oklahoma State Capitol Dome dedication.

When the capitol was built in 1917, a dome was sup-

posed to sit on top. However, shortages of materials during World War I prevented the completion of the dome. Eighty-three years later, citizens and companies in Oklahoma donated \$20 million to build the dome.

At the dedication, Oklahoma County REACT and University of Oklahoma REACT provided traffic control and parking area security. With an expected hundred thousand spectators, the Capitol Patrol brought in additional state troopers from all around the state to assist in crowd control and security, and the two REACT teams were an integral part of the security plan. The Teams also were responsible for maintaining a safety zone for the fireworks show that concluded the dedication ceremonies.

-Dale Ellis, Vice-President



Ramsey County (Minn.) REACT

On Saturday, October 26, members of Ramsey County (Minnesota) REACT staffed an exhibit at the Minnesota Hamfest, held at Touchstone Energy Place in St. Paul. This is the biggest hamfest in Minnesota, drawing over 2500 people each year.

In the photo, left to right, are Paul Oby, Paul Munns, and Joyce Reed. The photo was taken by Larry Shaunce, Albert Lea Amateur Radio Club. We talked to some 35 hamfest attendees, many of whom expressed interest in joining our Team.

-Paul Oby



Grand Island (Neb.) REACT

Husker Harvest Days.

Each year, Grand Island REACT sets up a booth to give people information about our Team. This year was a little "special" -- we managed to get a few pictures of the event! Here, members of the Team relax at our display area in one of the few times we weren't busy telling folks about REACT.

-Jeremy Smith

Nothing warms a farmer's heart quite like a display of the latest combines, harvesters, tractors, and other marvels of modern agriculture. For the Grand Island, Nebraska, area, that means

Indiana Council

On November 10, 2002, the Indiana State REACT Council elected George Lynn of Vanderburgh County as Council president. George has served as vice-president for four years, and is president of Vanderburgh Co. REACT; he is chairing the 2003 RI Convention in Evansville, Ind.

-Jack Murrell

REACTivities Team, Council, & Region News



Comal County (Tex.) REACT

When Comal County REACT (Canyon Lake, Texas) helps run the annual Christmas Parade, it truly becomes a family affair.

Team members are responsible for lining up the dozens of floats and marching units, then assist local police and Comal Co. Sheriff's officers in controlling traffic. And bringing up the end of the parade is Comal County REACT's own unit, featuring Katie, a trained SAR dog. Katie's owner and driver of the unit is CCR President Omer Bangs; Katie's handler is Team secretary Cheryl Whittler (Omer's daughter); and Cheryl's two daughters, Emily and Ellen, ride the trailer with Katie. (Ellen is mostly hidden behind the dog.)

-Photo by Lee W. Besing



St. Cloud (Minn.) REACT

St. Cloud (Minnesota) REACT celebrated 25 years of service to the community at its November, 2002, meeting. Representatives of Benton County Emergency Management, Benton Co. Commissioners, and St. Cloud Police Dept. were on hand to help the members celebrate. Pictured above: Founding Members Charles Reichensperger, Connie Reichensperger, and Larry Peterson.

Teams Offer REACT Items



Travis County (Tex.) REACT has these two shoulder patches available for sale to REACT Teams and members. Colors: Outer border and letters in blue, inner border and REACT name in orange, circle design in black. Cost: \$4.00 plus \$0.50 s/h. Order (with payment) from Travis Co. REACT, PO Box 180922, Austin, TX 78718.

Oklahoma County REACT has an orange and black lanyard with the REACT name embroidered on it. The lanyard is ideal for carrying a whistle or ID badge. Cost: \$6.50 each; add \$0.60 for one lanyard and \$0.30 for each additional one for shipping and handling. A photo of the lanyard is available at <http://

www.r-e-a-c-t.org/e-pubs/react.2620.lanyard.htm>. (Thanks to Wayne Barringer for putting this on the Web site.) Order (with payment) from Oklahoma Co. REACT, PO Box 2225, Oklahoma City, OK 73101, or <Paul.Deaver@ci.okc.ok.us>.

REACT Lake Simcoe (Ontario) offers a plastic key tag to remind radio and cell phone users of the vital information authorities need in an emergency call. The key tag contains a list of essential information; it's orange with black and white lettering and graphics, making an attractive giveaway item for Safety Breaks and displays. Cost: US\$27 plus US\$3 s/h for 100 tags. Order by e-mail to: <reactlakesimcoe@hotmail.com>.

Sale of these items containing the REACT logo has been approved by the RI Board of Directors, and a portion of sales price is donated to REACT International.

Willamette Valley (Oregon)

Jeff Newton of Oregon Fire Page is seeking affiliate members of REACT in the Central Willamette Valley (Ore.) in the vicinity of Roseburg, Eugene, and Salem (especially Springfield and Lane Counties) to help form a new REACT Team. The only existing Team in the state is in Salem. If you're interested, contact Jeff at <newton@efn.org> or <ofp@ofp.org>, or call the Oregon Fire Page office in Eugene.

Triple-C REACT (Contra Costa Co., Calif.)

The 45-foot "Sea Maid," owned by Marine REACT member Bruno Markert, is used to assist distressed ships and to aid the Sheriff's Marine Patrol in Contra Costa County, Calif. (Photo: Robert Gromm)

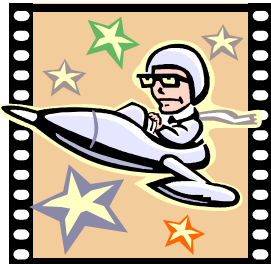


It doesn't take rocket science...

to renew your Team's membership for 2003! All it takes is completion of the Team Charter Renewal Package mailed to all Teams in October. If your Team hasn't received its package, contact RI Headquarters immediately. And remember, Teams that renew by December 31, 2002, are eligible for Early Bird prize drawings!

Renew Your Team Now -- Don't Miss Out!

10-9?



errors snuck into the November-December, 2002, Directory:

On page 1, the listing of Regional Directors showed Ron Werner as Director for Region 8. Ron had resigned and Kenny Jagdeoosingh, of Trinidad and Tobago, was appointed to that office.

In the Directory on pages 8-9, the wrong fax number was given for Bob Leef (Region 8 Director); the correct number is 775-667-8519.

Also in the Directory, the e-mail address for the By-laws Committee should read <bylaws@reactintl.org>.

On page 15, the wrong city is shown as the site of the 2003 RI Convention; it is, of course, Evansville, Indiana.

Silent Mics

St. Thomas (Ont.) REACT mourns the loss of **Michael Edward Payne**, who passed away September 26, 2002, at Woodstock General Hospital. Survivors are his wife Patricia; sons Michael, Jr.; Shawn (and his wife Tonya); and Jeffery, and granddaughter Amber. Services were held at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church with members of St. Thomas and Don Valley REACT Teams as honor guards.

Dallas County (Tex.) REACT sadly announces the death of **Frances Howard Riley**, DCR Unit 12 and RI Life Member 158, on October 24, 2002. Frances had celebrated her 84th birthday the day before. She joined DCR in July 1976 and served as Vice-President, President, and Chairman of the Board. She was an active Channel 9 monitor for many years and participated in most of DCR's community support activities. She also was active in the Texas State REACT Council, serving as Treasurer from 1991-95. Her survivors include husband J. L. Riley, son and daughter-in-law John H. and Vicki Riley, and grandson Chris.



Unsquelched

by Stuart M. DeLuca,
Editor

A New Year! (Yawn)

One of the (many) things I've never understood about my fellow human beings is their propensity for celebrating non-events.

For example, take New Year's. What is there about opening a new calendar full of blanks that is worthy of celebration?

From any objective point of view, January 1 is no different from any of the other 364 (or -5) days of the year. In fact, what is most interesting about January 1 is its utter lack of significance.

Other societies, past and present, at least chose to observe a day that had some astronomical, seasonal, or practical significance as the commencement of the calendrical cycle. But January 1? It's not the beginning of anything except January. There are no ancient monuments whose plinths point to a particular star that shines only on January 1. There aren't so much as crop circles commemorating the day.

One may object that the true significance of January 1 is that it is the day after New Year's Eve, and thus is significant as an essential day of respite from over-indulgence and its consequences.

Hah! But if January 1 were not New Year's Day, everyone would have just as good an excuse to get plastered on, say, the evening of the summer solstice (my personal choice).

And what's with this "resolutions" business, anyway? I've never figured that one out. But apparently (I confess that I have no direct knowledge of this practice, but it's been in all the papers), come January 1, millions of people write down lists of the ways they would like to improve themselves.

They couldn't lose weight (said to be a popular "resolution") some other time of the year? Besides, if I'm not mistaken, virtually all of these "resolutions" are abandoned by, say, January 5th anyway. So why bother?

Look, people, there's no good reason you can't start losing weight, or being kinder to your dog, or fixing up some other flaws in your karma, on any given day. Waiting until Jan. 1 to improve yourself is simply procrastination.

As you can tell, I've done a great deal of research on this subject. And as much as it pains me to do so, I must reveal the awful truth: *This whole New Year's business is a government conspiracy!*

You want proof? Sorry, I can't reveal my sources, and my evidence is much too complicated to explain it all here. So take my words for it, folks: There's really nothing special about New Year's Day. And with that, I'm going back to bed.

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