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the REACTer

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On the Cover:

***A mobile home park in Port Charlotte, Fla.,
after Hurricane Charley's visit
(Photo by Charles Seibert/Sun-Sentinel,
reproduced with permission)***

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From the President

by Dick Cooper

Do you remember the reason for the formation of your REACT Team? There are many reasons why a group of communicators might want to form a REACT Team, but one of the most common is something like: We want to help people, or, We want to help in our community. If your Team was formed for these primary reasons, what have you done to accomplish these goals?

Many groups of communicators/people get together and form a REACT Team but don't know what to do from there. This may be especially true of new Teams but may also be true of Teams that have been around for a while and have lost sight of the reason(s) for their formation in the first place.

The goals of helping people and helping in your community can start by getting to know your local law enforcement agencies (i.e. police, sheriff, highway patrol, etc.). Normally they have resources that can prove very helpful in the areas of Team formation, public relations, contacts, events, etc.

You must present yourself to these and other agencies in a professional manner. Be prepared to offer them something in return for their services and assistance, like Team support or participation when needed, but don't promise anything until you are sure that

you can deliver it.

The next place you want to look is the local, county, or state Office of Emergency Management (OEM) or whatever name they use in your area. This office will usually be affiliated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and will operate during local and area emergencies. If your Team can perform specific communication functions, let them know.

When you present yourself to these agencies, they will make you aware of RACES and ARES, the two amateur radio groups that often handle communications for OEM/FEMA. In many areas REACT Teams work alongside the RACES and ARES teams in emergencies. Unless REACT members are also licensed amateur operators they may not be able to use the same frequencies but they can still work together.

Align yourself with some of the agencies with whom REACT has a Statement of Understanding, such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, American Radio Relay League (ARRL), and National Weather Service. Also try to work with other agencies that may be in your area such as Neighborhood Watch, Skywarn, local amateur radio club, etc. Team members may be able to perform a number of different functions with a choice of many different agencies.

Of course monitoring is something that REACT Teams have done from the beginning of REACT to help people and their

local community. Monitoring can include CB, GMRS, FRS, amateur, marine and many other radio bands, depending on what may be most useful in your area. REACT members can help people by handling these calls for assistance and emergencies.

In all cases it is imperative that your REACT Team and members keep their communications skills at the highest possible levels at all times. You never know when you may be called upon to help any agency with a disaster or emergency. Many times the agencies that you work with will perform drills that you can participate in. These are merely tests of everyone's capabilities so that you can be more prepared during an emergency but they are very important. Just a few examples of REACT preparedness can be found in various disasters and emergencies that have happened over the past few years:

- California earthquakes
- California and Florida fires
- Florida hurricanes
- Oklahoma City bombing
- Floods and tornados in many places
- 9/11 disaster in NYC

In all of the above situations REACT was ready to jump in and help with an organized effort and it happened because REACT members had aligned themselves with agencies and they knew what to do when a disaster or emergency happened. Don't get caught - prepare today. You don't have to be a Boy Scout to have the motto of "Be Prepared."

The REACTer

From the Executive Vice-President

by Ed Greany

When the lights go out, are you prepared?

Our nation has recently suffered from multiple hurricanes, flooding, tornadoes, earthquakes, fires, transportation accidents, and more. Disaster seldom announces itself when knocking at our door. Are you prepared for when it does? Is your Team prepared?

With Internet access, there are vast resources available to all of us for disaster preparedness information. Among them are the American Red Cross, FEMA, Salvation Army, ARRL, Homeland Security, and others. Simply do a Google search using the search words, "disaster preparedness." No computer, you say? No problem - contact your nearest American Red Cross office or Office of Disaster Preparedness. I'm sure your local fire department would also have material and resources for you.

Do you have a disaster kit for your home stocked with the things to sustain you for at least three days? Do not expect help for at least that time. Do you have a "Go Bag" prepared for activating to a disaster in your community? Are your radios ready for immediate use with freshly charged batteries, antennas that fit properly, and material such as repeater directories, operations manuals, maps, and writing instruments? Is your level of expectation from your Team members higher than your actual ability to respond or

perform? Do you have the skills and knowledge necessary to perform at that level?

If any of these questions are answered with a no, then now is the time to correct that default. There are many good courses available to attain the skills you need. REACT International has one of the best Emergency Communications courses out there. ARRL has an equivalent one for amateur operators but it only covers ham radio. FEMA and CERT are excellent sources for learning materials, as is the National Fire Academy. Many courses are available on-line while some are in the classroom. Many are free while some have small fees and also offer certificates of completion.

Did you know that all disaster courses from the American Red Cross are free? Those, along

with First Aid and CPR, are probably the minimum classes that all REACT members should take.

If you are not an amateur operator yet then I recommend you consider a class in ham radio. It is not difficult and Morse code is no longer necessary. Study material is easily available and testing is done regularly.

Does your Team have a disaster plan in effect? Do your Team members know what steps they should take when disaster hits? How are they notified? What do they do? Where do they report? What should they bring?

I hope this has given you some ideas concerning your degree of preparedness in case of a disaster - for yourself, your family, and your community. Don't wait any longer - do it today before the lights go out.

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From Headquarters

by Norman Kaplan,
REACT International Treasurer

As I write this in the beginning of October and you read this in the beginning of November, the Team renewal packets should have arrived at each Team.

If your Team has not received its renewal packet, please contact REACT International at (301) 316-2900 or <react@reactintl.org> and let Dora know. Very few mailed items go astray, but it does happen. All Teams have been mailed their renewal packets.

To the Team officers: please read the renewal instructions. There have been changes to the renewal packet and the various fees and classes of membership. Each packet will contain the renewal instructions, Team officer information (please give us your telephone numbers and initial after the number if you want it given out), Team dues calculations, new members joined, annual audit certification forms and a list of your 2004 membership.

A Team member not registered with REACT International is not covered by the liability insurance. If the Team has members not registered with REACT International, the Team coverage is at risk. Please renew and file all members.

REACT International has now gone radio-active. Since moving to Suitland, Md., there have been no two-way radios at headquarters, but now thanks to donations from Big Al Sevilla, NOVA REACT, for a Kenwood 2

meter radio and antenna; Dora Wilbanks, RI Office Manager, for a Midland CB; Norman Kaplan, Federal City REACT, for a Midland GMRS and antennas; and Midland Corporation for a Midland CB and two FRS units. The CB radios cover channels 9 and 19.

The office thanks Big Al for his help in getting the radios installed and the antennas placed. The radios sit in the main office and are turned on when a properly licensed operator is in the office. REACT International is located a block off the I-95/I-495 Beltway at the Branch Ave. exit on the fourth floor of an office building and has relatively good coverage of the southeast corner of the Beltway.

I have talked with the REACT President and he has agreed that RI should be acknowledging the volunteer hours of our members. REACT International will be asking each Teams' Communications Officer to send in a listing of their Team members' volunteer hours by year. Those volunteer hours documented in the Monitoring Report include monitoring the radios, Team meetings, training, events, seminars, etc. Those members with 1000, 5000, 10000 and 5000-hour increments over 10000 hours in their lifetime REACT membership will be getting a certificate of appreciation noting their efforts. This means that members need to get their paperwork filed with their Communications Officer. The paperwork can be filed retroactively to Janu-

ary 1, 2004. The Communications Officers should file this with the Team Monitoring Report to REACT International. Both the Team's Monitoring Report and list of member hours need to be filed together. The current Monitoring Report form will be sent with the Team's new Identification Cards.

New Membership Brochure

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a *REACT* Christmas Wish Book

by Tom Currie,
Louisville METRO *REACT*

Many of us remember when the Sears & Roebuck Christmas Catalog was informally called "The Wish Book." Several years ago, Sears even began putting that title on their Christmas Catalog. Well, for *REACTers* there are several good catalogs that might be nominated as "The Wish Book." One of the best non-radio catalogs for *REACTers* is from Galls.

Galls is located in Lexington Kentucky, but is famous nationwide among public safety agencies such as EMS, fire, and police departments. Galls' isn't usually the cheapest source of uniforms and other items, but they do offer one of the widest selections of top quality merchandise designed to meet the needs of public safety agencies.

One reason Galls is well known is their extensive selection of uniform items.

Uniform shirts are available at prices ranging from \$20 to \$70. My personal favorites are the zipper-front uniform shirts with the buttons attached to the placket. These combine the traditional appearance of a button front uniform shirt with the advantages of a smooth zipper. Priced around \$35-40.

Teams looking for a more casual look while still maintaining a professional uniform appearance may want to look at Galls' lines of uniform shirts intended for bicycle patrols. One top choice here would be their Bike Patrol Polo with Reflective Sleeves for

around \$40 (also available without the reflective trim for around \$30).

Uniform trousers are priced from \$20 to \$90, with most around \$35-\$40. Sure, most Teams just specify a pair of black or dark navy dress slacks as their uniform trousers, but real uniform trousers have a lot of advantages. Trousers designed for public safety uniforms are cut to fit comfortably both sitting and walking/running. The seams and zippers are sturdier than those found in most dress slacks. One major advantage, often overlooked, is that uniform trousers have larger and sturdier belt loops to accommodate a heavy-duty 1½" belt. This doesn't sound important - until you try running around all day with a dual-band HT and high capacity battery hooked on your ordinary belt. Galls' own brand of uniform trousers are an excellent choice at \$25.

Don't forget a good leather belt. The "dress" leather belts and even "work" belts found in most clothing and department stores are not designed to support hanging a radio on your belt. To get a belt that is intended for such use, you need to shop companies that cater to EMTs, police, and similar professionals. The buckleless belts from Gould & Goodrich (\$30) and Safariland (\$40) are excellent and the Velcro closure is secure and comfortable.

With winter arriving, many members may be looking for a jacket that goes with their

uniform. Prices in the Galls catalog range from under \$20 for nylon to a breath-taking \$270 for a quality leather jacket - or perhaps you're looking for some rain gear. Vinyl rain jackets start at just \$13 with a wide selection of black, yellow, lime green, and safety orange jackets and raincoats available with and without reflective trim. My top choice would be the ANSI Compliant Reversible Reflective Rain Jacket with Reflexite® Brilliance Series Trim for \$90.

Not everything for *REACTers* from Galls are things you wear. Galls has a wide variety of gear to help you organize and carry all the rest of your "stuff" - organizers to hold all the loose equipment we accumulate in the car are available starting at \$10 for a visor caddy organizer to \$75 for the large self-supporting Seat Organizer Kit. Galls also offers a Soft Trunk Organizer for \$25 that will hold all that small stuff so many of us have in the trunk (or the back floorboard!)

Many Galls items are available on-line through their web site at < www.galls.com > , everything in their catalog (and sometimes more) can be ordered by phone at 1-800-477-7766 from anywhere in the US (From Canada, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands use 1-888-733-5391) (USA fax 1-800-944-2557, Other countries 1-859-269-4360). Request a catalog on-line or by writing to: Galls Incorporated; 2680 Palumbo Drive; Lexington, Kentucky 40509.

Battered... but Unbowed!

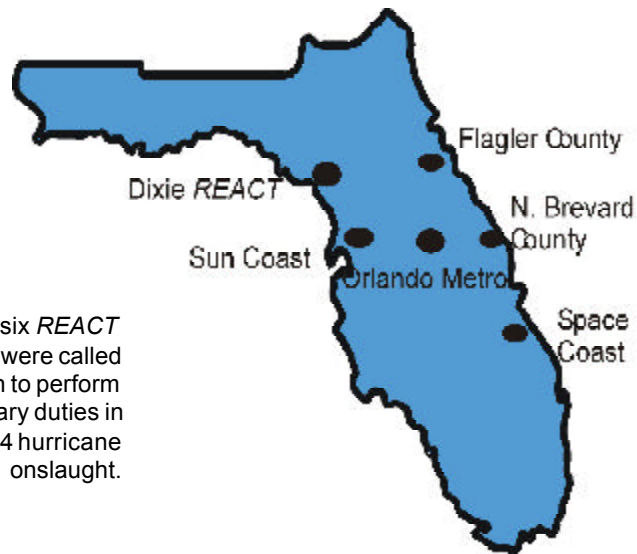
by Bob Pickering

The state of Florida suffered its worst single hurricane since 1992 when Hurricane Charley raged across south Florida and the state's worst hurricane season since 1964. Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne all paid visits to Florida – all within a month and a half. And at this writing the season is not yet over.

On Tuesday, August 10, Mike Cauley, the Florida REACT Council Emergency Coordinator, requested that the Council go to Level 1, the first general notification that the Council needed to prepare for activation for Hurricane Charley.

Hurricane Charley at the time was forecast to travel across Cuba, turning north and making landfall somewhere along Florida's Gulf Coast. Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Bonnie was rapidly moving toward the Panhandle where tropical storm warnings and hurricane watches were posted. Teams—especially Dixie County REACT and Sun Coast REACT, both along Florida's Gulf shores – watched carefully as Charley was forecast to impact within the next several days.

Meanwhile Teams in central Florida and the east coast also knew they were not out of the woods. By the afternoon of Wednesday, August 11, hurricane



Florida's six REACT Teams were called upon to perform extraordinary duties in the 2004 hurricane onslaught.

warnings were flying along Florida's Gulf Coast and Keys.

On Thursday, August 12, Tropical Storm Bonnie slammed ashore near Panama City. Tropical storms are usually spread out and their impact is widely felt. The Storm Prediction Center issued a tornado watch effective Thursday afternoon as conditions became ripe for tornados across north Florida due to Bonnie's impact.

At 5:57 p.m., Assistant Warning and Coordination Meteorologist Angie Enyedi and the staff at the National Weather Service in Jacksonville detected a possible tornado developing over Flagler County. REACT members observed a wall cloud and the warning was promptly issued. Within two minutes REACT mem-

bers had their storm-spotter net up and running on GMRS 462.675 repeater. REACT members checked in and reported conditions across the county as the potentially severe storm crossed Palm Coast. One member at the County's Emergency Operations Center ran Net Control and tracked members' information. Fortunately this storm dropped no tornado and the warning expired with no incident.

However in Jacksonville, sixty miles to the north, a tornado did strike, hitting the local Amtrak station as well as destroying a number of buildings.

By the end of the day, Bonnie was gone but Charley was coming and the real monster had yet to be seen.

Florida's *REACT* Teams respond to the state's worst hurricane season in forty years

Friday the 13th of August, 2004. Hurricane warnings were flying along the entire west coast of Florida from the Suwanee River through the Keys. The monster was coming. Charley was rapidly strengthening and on target for landfall near Tampa.

The Florida Council was on Level 3 partial activation; Council leadership was monitoring reports from Florida Teams and preparing to coordinate any mutual aid request. Orlando *REACT* members also helped in this effort. *REACT* members in the Sun Coast and Dixie County Teams began to prepare for what would come.

But a special advisory from the National Hurricane Center changed everything. We were now dealing with a fast moving Category 4 hurricane rapidly approaching the Ft. Myers area. The projected track had changed. The storm would not ravage Tampa but race towards the southwest Florida coast and head for *REACT* Teams in Orlando, North Brevard County, and Flagler County. Teams in the storm's path suddenly found themselves rapidly preparing for the Category 4 hurricane.

Sun Coast *REACT* and Dixie *REACT* lowered their levels of response but kept a nervous eye on Hurricane Charley as he turned towards southwest Florida.

September-October, 2004

Orlando Metro *REACT* activated at Level 3. Members had been running since 11 p.m. on August 11, assisting Orange County ARES / RACES with shelter communications and staffing. The Team also activated its Skywarn net on its GMRS repeater, operating on 462.600Mhz.

The sky was a solid dark cloud rounding to the horizon like some sinister starship

That afternoon, like a scene out of the movie Independence Day, the dark round cloud shelf of the hurricane closed in on Orlando. The sky was a solid dark cloud rounding to the horizon like some sinister starship bent on destruction of the communities below it.

As night fell the winds came. Power flashes filled the sky as transformers blew and lines came down. Within minutes many parts of Orlando were in the dark as a 105 mph wind gust was recorded at Orlando International Airport.

The core of the hurricane

roared over downtown Orlando. Winds howled among the tall buildings of downtown. A number of small tornados were reported in the area as Charley moved through.

Orlando Metro members kept busy with Skywarn and Red Cross shelter communications, as well as monitoring CB and FRS frequencies. Members not assigned to a shelter were at home acting as storm spotters for Skywarn. Before midnight Orlando had lost almost all power and trees were down all across the area. Damage was widespread but the GMRS repeater stayed up and running.

North Brevard *REACT* members were also activated to a full Level 4, huddled in shelters in the Titusville area.

North Brevard *REACT* personnel assisted in the administration of amateur radio nets that covered shelter operations in northern Brevard County. Members were fully up and running by five o'clock and also had GMRS operations at the Brevard Emergency Operations Center as well as the Brevard County Dispatch Center. The center of the hurricane brushed over northern Brevard County after dark. Net operations were very active through midnight. One shelter evacuee was pregnant and labor pains began, which forced an emergency transport to Parish Hospital before the



Hurricane Charley roars ashore near Ft. Myers, Florida, beginning a path of destruction across the length and breadth of the state.

brunt of the storm struck.

The storm lashed out at Titusville with rain bands and winds gusting to hurricane force as Charley moved toward the east coast from Orange County. Just as other parts of Florida had experienced, power failed as the hurricane moved across the east central Florida coast.

Space Coast REACT reported that a tornado was reported near Melbourne, but otherwise the area was out of the direct wrath of the hurricane. Space Coast REACT monitored the progress of the hurricane and monitored reports from the Florida Council.

Flagler County Assist REACT was now at Level 4, all of its available members in full activation staffing the EOC or in the field operating for Skywarn. REACT

members worked side by side with the Flagler County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, who were providing communications to the county shelters.

At 11:08 p.m., Ray Aguiar reported a sudden increase in winds on the south side of Flagler County. In ten minutes the winds went from ten-to-twenty mph to nearly sixty mph with gusts to seventy. Charley had come to Flagler County.

Flagler County Assist REACT members relayed reports to the National Weather Service as well as to Emergency Services staff at the EOC. Soon the center of the weakened hurricane, now a Category 1 storm with 85 mph winds, was raging over Flagler County. Within a few minutes power flashes filled the sky and eighty percent of Flagler County was

without power. Nextel cellular service failed immediately. GMRS and Amateur radio were the only links to shelters staffed by the ARES members.

At dawn's light the true nature of the devastation was revealed. The horror of Charley's wrath was seen in southwest Florida where over twenty people who had refused evacuation orders were killed in mobile homes.

North Brevard REACT reported that the worst damage was in the northern part of its operational area near Scottsmore. Flagler County Assist members reported that the southeastern part of Flagler County had the worst damage there. Orlando Metro reported that there was heavy damage throughout Central Florida including personal damage to members' homes of Orlando Metro REACT. Sun Coast, Space Coast and Dixie County REACT Teams had escaped Charley's wrath. Orlando Metro REACT also discovered that the pole that their GMRS repeater is mounted on was bent at a 45-degree angle and was in need of repair. Members of Space Coast REACT were contacted to assist.

Immediately after the storm, the Florida Council began to take reports from Florida Teams to see if anyone needed mutual aid. But the need for REACT support in Orange and Flagler Counties was filled when regular systems came back into place including the Nextel system that failed when the power went out. The need was filled by REACT when systems failed during the storm.

In North Brevard shelters closed by 9:00 a.m., allowing REACT members there to close down their operations. Flagler County Assist and Orlando Metro had shut down their operations by 2:00 the previous day.

On the weekend of August 21, Sun Coast REACT responded to one of the needs that were reported after the storm. Members assisted in the Ft. Mead area by helping distribute water and ice to storm victims. Members assisted at a distribution center where storm victims could pick up ice and/or water and other needed supplies.

But Hurricane Season 2004 was not over. The tropics would spin off another monster from the south. This time Hurricane Frances bore down on the state. Frances was a lot different. Instead of rocketing across the state in hours, this one would take days.

Numerous tornadoes fell from the sky like air-to-surface missiles

Once again Teams along Florida's east coast braced for the storm. Brevard County Emergency Management requested help in its EOC from Space Coast REACT and members of North Brevard once again reported to shelters providing emergency communications. REACT Teams in Orlando and Flagler County activated one

more time, members establishing Skywarn nets and helping where needed. REACT members hunkered down and prepared for the onslaught of Frances. Orlando Metro, with assistance from Space Coast REACT, got their GMRS antenna back upright.

This storm was much different. Locations in Brevard County had hurricane conditions lasting up to 24-36 hours of winds over 74 mph. Finally after stalling on September 4, huge Hurricane Frances, with sustained winds of 105 mph, began to slowly march across the state. Sun Coast REACT as well as Dixie REACT activated their Teams to prepare for the storm.

Frances hammered the state, sending millions into the dark as numerous power systems failed. REACT members in Skywarn nets reported conditions rapidly deteriorating. REACT members in Space Coast were concerned about whether their radio towers would hold up.

In Flagler County, members Chuck Bowers, Sam Carcione, and Linda Woodson, along with assistance from Irene Pickering and Merrill Musikar, spent several days working out of the EOC. Richard Frazier and Kalem Cossette kept a communi-



Linda Woodson, Flagler Co. REACT Secretary, running the REACT Hurricane Net at the EOC in Flagler County (Photo: Bob Pickering)

cations link to Palm Coast Fire Department. Jack Rhine began to report falling trees; Nick Bereda and Al Breyer reported flying shingles as a squall with seventy to ninety mph winds blasted across the county. Other members reported phone outages as well as falling trees. Though choppy, the GMRS system stayed up through the whole event.

North Brevard REACT was at a full Level 4 activation with members Alan and Cathy Johnson performing their duties at Imperial Estates Elementary school shelter while member Mike Ellixson helped keep the lines open at the Parish Medical Center Hospital during the several



Hurricane Jeanne left this “road to nowhere” in Vero Beach, Florida. The condos at left have been condemned. The seashore is several miles to the right. (Photo: Linda Konrad)

days of Hurricane Frances.

Numerous tornados fell from the sky like air-to-surface missiles. Homes were damaged as Frances slowly marched northward.

Monday, September 6, the winds finally began to die down. Power was out everywhere. Teams began to help in recovery efforts and assess the damage done by Frances.

Members of Sun Coast REACT began to help elderly people in their local areas who needed help after the storm. Gary Thomas and Sun Coast REACT

An apartment complex in Vero Beach after Hurricane Jeanne passed through. (Photo: Linda Konrad)



members as well as members of Dixie REACT watched closely as yet another tropical storm, Hurricane Ivan, slammed into Alabama with drenching rains spread over the Panhandle, a part of Florida that does not have local REACT Teams. Through all this the Florida Council watched for any requests that Florida REACT could assist with.

But there was little time to recoup. As REACT Teams either returned to monitoring or helped with local recovery efforts yet another storm was spun off from the tropics. Tropical Cyclone Jeanne performed a deadly dance across

the Caribbean and the Bahamas as Florida’s citizens held their breath. But after the storm made

a complete loop in the warm Atlantic waters, Florida REACT members realized we would be facing yet one more hurricane. This time Jeanne followed the same footsteps as Frances but a bit faster. Once again on Florida’s east coast REACT Teams braced for another impact.

Many members weary from hours of work during the past few storms prepared for yet another.

September 25: Hurricane warnings flying on the coast. REACT Teams in Flagler, Brevard, and Orange counties all made final preparations for the storm.

Jeanne’s first weapons were tornados, though not as many as there were with Frances. Jeanne kept a good head of steam, making prog-ress lashing southern Brevard County with her eyewall as she made landfall on September 26. Space Coast REACT as well as members from North Brevard REACT once again watched the storm, ran Skywarn nets, helped the Brevard EOC, and performed many other functions. Orlando Metro and Flagler

County Assist activated their long-term Skywarn nets, reporting conditions to the National Weather Service.

Flagler County Assist REACT members staffed Flagler EOC throughout the entire event; some members were up for twenty-plus hours. Other members worked with ARES in Flagler County helping with shelter communications.

Jeanne slogged across Central Florida crossing over Bartow, one of the towns that both Frances and Charley had gone over. It took until Monday morning the 27th for Jeanne to clear the area.

Other REACT Teams in Tampa and the Dixie County area also responded to the storm. Sun Coast REACT helped in recovery efforts after the storm. At this writing there are still thousands who do not have electric power, running water, and other necessities of modern life.

Dixie REACT for the third time activated to support shelter operations in Dixie County. Ron Cheney and the Team provided personnel and managed a shelter for evacuees for all three storms. Once again Dixie County REACT

members staffed the shelter sites.

Gary Thomas and Sun Coast REACT members relayed weather reports and provided local assistance once again. Sun Coast REACT members went out into the community once again helping elderly citizens who could not take care of themselves after the third impact in less in three months.

As September drew to a close, many REACT members realized that Florida had just endured a historic hurricane event. Even though hurricane season is not over, as each day passes we get closer to the end of the 2004 North Atlantic season. Florida REACT Teams prepared and used their emergency plans. The Florida Council Emergency plan worked as it should. All Florida Teams can be very proud of their members and volunteers who worked hours upon hours under the onslaught of demons from the tropics. But Florida REACT Teams came through, helping where they could wherever they could and will be ready for the next one, whenever that may come.

More hurricane damage photos on the next 2 pages

How You Can Help

Editor's Note: As of mid-October, the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and other NVOAD disaster relief agencies continue to help Floridians put their lives – and their state – back together. People in Florida do not need cast-off clothing, ragged bedding, second-hand furniture, and boxes of half-spoiled food. What they need most is money. Cash donations can be used by disaster relief agencies to pay for temporary housing, emergency home repairs, and replacement clothes and household goods. Let people in your community know that their help is also needed and welcome – but that a \$50 cash donation is worth more than a truckload of trash.

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More photos of hurricane

Editor's Note: These photos were taken exclusively for the REACTer by free-lance writer/photographer Linda Konrad in and around Vero Beach, Florida.



All across the state, trees like these ancient banyans were felled, ripping out utility lines and, too often, smashing down on homes and vehicles.



Wind and rain tore up roofs, letting water cascade into homes and apartments. Many families lost a lifetime of personal possessions, often irreplaceable.

damage in Florida



This entire condo complex (also seen at left of the photo on page 10) was so badly damaged, repair was unfeasible.



Even in the “best” neighborhoods, piles of debris sat on streetcorners for weeks, waiting for clean-up crews.

REACT International, Inc. 2005 Directory

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U.S.A.

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Web site: www.reactintl.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

L. O. "Larry" Fry, Chairman	Region 5	833 Cornelia St. Janesville WI 53545	608-752-4547 fax 608-757-2379
Robert L. "Bob" Kaster, Vice-Chairman	7	2401 SW 76th St. Oklahoma City OK 73159	406-685-9745 EVG fax 405-681-0546
Fred Lanshe	1	630 Washington Street, Allentown, PA 18102	610-434-3235
Don E. Manlove, Jr.	2	4019 W. Dogwood Ave. Chester VA 23831	804-283-2210 Nextel 166*1030*35 804-520-0795
John T. Knott	3	5961 Fish Ct. Orlando FL 32807	407-736-8999 fax 407-281-0237
Paul Jackson	4	424 Montreal Pl Westerville OH 43081	614-891-2357
B. F. "Frank" Jennings	6	19933 Nilsen Ln NW Poulsbo WA 98370	360-779-4125 fax 360-779-2468
Rob Clark	8	32490 W. Arby Ave. Las Vegas NV 89118	702-341-1045
Kenny Jagdeosingh	9	PO Box 3062, Tragarete Rd Port of Spain, Trinidad WI	868-628-2886

Dick Cooper, ex officio

see below

E-mail addresses for Board Members: First initial and last name @reactintl.org (Example: lfry@reactintl.org)

OFFICERS

President	Dick Cooper	24 Thropp Ave. Hamilton NJ 08610	609-888-3506 EVG fax 609-888-3509 609-915-0789
Exec. Vice President	Ed Greany	1742 Spring Ln Corona CA 92882	909-735-4153 fax 775-218-0732
Secretary	Lee W. Besing	8607 Timber Ash San Antonio TX 78250	210-771-7075 fax: 210-680-2680
Treasurer	Norman L. Kaplan	2605 Loma St Silver Spring MD 20902	301-649-6389
General Counsel	Charles A. "Chuck" Thompson	2909 Rosedale Ave University Park TX 75205	214-368-8223 fax 214-691-2322 214-797-1495

E-mail addresses for officers: First initial and last name @reactintl.org or title@reactintl.org (Example: president@reactintl.org)

BOARD COMMITTEES

Finance	Norman L. Kaplan, Chair Larry Fry Frank Jennings
Membership	Appointed as needed
Office Review	Appointed as needed

CORPORATE COMMITTEES

Awards & Recognition	vacant		
Computer Services	Johnny Stowers	4154 Otomi Ave. San Diego CA 92117	858-274-4883 computer@reactintl.org
Communications/FCC	William M. Riley	12215 Malta Ln Bowie MD 20715	301-262-2680 communications@reactintl.org
Convention & Site Selection	Paul Oby	1600 Englewood Ave #208 St. Paul MN 55104	651-646-0259 convention@reactintl.org

REACT International Directory

(Continued)

Emergency Response	vacant		
Junior Membership	vacant		
Membership Development	Robert Hoban	P.O Box 42921 Las Vegas NV 89116	702- 383-6674 http://woodyw.com/react
Public Relations	Bob Kaster*	see under "Board of Directors"	
Publications Review	Stuart DeLuca	9224 Meadow Vale Austin TX 78758	512-836-2861 editor@reactintl.org
Training & Development	Tom Currie	7001 Ethan Allen Way Valley Station KY 40272	502-933-0719 training@reactintl.org
Ways & Means	Frank Jennings*	see under "Board of Directors"	

* Directors serving until a permanent chairman is found.

Calendar

November 11	Remembrance Day (Canada)
November 25	Thanksgiving (US)
December 6	Deadline for Jan-Feb 2005 REACTer
December 25	Christmas
December 26	Boxing Day (Canada, UK, Australia)
December 31	New Year's Eve
January 1	Team Renewals due at RI
January 17	Martin Luther King's Birthday (US)
February 2	Deadline for Mar-Apr REACTer
February 21	Presidents' Day (US)
March 13	Commonwealth Day (Canada)
March 15	Deadline for Nominations for Regional Director (Regions 3, 6, & 9)

Has Your Team Renewed Yet? Team Renewals are due January 1!

*Reduced dues for family members (after the second member of the family)

* Increased insurance fees to continue liability coverage

*Remember that all Teams must certify compliance with IRS rules
(unless they have their own 501(c)(3) exemption)

Check with Your Team Officers To Be Sure YOUR Team Is Renewed!

REACT Council Directory

as of October, 2004

ARIZONA

Arizona State *REACT*
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SOUTHERN CALIF.

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November-December, 2004

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NEBRASKA

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North Carolina State
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PENNSYLVANIA

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WEST INDIES

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CANADA

Ontario *REACT* Council
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(519) 539-6922

Council Officers: Please check the information above, and notify the RI office of any changes or corrections.

REACTivities -- Team & Council News

Blackberry REACT (Calif.)

After pricing commercial mast mounts to use in the field during events and emergencies, we found a dolly on sale at a local car parts store and realized we could use it as a drive-on mast mount.

The white fiberglass antenna mast is fixed to the dolly with heater duct straps. When we're not using the dolly to hold the mast up, it comes in handy hauling the base station gear to and from the locations where it will be used, as well as general use for camping, picnics, and around the house. Although it cost only \$20, having a drive-on mast mount we can use for other purposes made the decision a snap.

There are a couple of issues with the dolly. Be careful the first time you drive over it. The platform on ours is not flush with the ground; driving a wheel over it flexes the platform and causes the handle to spring forward. If the dolly is too close to the truck, it will hit the fender. Second, although it looks like you can lay the dolly down, attach a tall mast, and walk it up, the wheels are not a fixed pivot. The dolly tends to roll forward as you try to raise the mast. We use a light fiberglass mast, fix the bottom section to the handle after we've pulled the tire onto it, then lift the remaining sections mast sections with antenna



Louise Johnson, Blackberry REACT C-57 in Mountain View, California, operates as Net Control for the Palo Alto, Calif., Walk for Diabetes.

attached onto the fixed section by hand. In addition to being lighter than metal masts, fiberglass doesn't conduct electricity.

The heater duct straps are metal and can be hand-tightened or, if the wind is up, tightened with a screwdriver or wrench. No matter how tight, the straps pop loose when you flip the fastener up. Then just pull the end of the strap out like pulling a belt out of the buckle. Fabric hook-and-loop straps would work, of course, but the metal duct straps let us get some leverage into tightening the mast to the dolly. We keep the straps and tools in the black bag seen hanging from the handle.

Members of Blackberry REACT provided communications for the Walk for Diabetes on October 3, 2004, which had 200 participants on the trail in 5K and 10K

courses. There were no injuries and no requests for SAGs
-Phil Stripling

Southeast Louisiana REACT

Since Louisiana did not experience the serious effects of Hurricane Ivan, Southeast Louisiana (SELA) REACT made its linked repeater system available for traffic from field units to the State EOC. The amateur radio network extends from Baton Rouge to New Orleans, Louisiana. The system was designed for passing emergency communications but is available for daily use by all licensed amateurs. Future plans call for expansion toward Lafayette, eventually providing complete coverage along IH-10 and the Louisiana Gulf Coast.

Dallas County (Tex.) REACT

Heavy rains in late July brought massive flooding to southern Dallas County. On Friday, July 30, the Dallas Area Red Cross (DARC) was in a Level 3 response, and a large group of national volunteers, plus special communications gear, were being brought in to assist the local chapter.

Late Friday afternoon, DARC contacted Dallas County REACT's Red Cross Liaison Brad Wagoner, K5BAW, to request assistance from DCR in installing a 28-station wireless computer training facility, which was connected to a central database in Virginia via satellite. DCR President Bryan McGee, AB5LQ, Martin Schneider, K5GMS, Rik Albury, K4TTT, Bernie Parker, K5BP, and Bill McCutcheon, W5KDD, responded on short notice and were hard at work by 6:30 p.m. The set-up involved physically hooking up each computer followed by software configuration.

DCR, which has been responsible for the operation and maintenance of the DARC radio communications center since December 1999, was once again asked to help with a necessary communications function that didn't involve talking on a radio. While radio is a critical necessity, more and more the Team is being called on to work with other technologies. In this case, DCR's response was quick, and the results virtually flawless, according to DARC supervisors, showing DCR's flexibility in being able to assist Red Cross with a non-traditional communication need.

November-December, 2004

A Chance to Shine

Popular Communications magazine wants to highlight the service your Team is giving to its community. PopComm has asked REACT past president Ron McCracken to write a monthly column of REACT news for its readers.

Sound good? Yes indeed, but it requires lots of photos and stories from you. It will take considerable material to compile a monthly page of interesting REACT news for PopComm readers. The success of the REACT column rests squarely on your shoulders. Send an item today.

What's in it for you? PopComm reaches thousands of radio enthusiasts across the US and beyond. Your Team will get deserved recognition for its efforts. Your stories will help build the good name of REACT worldwide. Your Team's successes will attract others to form new REACT Teams in unserved areas.

It's simple. It's no extra work. Take photos. Lots of photos, of your Team in action. Use e-mail or the postal service. Send a copy to the REACTer. Send another copy to: Ron McCracken, REACT PopComm, 765 Scotty Drive, Titusville, FL 32780. E-mail: ronmccr@hotmail.com. Send stories too, a copy to each. And send your Team or Council newsletters, too. Keep sending new ones. Do all exactly as you do for the REACTer. All magazines follow the same basic rules.

You came through with flying colors the last time a magazine did this for REACT. Help make this offer from Popular Communications just as big a success. All REACTers will be the winners.

Comal County (Tex.) REACT

Over a dozen REACT volunteers from three Teams helped put on the annual 4th of July parade in Startzville, Texas, on Monday, July 5th.

Comal County REACT members were assisted by members from Bexar County (San Antonio) and Travis County (Austin). There were nearly 50 entries in the parade including all the local dignitaries. The parade was sponsored by the Startzville VFW Post #8800 and has been held almost every year for at least the past fifteen years.

REACT received a very

nice thank-you letter from the VFW Post afterward saying, "We couldn't have put it on without REACT managing the staging and de-staging areas for us."

The Comal County REACT Team activated the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) as a practice for use of that method during actual emergencies. While ICS was perhaps a bit over-kill for this small of an event, it was good practice for the members to learn more about how the chain of command was established. Each of the key positions (Incident Commander, Logistics, Staging Manager, Operations, Safety, etc.) had easily identified reflective vests with their titles on both the front and back.

-Lee Besing
1 9

REACTivities -- Team & Council News

Oklahoma County (Okla.) REACT

REACT and Oklahoma bikers joined in the fight against birth defects. On August 21st, motorcyclists from all over the Oklahoma City Metro area got together for the March of Dimes "Bikers For Babies." Oklahoma County REACT was requested by the Oklahoma City Police Department Special Events Unit and the March of Dimes organizers to assist with traffic control.

A poker run started at mid-day then everyone returned to a second rally point to have their playing cards collected and tallied. After everyone was back from the poker run, on to a parade to another location for din-

ner and a party with more fund raising events.

Oklahoma County REACT provided traffic control at the initial rally point to get the bikers into traffic. Then again during the parade, team members assisted the Oklahoma City Police Dept with traffic control. Oklahoma County REACT worked closely with the Police Dept to ensure non-parade traffic was held so that the parade could continue in one long stream. And with 820 bikers, the 2.5-mile parade route was filled with motorcycles for awhile.

Because of the assistance of REACT, the parade was smooth and without incident. If you are a biker in the Oklahoma City area, this is one event you do not want to miss. This event raised over \$45,000.00 in the fight against birth defects.

Cedarloo (Iowa) REACT

Members of Cedarloo REACT 4748 and the Cedar Falls Emergency CB Club provided communications support and Victory Van support for the local March of Dimes Walk America on April 24, 2004.

Since the walk goes through both Waterloo and Cedar Falls, Iowa, both groups are actively involved. Communications were provided over the local GMRS repeater owned by Cedarloo REACT.

Part of our responsibility that day was to keep the walkers

out of the way of the runners from the YMCA fun run which covered parts of the same route and at the same time trying to keep the runners and walkers out of the way of moving vehicles on the streets. This freed the local police to man the major street crossings that both activities utilized. Approximately 250 people showed up for this year's Walk America.

**Nominations for
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
(Regions 3, 6, & 9)
will be due
March 15, 2005
Nomination form will be in
the Jan-Feb REACTer
or find it on the RI web site**

Prince George's Co. (Md.) REACT

The City of Bowie held its Memorial Day parade on Saturday, May 29. Five members of Prince George's County REACT took up positions along the parade route. We relayed reports of a staff member locked out of her car, a parked car along the parade route, and a disabled antique car during the parade. Otherwise, all went well.

Bowiefest was Saturday, June 5, at Allen Pond Park. We provided communications around the park, with GMRS simplex.

-William Riley

Sparks Flew!



By Barbara Jennison

Sparks fly between a rancher and a REACT female dispatcher as they battle grassfires consuming his land south of San Angelo, Texas.

Based on actual events and composites of people and equipment, a love story ignites.

The novel is dedicated to individuals who volunteer during times of disaster, especially to the late Hon. Jerry Jennison.

Available at:

www.authorhouse.com

REACT International

PRICE LIST

2004

MEMBER IDENTIFICATION ITEMS			STATIONERY-PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS		
	UNIT WEIGHT	UNIT PRICE (\$)		UNIT WEIGHT	UNIT PRICE (\$)
Embroidered Emblems (Patches) 3"	½ oz	1.25	Letterhead REACT logo/color (25 each)	5 oz	1.30
Embroidered Emblems (Patches) 5"	1 oz	3.25	Envelopes #10 - REACT logo/color (25 each)	5 oz	1.50
REACT Pin (Tie Tack style)	½ oz	3.50	Pamphlet - Getting Help by CB Radio (100 each)	24 oz	4.55
Name Tag (Plastic engraved) Blank	2 oz	5.25	REACT Highway Safety Litter Bags (100 each)	1-1/2 lb	15.00
Name Tag – Engraved	N/A	1.40	REACT Brochure—An Invitation to Join (100 each)	2-1/2 lb	15.00
Add-on Bar – Engraved	½ oz	2.50	Plastic Pamphlet and Brochure Holders (clear)	1 oz	1.75
Decal – Member (1.5 x 6)	1/10 oz	0.15	Note Cards/Envelopes (10 each per package)	2 oz	2.50
License Plate Hanger (Aluminum 4"x12")	2 oz	4.50			
Life Member – Embroidered Emblem (Patch)	½ oz	3.15	TRAINING AND TEAM FORMS		
Life Member – Decals (3 to a sheet)	½ oz	1.75	Team Management Notebook	6 lb	21.00
REACT Decal Sheet - Logo (18 in 3 sizes)	½ oz	1.80	Monitoring Guide	7 oz	1.00
Caps (mesh and solid)	3 oz	7.00	Public Relations Guide	7 oz	1.40
Bumper Stickers (2 for \$1.50 and 6 for \$4.50)	½ oz	0.85	Fund-raising Guide	3 oz	1.40
			Team Activities Guide	4 oz	1.40
			Junior REACT Guide	2 oz	0.25
			REACT 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Tax Guide	4 oz	3.60
			Governing the REACT Team – “How To”	2 oz	2.00
			Disaster Preparedness – “How To”	5 oz	3.30
			Safety Break Manual – “How To”	3 oz	5.00
			FORM – Monitoring Hours Log/Yellow (25 each)	5 oz	1.00
			FORM – Monitoring Incident Report (25 each)	5 oz	1.00
			REACT Team Contact Directory (2003) Edition	10 oz	5.00
			SPECIAL RECOGNITION AND GIFT ITEMS		
			Distinguished Service Certificate – Member	½ oz	0.25
			Special Recognition Certificate – Non-Member	½ oz	0.25
			REACT Award Pin with Charm (not engraved)	1 oz	5.98

SHIPPING AND HANDLING INFORMATION

- r All money values are in US Dollar(s). Foreign orders must be in US funds, subject to tariff, customs and/or extra shipping charges.
- r All shipments are sent via UPS by the vendor. Please make certain your shipping address is one UPS can deliver to (*no PO boxes*).
- r All orders are shipped “best way possible.”
- r Shipment becomes the responsibility of the buyer once it is shipped (FOB). *REACT* International is not responsible for lost or damaged goods, customs or duty taxes. Receiver is responsible for filing damage claims with the carrier.

SHIPPING AND HANDLING CHARGES FOR CANADA: Weights up to 1 pound = \$4.00 (covers surface rates). Each pound or fraction of a pound over 1 pound add \$2.75 per pound.

SHIPPING AND HANDLING CHARGES FOR ALL OTHER COUNTRIES: Weights up to 1 pound = \$10.50 Each pound or fraction of a pound over 1 pound add \$10.00 per pound. This charge will cover the costs of shipping and handling under AIR MAIL Printed Matter rates.

Shipping and Handling for US Addresses on Next Page

Shipping and Handling Charges for US Addresses

For mailing, each 3-digit ZIPcode is in a postal zone. Look for the first 3 digits of your ZIP code for the postal zone and then look for the charge by weight to that zone.

ZIP Code	Zone	ZIP Code	Zone	ZIP Code	Zone
004-005	A	510-516	C	600-663	B
006-009	D	520-561	B	664-693	C
010-013	A	562-587	C	700-717	B
014-129	B	588-593	D	718-792	C
130-279	A	594-599	E	793-831	D
280-509	B			832-999	E

Weights up to one pound: S/h charge is \$4.00 to all zones

ZONE:	A	B	C	D	E
1 to 2 pounds:	\$4.20	\$5.15	\$5.30	\$5.65	\$6.00
Each add'l pound*	\$0.75	\$1.00	\$1.35	\$1.75	\$1.90

*Always round up to the next highest weight.

Teams Offer REACT Items

REACT Lanyards

These colorful red and black lanyards are ideal for carrying a whistle, ID badge, etc. Available at a cost of \$5.99 each plus shipping. Send requests to Oklahoma County REACT #2620, PO Box 2225, Oklahoma City, OK 73101-2225. Make checks payable to Oklahoma County REACT 2620. For more information, contact Treasurer David Gallagher, at < ocreact118@cox.net > or call him at 405-205-7434.



ALL-SERVICE and AMATEUR PATCHES

Travis County (Texas) REACT has two designs of embroidered uniform patches, suitable for use on shirts or caps. Both show the standard REACT logo, with an added border. One reads, "Amateur Radio Communications" and the other reads, "GMRS CB Amateur FRS MURS Communications." The central logo is orange and black; the added border is dark blue. Patches are \$4.50 each, in-

cluding shipping and handling. Send requests to Travis County REACT, PO Box 180922, Austin, TX 78718-0922. Make checks payable to Travis County REACT. For more information, contact Treasurer Paula Coker, at < kb5ehp@texas.net > .

SAFETY KEYTAGS

Safety key tags are available from REACT Lake Simcoe. The orange plastic tags are designed to allow any Team to use them. Distress call info is always handy. The tags are ideal as handouts at displays, speaking engagements, Safety Breaks, etc. Cost: \$30/100, includes S&H. To order, or request a sample, contact: < react@react-lake-simcoe.org > or REACT, 765 Scotty Drive, Titusville, FL 32780.

REACTivities -- Team & Council News

Tri-State Emergency Communications - REACT

At a meeting last July in Jersey City, the Bayonne Fire Canteen of Bayonne, New Jersey, and Tri-State Emergency Communications – REACT executed a Memorandum of Understanding permitting the Fire Canteen Service access to repeaters owned by Tri-State. The canteen's twenty-four members will utilize the repeaters for primary member dispatching and coordination throughout their area of operations.

In addition to Amateur and GMRS repeaters, Tri-State either owns or has permission to access a number of commercially licensed repeaters and simplex frequencies throughout the New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut tri-state area.

Jim Battista, President of Tri-State Emergency Communications – REACT, stated that unlike other communications groups in the area that use either Amateur or GMRS exclusively, Tri-State believes that including commercially licensed frequencies in its well-rounded channel plan is important in that "it affords us the ability to be able to get radios in the hands of responders and the volunteers that will deal with the disaster response quicker without requiring that every user become individually licensed to access

November-December, 2004

Welcome New Teams!

REACT Lafayette (La.) -
6098

REACT of Madison
County (N.C.) - 6099

repeaters. We welcome Chief Jim Noble and his crew to the Tri-State system and hope to have a long-lasting relationship with the Bayonne Fire Canteen."

Tri-State Emergency Communications was founded in 2002 and chartered through REACT International, an all-volunteer, non-profit association dedicated to providing public service and emergency communications to our community.

Bayonne Fire Canteen based in Bayonne, Hudson County, NJ, is an all-volunteer group specializing in fire ground rehabilitation operations. The organization consists of twenty-four volunteers assisting emergency workers by providing food, beverages and shelter on signs of fire ground dehydration and fatigue. BFC like many other area responders were actively involved in 9/11 and post 9/11 response and support. For more information on the Bayonne Fire Canteen visit <<http://community.nj.com/cc/bayonnefirecanteen>> .

Mid-America (Nebraska) REACT

On Saturday, May 22, 2004, at 7 o'clock in the evening north of Dakin, Nebraska, a tornado left a path of destruction 52 miles long. At the height of its fury, it reached two and a half miles wide and produced winds of more than 210 mph – an F4 on the Fujita scale. That was enough to level the southern Lancaster County town of Hallam, Neb., with a population of 300.

In all, the storm wiped out more than 150 homes and severely damaged 57 others. Thirty-seven people were hospitalized and one 73-year-old was killed in Hallam. The tornado hit Hallam at 8:44 p.m.; by the time it had dissipated, about 9:50, the tornado had come within a few miles of or caused damage to twelve villages in five counties. The height of the tornado wasn't known, but the storm itself towered sixty thousand feet into the atmosphere. The tornado started in Jefferson County or southwest of Lancaster County and traveled to the northeast.

The Skywarn net in Lancaster County was activated at 8 o'clock on the 147.045+ repeater and the 146.760- repeater was used to relay information to the National Weather Service in Omaha. We lost the receive site for the 147.045 repeater when the

Continued on Page 22

REACTivities -- Team & Council News

Mid-America: Nebraska Tornadoes

Continued from Page 21

tornado destroyed the Norris High School in southern Lancaster County. The damage assessment of southern Lancaster County was completed at 5:30 a.m. on Sunday, May 23.

At 8:02 p.m. the Skywarn net deployed Phil Ward, KD4NYY, to western Lancaster County, and Todd Ludwick, KC0CDQ, to northwestern Lancaster County. At 9:15 one of the spotters heard Hallam ask for mutual aid from all of Lancaster County. Emergency Medical Service responded from as far away as seventy miles. Phil then contacted the Salvation Army Corps officer in charge, who asked him to go to Gage County and assist the Corps there, but then Phil told him that the town of Hallam in our own county may need our assistance more than Gage County.

Phil and Edwin Stickley, N0QYP, arrived at the Salvation Army at 10:15 and started to load the canteen and head toward Hallam. By 11 o'clock, reports were coming in that ninety percent of the town of Hallam was destroyed. Phil called the Nebraska State MARS director, who is also a SATERN member, and relayed damage reports to him. We arrived in Hallam with the Salvation Army Canteen at 3 a.m.

Texas State REACT Council

During the Texas Special Olympics Summer Games this year in San Marcos, Tex., an amateur radio "special event station" was set up in the Olympic Village, to demonstrate amateur radio for the Athletes and spectators.

The event was sponsored by the Texas State REACT Council and organized by Bexar County REACT members with help from some other hams as well. A special thanks is due to (non-REACT members) Bob W2IK and Krissy KD5YTN for manning the station both days, from setup to knock down. We used Bob's IK-STIC2 antenna which covered 10-160 meters (with tuner) but required no guy wires and a very small footprint in a very crowded area.

Special Events Radio Operators this year included Bob, Krissy, Lee N5NTG, Pat AD5BR, David KB5FNK, and Brian NB5R. David Behrend, KB5FNK, (Special Olympics Communications Coordinator) was the one who coordinated our being an official station on the published program guide for this year's Special Olympics. He wasn't able to spend much time on the air as his primary job as a volunteer was to coordinate the commercial radios being used by various officials at the different venues spread across much of San Marcos. He used two repeat-



David Behrend of San Angelo (Tex.) REACT and Krissy KD5YTN, a San Antonio ham, at the Special Olympics Special Event Station (Photo: Lee Besing)

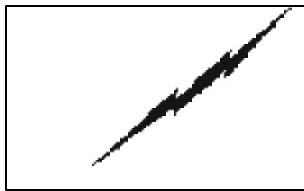
ers and about 150 handheld radios.

While we only made sixty contacts during the two days of operating (10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day) due to band conditions being rather unfavorable, we were able to talk to hams from around the USA and even British Columbia in Canada. Any Special Olympics Athlete or family member who got on the air, even if all they did was give their name to the remote operator, received a special certificate to certify that they had operated an Amateur Radio Station during the Special Olympics.

A couple of the contacts we made were with school Amateur Radio Clubs; one was an elementary school in Pennsylvania holding their last ham club meeting of the school year. Another contact was with the Battleship New Jersey Special Events Station. A bicyclist ham, W3FF, in California was able to reach us using his "bicycle mobile" station. We did wonder what he was using for an antenna on his bicycle.

-Lee Besing

The REACTer



Unsquelched

by **Stuart M. DeLuca,**
Editor

What's the Difference?

When people ask me, "What does REACT stand for?" my standard answer is, "We're an all-volunteer public service communications organization." Almost always, they look puzzled for a moment, then they say, "Oh. You mean, like amateur radio?"

So then I have to explain that, while many REACT members (including me) are licensed amateur radio operators, you don't have to have a ham license to be in REACT. You don't even have to own a radio.

But the conversation al-

ways leaves me a bit frustrated. No, we're not "like amateur radio" – but how are we not? What's the difference?

After giving the matter some thoughtful consideration (My wife thought I was staring blankly into space...), I've come to this conclusion.

Amateur radio, worthy as it is, is essentially a hobby, a pastime for people to pursue at their leisure. Many ham operators contribute greatly to their community, especially – but not only – in time of emergency. People be-

come ham radio operators because they enjoy playing with radios and related technology.

REACT is not a hobby; it's a mission. People join REACT for one main purpose: to contribute to their community, to help save lives and property, to assist other community organizations with public events and fund-raising. Yes, many REACT members are also ham operators; the two are fully compatible: one person can be both an amateur (in the best sense of the word) – and a REACT professional.

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