

Public Service Through Communications



The REACTer

November-December 2006



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From Headquarters by Norman Kaplan



Team renewals have been sent. If your Team has not received their renewal packet, please call Dora Wilbanks at (301) 316-2900 and let her know. We will send the Team a new renewal packet.

Since the number of insurable members has dropped below 2,000 members, the charge for insurance has dropped to \$11. The savings are being passed onto the Teams. Each Team member, Regular, Family, Jun-

ior, Additional Family and Life member on a U.S., Canada or Puerto Rico Team needs to pay the insurance fee.

Last year, a Team working an event had a golf cart stolen. The insurance company paid the \$2,800 cost of replacing the golf cart. Without insurance the Team and its members would have had to pay for the golf cart out of their own pocket. (See Sept.–Oct. *REACTer*.)

When your Team renews, the membership cards for the renewing members and an Annual Monitoring Report form are sent to the Team. After the monitoring reports for the year is gathered by the Team Communications Officer, please fill out the monitoring form and send it to *REACT* International. We tried to enter into the Federal Combined Federal Cam-

paign but *REACT* International did not have reports from Teams in 15 states to become eligible for the CFC. The Annual Monitoring Report is used for the *REACT* International Annual Report, grant applications, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency Reports and Federal Communication Commission Reports. The report covers types of activities that in aggregate may help Teams think of other activities that they may provide communications assistance. *REACT* International will start mailing Team Topics in months that the *REACTer* does not come out. As part of the Team Topics, ideas from the Annual Report, statistics and training will become articles.

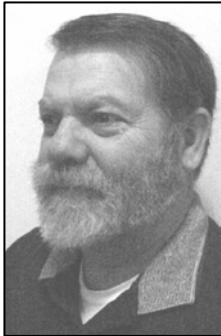
CALENDAR - Fall - 2006

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- Nov. 11: Veterans Day (US); Remembrance Day (Canada, Australia, New Zealand (12th UK))
- Nov. 23: Thanksgiving (US)
- Dec. 5: Deadline for Jan-Feb, 2007 *REACTer*.
- Dec. 7: Pearl Harbor Day
- Dec 16: Hanukkah begins
- Dec 21: Winter solstice
- Dec. 25: Christmas
- Dec 26: Boxing Day (Can, UK, Austrl, NZ)

REACT International, Inc., is seeking a volunteer to serve as Director for Region 8, which covers Calif., Nev., Utah, and Ariz. Most of the Teams in that region are in California. Suitable Candidates must reside in one of those four states and be a member of a Team in one of those four states. They must also have been a *REACT* member for at least 2 years. Typically members who have been serving at the Team or Council officer levels are good candidates for this position. The Board meets 2 times a year in person, other times via electronic means over the Internet. Interested persons should contact the *REACT* International office via email or phone. Referrals of possible candidates are welcomed. (See VP column, p 3.)

From the Desk of the V.P.

Ed Greany



There is a serious need for good *REACT*ers to enter into leadership roles to help *REACT* grow. There are vacancies on various committees including some committee chairs and one position as Director for Region 8 (Calif., Nev., Utah, Ariz.). The positions and description for the vacant committees are on the *REACT* International website: <www.REACTINTL.org>.

Click "Committees" from the menu. *REACT* only runs efficiently when we have good leaders guiding us the correct path. Are you one of those leaders? If you feel you might be a candidate for one of our vacant positions, please contact me.

On another note, we still have no formal bids to host the 2007 International Convention and it is probably too late by the time you read this. We only meet every two years now and the previous convention was held in Corona, Calif., hosted by the CREST *REACT* Team in 2005.

Ed Greany
E.Greany@REACTINTL.org

9-11 Commemorative Special Event Station K5BCR

By Lee Besing, Hill Country *REACT* Secretary

2006 marked the fifth anniversary of the World Trade Center (WTC) Disaster. Hill Country *REACT* Team #4804 chose to commemorate this event by hosting a Special Event Ham Radio Station at Brackenridge Park in San Antonio, Texas. The idea originated with local ham operator Bob Hejl, W2IK, who was unable to participate at the last moment. The event grew over a very short time into a full blown, city-wide, "Emergency Preparedness Day" event, with the participation of more than a dozen other agencies.



The photo above shows the *REACT* Ham Radio station with radio operators Jim Wells W5CPA (rear) and Schuyler Crist KE5VIP (front center) talking to two unidentified American Red Cross volunteers. The American Red Cross also had a full scale display with their ERV, Disaster Response Trailer and Truck plus free

snacks and drinks for the attendees and participants, staffed with about a half dozen volunteers.



Despite heavy rains that day which dropped nearly five inches of rain in some parts of the city, flooding streets nearby and raising the San Antonio River enough to overflow the banks inside Brackenridge Park where the event was held, over a dozen agencies were represented with displays and booths providing information to the attendees.

REACT Ham Radio operators made contacts on both 20 meters and a local 2 meter repeater (sponsored by the Alamo Area Repeater Organization). Instead of operating from inside Hill Country *REACT*'s Communications Trailer, the *REACT* Team chose to set up outside under a pop-up awning to allow more attendees better access to view the activities or to participate. Some local hams from area ham clubs stopped by during the day to assist in the operation and their help was greatly appreciated.

A large 4'x8' photo display was donated by a local business

(Art-Trig Corp.) with a collage of photos from 9/11 that had been collected from *REACT* members during that time frame. It featured images of four N.Y. Team patches and had photos of many of the *REACT* volunteers who had responded. It was mounted on plastic corrugated board and was hung inside the awning where it ended up blocking the blowing rain during the event

Co-sponsors of the event included the Alamo Regional Citizen Corps, City of San Antonio (COSA) Emergency Operations Center and the COSA Parks and Recreation (who waived the rental fees for the pavilion). Organizations which participated included: Hill Country *REACT* Radio Team, Alamo Regional Citizen Corps, City of San Antonio EOC, City of San Antonio Police VIPS program (Volunteers In Policing Service), City of San Antonio Fire Department, American Red Cross Disaster Services, Catholic Charities RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program), Bexar County Emergency Services Rehab, Texas Medical Rangers, South Texas K9 Search & Rescue, Willford Hall Medical Command (USAF), ICDC / 911 Memorial, Bexar County Sheriff COP program (Cellular On Patrol).

One of the outcomes of this event, was a revealed need to re-waterproof the awning, plan for rainy weather when using the awning to block blowing rain (yes, it does rain in Texas sometimes) and to figure out a way to provide handicap access

to the communications trailer via a ramp or some other method for future operations. The *REACT* Team got lots of positive PR out of this event with both the San Antonio City Council and Bexar County Commissioners issuing a proclamation declaring that day as "Family Emergency Preparedness Day". More photos are available on-line at www.SanAntonioHams.org/news. See also p18.

As a reminder: Anyone who was at ground zero for 9/11 and has experienced health problems should follow up with the State of New York. For details see the Sept – Oct. 2006 *REACT*er.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Red Cross Background Checks

As most have probably heard by this time, the American Red Cross (ARC) is now requiring extensive background checks on all volunteers. The deadline has passed for free checks; they will now cost volunteers a reported \$3.50.

Checks are conducted online through a private contractor at: MyBackgroundCheck.com/ArcVts/

This requirement has stirred up a great deal of controversy with some emergency volunteers

supporting the ARC and others finding the checks extremely invasive of privacy and potentially leading to identity theft.

The following statement is found on the above website under the conditions to which the candidate for the check must agree: "The report (to ARC) will contain any written, oral, or other communication of any information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing, credit, capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living is used or expected to be used or collected in whole or in part." It continues: "The types of information that may be obtained include, *but are not limited to* (ed: my emphasis): credit reports, social security number verification, criminal records checks, public court records checks, driving records checks, educational records checks, verification of employment positions held, personal and professional references checks, licensing and certification checks, etc."

ARRL says, "The Red Cross has stated that they will not use credit reports," he (President Joel Harrison) noted. "Requiring that volunteers authorize the procurement of a credit report is inconsistent with this assurance." ARRL further advises volunteers to read the fine print and make their own judgments.

ARC is quoted as saying, "Unfortunately, in this day and age it is critical that the American Red Cross and other agencies,

employers and organizations perform due diligence in researching the people who will represent them.”

It has also been suggested that ARC is trying to avoid liability claims.

At least at present, there seems to be inconsistency in the application of this requirement across the country, and the national number given seems of little help. Your editor is working through the emergency coordinator of the Pine Tree Chapter of ARC (Bangor, Maine) to provide more details as the requirement applies to *REACT* volunteers. The *REACT-L* list has also had discussions of the matter.

More later—

Happy Birthday *REACT*

Jim Koritzky, Penobscot *REACT* Team 6088

I am writing to you in regards to a very special date that should be marked on your calendar. This coming January marks the 45th anniversary of Henry “Pete” Kreer’s dream becoming reality. *REACT* was born on that date.

Henry took much of his own time to find financial support so that office space could be available at Northbrook, Illinois. In the sixties, citizens band radio exploded as a means for communications along the nation’s highways. Most important, CB became a tool for truckers and vacationers looking for direc-

tions. Even many state troopers used CBs to receive accident reports around large congested areas in the new Interstate Highway System.

From transportation, CB became useful on construction sites and some commercial fishermen made good use of it because on open water, there are not obstacles to interfere with communications – such obstacles as buildings, forests (or other CB-ers).

Let’s keep the candle burning. Think of some ideas about what you can do to make a good impression for your Team in your area. I can think of a few. Raise some funds to order extra copies of the *REACT*er and distribute them to places like Radio Shack, auto dealers that sell pick-up trucks, and used car dealers. If you come up with good ideas, let *REACT* International know about it (and the *REACT*er).

If Pete were living today, he’d be proud of how far his idea has gone.

Amateur Radio Formally Part of Emergency Communications Community

From the ARRL Website

A section of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 2007 Appropriations Act, HR 5441:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgiin/bdquery/z?d109:h.r.05441:>), formally includes Amateur Radio operators as a part of the emergency communications community. Congress approved the measure before adjourning for its pre-election break. President George W. Bush signed the bill into law October 4.

Amateur Radio is included within the legislation's Subtitle D, Section 671, known as the "21st Century Emergency Communications Act." Radio amateurs are among the entities with which a Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECC Working Group) must coordinate its activities. Included within the DHS's Office of Emergency Communications -- which the measure also creates -- RECC Working Groups attached to each regional DHS office will advise federal and state homeland security officials. The final version of the legislation incorporated language from both House and Senate bills and was hammered out in a conference committee. An earlier version of the 21st Century Emergency Communications Act, HR 5852, included Amateur Radio operators as members of the RECC Working Groups.

However, it has been noted that the actual references to amateur radio are quite limited. In any event, REACT will continue to be there when needed.

REACT News: Teams and Team Members



Flagler County REACT works 4TH of July Event

Flagler Beach – Flagler County, Florida, Assist *REACT* volunteers gathered at the Flagler Beach Police Department at 8:30 a.m. on the 4th of July. Members were staging to get their brief on assignments for the 4th of July parade. This was the 20th time that the group has worked the event and over the years it has become increasing challenging. Now a team effort with the local ARES organization, *REACT* members are assigned to traffic posts while ARES members assist in the line up of the parade.

Communications was handled by Linda Woodson – *REACT 27* who handled Net Control and Bill Sturridge *REACT 6* who was the liaison between the GMRS repeater net and the ham radio net. *REACT* members used the 462.550 repeater in Flagler Beach but the Ops Officer had access to a law enforcement frequency for relays.

REACT Member Kelly Sturridge – *REACT 4* was challenged twice as she saw a vehicle strike a pedestrian and was able to get the info with the assistance of Sam Carcione – *REACT 26* to the Police. Then she helped with a woman who lost her daughter in the parade but she was found near a store. All 6 members on the ground were clear by 12:30 p.m.

Then at 5:45 p.m. *REACT* volunteers gathered once again at the Flagler Beach Police Department. This time the mission was different – assist in patrol, security and traffic. Members were assigned to walk the central part of town keeping an extra eye out for fights or any other signs of trouble. When something was spotted, it was reported to the Flagler Beach PD via the Flagler County Sheriff's Command Post located at the Police Department. The Command Post would in turn dispatch units. Bill Sturridge – *REACT 6* – was the Net Control Station (NCS) and ran communications. Ariel Carmean and Randy Sturridge also helped at the NCS location. Already the police have handled several fights and other incidents had already taken place. At 6:00 p.m. *REACT* hit the ground and members were asked to be very careful while out on foot.

The first problem was at 7:00 p.m. when one of the entertainers for the show could not get into the parking area. A *REACT* member just happened to be in the area and assisted the entertainer so that the many people gathered could see Elvis come to life.

Things went smoothly until about 8:00 p.m. when a lost child was found by the Flagler Beach PD. The Police

took the child to the Command Post but then the officer needed to leave due to another call. At that point *REACT* was requested to assist and *REACT* Member Richard Frazier – *REACT* 24 was sent to the command post to stand by with the child. Upon his arrival he was also tasked with standing by with an elderly woman who was lost and did not know where her husband was.

As 8:45 p.m. approached, a citizen found the mother of the missing child and was able to locate Bob Pickering – *REACT* 1 who confirmed with Richard – *REACT* 24 that indeed her son was at the Flagler Beach PD. The mother spoke broken English and did not know how to get to the Police Department. Richard could not leave his post, and none of the other four volunteers on the ground could leave their posts either. *REACT* 3 – Merrill Muskar who had just arrived was able to take the child from the PD back to his mother on State Road A1A.

While this was on going the Rescue Ambulance there was assigned to the event arrived and needed traffic assistance in getting to their staging point. *REACT* Units 26 – Sam Carcione (Ops Officer) and *REACT* 27 – Linda Woodson arrived at south 2nd street and A1A to guide the Medical Attack Vehicle into its staging point among the traffic and heavy crowds.

Now at 9:00 p.m. all members assigned to traffic posts at State Road A1A and State Road 100 were in position. Richard – *REACT* 24 still had the elderly

woman who was separated from her husband. Richard – *REACT* 24 reported that she told him that her husband may be at the fishing pier and so they started walking that direction. At the same time traffic was extremely heavy with no one going anywhere fast.

Chuck Bowers – *REACT* 19 also assigned to the intersection reported that he may have the other party involved with the woman who lost her husband. So Richard – *REACT* 24 proceeded to *REACT* 19 - Chuck's location. When he got there it was found it was a separate incident so *REACT* 24 – Richard started to the pier once again with the woman. At that same time Linda – *REACT* 27, and Sam – *REACT* 26 had cleared the assistance to the Rescue truck and discovered that the woman with Richard – *REACT* 24 spoke Russian not Spanish as was first thought. Bill Sturridge – *REACT* 6 (Net Control - NCS) tasked Ariel Carmean – *REACT* 10 (Junior Member) who was assisting at NCS to help locate a Russian Translator.

Now when all this was happening Sam – *REACT* 26 suddenly called NCS advising that a man by his post was having a heart attack. NCS immediately notified dispatch of the emergency and a Rescue truck was dispatched. At the event there were two bicycle medics who quickly arrived on scene. Now the truck that was staged had already gone on another call and yet another unit was enroute but from some distance away. The

fireworks display had also started making the heavy traffic even worse. Now with an inbound ambulance traffic stuck everywhere, members struggled to listen to their radios as the booms and explosions went off from the massive fireworks display.

As this was going on Richard – *REACT* 24 who was unable to locate the woman's party escorted her on foot back to the Police Station and the command post to stand by for a Flagler Beach Police Officer.

Back at the intersection *REACT* members working with Fire Police and Law Enforcement began to work traffic and pedestrian control as the fireworks ended. The one Rescue truck had the first patient loaded was turned around and then started its way through the heavy traffic to the hospital.

Near 10:30 p.m. the one law enforcement officer in the intersection got into an altercation with a person and had to call for back up and the situation brought the Officer out of the intersection. Now *REACT* members with the Fire Police were working the busiest intersection on their own. *REACT* volunteers quickly re positioned to work the traffic as back up officers arrived in bicycles. One of the officers almost was struck by a car and was assisted by *REACT* members in securing his bicycle to allow the officers to assist the first one.

Then over the radio we heard "This is *REACT* 24, this woman is having a heart attack!" An

emergency was declared once again over the air and Net Control quickly made notification of Rescue that medics were needed. Richard – *REACT* 24 comforted the woman as medics and Rescue were enroute.

Our radio system had become as busy as law enforcement's as *REACT* was tested once again in a tough situation. Rescue and medics arrived at the PD while *REACT* Net Control forwarded contact info to the Emergency Room.

REACT 3 – Merrill then also reported a reckless driver, this report was relayed by NCS to dispatch for action.

On top of all this, a report of a traffic crash was received at Colbert Lane and State Road 100 blocking the way out of Flagler Beach. *REACT* 29 – Rhianna Gross who is also an R.N was on scene assisting at that crash.

Back at the intersection, *REACT* members continued to work the traffic with the Fire Police. A Rescue Truck was once again on the way due to injuries to the person in the altercation with the police. So once again we have to stop everything to let the Rescue truck get through.

It was not until near 1:00 a.m. when *REACT* members were finally able to clear. Many Police Officers and Sheriff Deputies praised the volunteers as they returned to the Police Department.

It should also be noted that Randy Sturridge – *REACT* 11 also assisted with NCS func-

tions as well as the after action report.

No it was not a perfect event, but through teamwork. *REACT* members can be given credit to helping save two lives and reuniting a family through the chaos of the event. But these types of events also serve as a training ground for when the emergency happens it will help us be ready.



Wisconsin Council of *REACT*

Annual Campout

**-Lynessa Rissell, Secretary,
Wis. Council of *REACT* Teams**

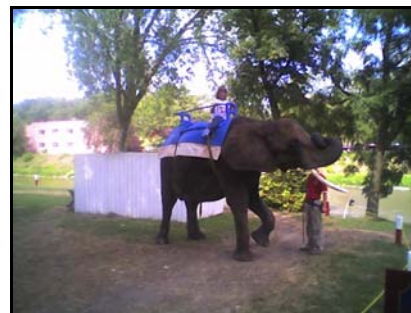
The Wisconsin Council of *REACT* Teams had their annual Council Campout at the Riverside Park in New Lisbon, Wisconsin on the weekend of August 11-13, 2006. There were 4 Teams enjoying the time together with a visitor from Minnesota. The following Teams were represented: Tri City *REACT* #4365, *REACT* Services Diversified, Inc. #4813, Marathon County #4730, Waukesha

Area *REACT* #4089. Mr. Paul Oby from Ramsey County *REACT* in Minnesota spent the weekend with us as well. We had a total of 24 members including Junior *REACT*ers from the Teams enjoying the weekend. The weather for the weekend was amazing compared to other years. The temperature was perfect and the evenings were cool but not damp.



Campout Potluck

Several families arrived a day before the actual event so that they could enjoy the area. While enjoying the weekend. On Saturday George and Jacki MacDonald took several of the girls and Paul Oby to the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin where they volunteer during the summer. All had fun and the favorite sight they saw there was the Chinese Acrobats as well as the Magic Show. While there Catie Aiken, Junior *REACT*er from RSD, was chosen to be in the Kids Circus and also rode an elephant.



Catie On The Elephant

During the day the adults who didn't go sat around enjoying the day and talking to each other and preparing for the evenings potluck dinner. Some members of Teams that do not come out for the weekend will come out and enjoy the fellowship of the potluck dinner and will sit around one of the community campfires that the campers have and make Smores before returning home.

Also, on Saturday Tianna and Grandpa Larry Fry traveled back to Janesville for a softball tournament she was in. As a result of winning several of the games her team was in they had to play on Sunday and the Frys left very early on Sunday so that she could attend the game. Unfortunately, her team did not win, but did come in 3rd place for the tournament. Not Bad!

Although there are no events planned, participants can do a lot of sight seeing to the Wisconsin Dells area or any other area that is near by as several families did, or even go fishing like Tianna did and caught a nice size fish and released it, so maybe she can catch it next year. You can go bike riding around the campground like several members did or take long walks around the area as well.

Next years event has been already scheduled for August 10-12, 2007 at the Riverside Park in New Lisbon, Wisconsin. Several of the families have already planned on arriving several days in advance so that they can make it a vacation and not just a weekend away. It will be

nice to see everyone again for the weekend instead of just one day for a council meeting.



Family and friends getting together

The Wisconsin Council of *REACT* Teams is extending an invitation to those who enjoy camping and traveling to come out and join us for a great weekend! The fees are very reasonable \$15.00 per night for sites that have electric and \$10.00 for those that do not. If you don't like to camp, Paul Oby can recommend a great hotel to stay at as that is what he does when visits the Campout he enjoys the days visiting with the families and Teams who attend then he travels back to his hotel and sleeps. This invitation is extended to all *REACT* members and their families.

If you have questions in regards to the Annual Wisconsin Council of *REACT* Teams Campout feel free to contact Jean Fry, Council Treasurer, of the Tri City *REACT* #4365 Team at <treasurer@wireact.org> or Lynessa Rissell, Council secretary, of the *REACT* Services Diversified, Inc #4813 Team at: <Secretary@wireact.org>.



Bulverde Jubilee Special Event Station N5J

By Lee Besing, Hill Country *REACT* Secretary

2006 marked the first year that the Bulverde Jubilee featured a Special Event Ham Radio Station. This was their 5th Annual Event and organizer Joe McNaull, WD5FMU, wanted to have a ham radio station in place. He ended up with not only one ham radio station, but two for the price of one. Both Guadalupe Valley ARC (GVARC) and Hill Country *REACT* Radio Team #4804 had ham stations up and running. GVARC had a 20 meter station running voice and CW. *REACT* had two radios on the air, a local 2 meter repeater (145.45) for talk-in, plus an HF radio that was usually on 20 meters, but did check out the other bands for action (none found). The radio bands didn't cooperate with either group of radio operators, although they did make contact with each other once or twice as they stumbled across each other. In the photo below, GVARC members operate the radio while setting up an umbrella for shade. Note: This means you need 1 operator, 1

logger and 1 person to hold the shade umbrella if you can't find a way to mount it.



With the two stations separated, GVARC on the east end of Bulverde, and REACT on the west end, there was probably at least 200 yards between them. There was little or no interference experienced as neither station was running more than 100 watts peak using vertical antennas of some homebrew variety. REACT was using local antenna designer, Bob Hejl W2IK's 2 meter J-pole antenna plus his latest HF Antenna invention, the deployable HF antenna that stores in the same tube that acts as the base when mounted. They made some of the same contacts, plus some local hams, but both groups shut down operations in the late afternoon feeling like the time spent had been worth their effort in terms of publicity for their group. REACT was set up outside their communications trailer under a pop-up awning that had a large poster featuring photos from 9/11 World Trade Center Disaster. This was the same poster planned for use two days later when the REACT Team would be operating another special commemorative Ham Radio station at Brackenridge Park on Monday, September 11th.



In the photo above, Schuyler Crist, KE5VIP, assists three local youths from an area church get on the air using the special event call sign. Lee N5NTG taking the photo, was there as control op since they were operating in the General portion of the 20 meter band. Each of the three read the script "CQ CQ CQ Special Event Station November Five Juliet..... etc." on the air multiple times in an effort to make a contact. Unfortunately nobody responded, but each of them was given a N5J QSL card as a souvenir. Organizer Joe McNaul, WD5FMU, also tried his hand on the air with no luck. See photo below.



Most of what was heard on 20 meters was coming from Europe, especially Georgia in Russia, as operators competed in the Worked All Europe (WAE) contest this weekend. This meant that such operators were ignoring possible contacts with non-European hams, to the extent that one such ham was

heard on the air explaining not-so-patiently that he didn't want any other contacts from the USA and to go away and quit bothering him. The hams in Bulverde also contacted a couple of other special event stations, one in California, the other up on Ontario, Canada. Several local hams showed up to visit in person, picking up a QSL card for making an "in-person" contact with the station.

Don't forget to let us know what your Team is doing.

What you do is what counts.

Send us your information at:
editor@reactintl.org
react@reactintl.org

and don't forget Ron McCracken's column in *Popular Communications*:
ronmccr@hotmail.com.

and the REACT-L list:
 See July-August REACTer, but remember, it is gibbousmoon, not gibbousmoon



Proud Track Record

By Ron McCracken, Lake Simcoe *REACT*

Two Ontario *REACT* Teams recently worked a run/walk event for Easter Seals. Not unusual.

Well, a little. This was the 28th annual Persechini Easter Seals Run/Walk for crippled children and some of these *REACT*ers had helped with 25 of them. In fact, this was likely the very first event *REACT* Lake Simcoe worked after its Charter was granted in late 1978.

The event, in Newmarket, Ontario, was already two years old, and growing fast. Organizers contacted *REACT* Lake Simcoe to inquire about safety communications for the third edition. A few successful years later, *REACT* Lake Simcoe gave birth to a ‘daughter’ Team, *REACT* Don Valley, so members would not have to travel 40 miles to Team meetings. *REACT* Don Valley has continued to work with *REACT* Lake Simcoe on the Easter Seals event for some 20 years. It has grown to be the larger of the two Teams.



“Terrible two-some” at work. *REACT* Don Valley member Vic Rocha and *REACT* Lake Simcoe member Ron McCracken plot something. The two Teams’ had just shared in safety communications for the 28th annual Easter Seals Run/Walk at Newmarket, Ontario.

Together, the Teams now keep vigil over some 2000 walkers and runners over a 10k route that has shifted several times across the years. *REACT* vehicles are sited at intervals along the route. They maintain visual contact with walkers and radio contact with officials at the start/finish.

In the photo Julie and Anne, two of the staff members at the

St. Croix Valley Travel Information Center, point the way to

There have been anxious moments when organizers and police were grateful for the *REACT* presence. Perhaps the worst was a sudden, severe storm that brought down trees along the route. *REACT*ers had to shelter walkers in their vehicles, which in some cases were trapped for a time between downed trees. School buses now stand by during the events to rescue walkers if needed.

In a few months the two Teams will gear up once more, to help with the 29th. See also photo on p. 20.

Ramsey County Minnesota



Members of Ramsey County *REACT* in St. Paul Minnesota, spent over 80 hours on Labor Day weekend serving coffee, orange drink and cookies to travelers who stopped by the St. Croix Rest Area located 3 miles west of the Minn./Wis. border on I-94. This is the Team’s 13th consecutive year of being out there, and they have received total support from the staff at the Information Counter as well as the custodial staff.

the safety break. It was their idea to post the signs (coffee at

picnic shelter) all around the counter so people couldn't miss us.

The staff have always gone out of their way to help us for the past 13 years we've been there. At the end of each Safety Break they always inquire when we'll be back.

Says Paul Oby, "We served over 1,500 guests from many locations in the U S and other countries as well, including past and present *REACT* members. We always encourage the past members to consider rejoining as we can always use more people."

In Honor of Richard Tyler: Leadership and Service

I (Robert Pinnell) as current president of Rose City Windsor *REACT* #2060 would like to submit Mr. Richard (Ty) Tyler's name to be honored for outstanding leadership and membership. He has been an active member of Rose City (Windsor, Ont.) *REACT* since June 1, 1970. He has served as president until recently (the last 18 years). At the age of 85 (November 16, 2006), he is still active, attending every meeting and also any special meeting as called. He also lends guidance at all functions such as parades and walks/runs.

Due to his diligence, we are still very active in our community including all of Essex County. I don't think he was a charter

member of the Team but he was one of the earliest members. Also, at one of the meetings setting up the convention that we hosted, Ron Faulkner indicated that Ty is the oldest and the longest serving active member in Canada.

From the Philippines Eric Conrad Epie writes:

Just advance information: another Team will be coming up, *REACT* Sidlakan. It is near the island where the *REACT* Negor Team is located; it is very active and really interested in affiliating with us.

One practical idea we initiated with *REACT* Negor is to register our Team names with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) using our *REACT* International Team Number. In that way other Philippine Teams will be able to follow up; say *REACT* Kaamulan 6061, Inc. and *REACT* Negor 6118, Inc.

Thanks Eric. Mabuhay!

Life Membership

Did you know that *REACT* life membership is a great way to honor a member who has served your Team or Council with great dedication? Life membership applications can be downloaded at <<http://www.REACTintl.org/pubs/lifeapp.PDF>>, or you may request one from the RI office.

About Your Subscription

All Regular, Junior, and Affiliate members in the U.S. and Canada automatically receive a subscription to *The REACTer*; the subscription price is included in the annual RI dues. All Life Members also automatically receive a subscription to *The REACTer* but may discontinue their subscription if they wish.

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Submission Guidelines for *REACTer*:

We are in the process of updating our submission guidelines, but can offer the following. Electronic submissions are preferred. Send to:

<editor@reactintl.org>.

Please make sure you reduce the size of photos. Your editor has only a dialup connection and can't handle large files. Paper submissions should go to:

Don Tarbet
144 Atkinson Rd.
Bradford, ME 04410

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SKYWARN

Has your Team joined the Skywarn effort? If not, call your local forecast office.

OOPS!

This is getting to be a regular feature. Guess the gremlins are hard at it. Eric Conrad Epie points out that it is Kaamulan *REACT* #6061, not Raamulan... And it is Joel Kogen, not Kagan. Thanks a bunch, gremlins!

Emergency Communications Training

The Level I *REACT* Emergency Communications training manual is available online for members to download free of charge. This program is similar to that offered by ARRL to its members, but has been expanded to include additional materials regarding other radio services (including GMRS, CB, FRS, and MURS, in addition to Amateur Radio) due to the wide variety of radio services often used by *REACT* Teams.

The *REACT* EComm program is available only to *REACT* members. See the EComm Flyer at <http://www.reactintl.org/committees/EComm%20Flyer.pdf> for more information about the Emergency Communications Training and Certification Program. *REACT* Members should send e-mail to IWantEComm@REACTintl.org for information about downloading the manual online.

If you have more training ideas and want to volunteer to help the training and development committee, contact Tom Currie, the committee chairman, at training@REACTintl.org.

This from Ron McCracken, RI Publicity Chairman:

American Red Cross: Disaster Victim Safe and Well Registry
<<https://disastersafe.redcross.org/>>

In July, the American Red Cross launched this Safe and Well Web site to provide families with a tool to exchange welfare information with loved ones and friends in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. The site allows a disaster victim to select and post standard messages for friends and family that indicate the victim is safe and well and will make contact when they are able. Those worried about the safety of a victim can access the site, enter either the name and telephone number or name and complete address of the person in question, and view their "safe and well" messages.

Also check Ron's Column in *Popular Communications*.

Don't Forget: The deadline for the January-February, 2007 *REACTer* is December 5, 2006.

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UNITED VALLEY REACT DOES SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Marian H. Oliastro
United Valley REACT
Team #2141

United Valley REACT is located in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. It is an active *REACT* Team with a busy schedule all year long. Thankfully, emergency situations don't happen all that often, such as the severe flooding Western Pennsylvania experienced in 2004, so the Team keeps busy between disasters by serving the community with communications for civic events such as Walk America, Snitger's Annual Bike Race, The Officer Naims Memorial Parade, and many others. However, the Team has a favorite event to look forward to every year; it is the Beaver

County Special Olympics Athletics Competition.

In May of 2006 the 17th Beaver County Special Olympics was held at the Beaver Area High School athletic field. Director Ernie Sotirake set up the command center by the announcement podium at one side of the football field. *REACT* Team members, as well as volunteers from the Elwood City Amateur Radio Association, Inc., were stationed at different event areas that included 50, 100, and 200 meter races, softball throw, standing and running long jumps, tennis ball throw, shotput, and the wheelchair event. The events were carried out with the help of volunteers from all over the county, from surrounding school districts, various civic organizations, Ambridge High School Junior ROTC, and the Ohio Valley Marines. It was truly a community effort. The flag was raised by the Marines to the sound of the National Anthem, dignitaries were introduced, and the torch was lit. The games had begun.

Why do the members of United Valley *REACT* look forward to this event above all others? The answer is simple; the kids. They are amazing. They each go out there wanting to win a medal or a ribbon, but if one of them should fall, the whole group will go back and help that one up

and start all over again. They truly enjoy the competition, and the smiles and joy when they are handed their awards bring tears to our eyes. The Special Olympics oath says it quite well; "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

Special Olympics is for those with intellectual disabilities. Participants might also have a physical handicap. The event is funded solely through contributions, special events, and grants. It is the world's largest amateur sports organization with nearly one million athletes and 250,000 coaches spanning 140 countries. There are no training fees of any kind for the athletes or their families. The coaches and officials volunteer their time, and no entrance fee is charged to attend any event. According to a study done by Yale University, participation in Special Olympics has a very positive effect on the participants' self-image and their ability to function in a social setting. They perform better at school, at work, and at home, and the experience enhances their ability to live independently, to hold a job, and to participate in community activities as well as to develop close friendships. At every awards ceremony, in addition to the gold, silver, and bronze medals for first, second, and third places, those finishing from fourth to last place are also presented with a ribbon for their achievement.

According to their web site, Special Olympics of Pennsylvania (SOPA) is the second largest chapter of Special Olympics, Inc. They now train more than 20,000 athletes who participate in over 20 Olympic-type sports at more than 300 local, sectional, and state level competitions <www.specialolympicspa.org>.

Some United Valley *REACT* members have been providing communications for this event for several years. Newer members pick up on the excitement and join in to relay information about such things as missing athletes, changes in the rosters, or needed medical assistance. As they work they also have a chance to watch the events and usually find themselves cheering for partici-

pants that they have met or talked to beforehand. Invariably, they are sorry to see it all end, even after a long and tiring day, and as they load up their equipment and add this year's commemorative pin to those already decorating their hats, they are already looking forward to next year's event.

MS150 Bike to the Beach 2006

By Lee Besing, Hill Country *REACT* Secretary

Every year the San Antonio Repeater Organization (SARO) provides Ham Radio operators for the MS150 Bike to the Beach event. Every year the event in support of Multiple Sclerosis research and treatment grows bigger as more riders sign up to ride the 150+ miles from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, Texas over a two day period (Saturday/Sunday). Due to cross membership between the various local radio organizations, many of the local *REACT* members are also members of SARO.



Seven of the more than 60 Ham Radio Operators from San Antonio, Houston and Austin who helped to provide radio and other support to the 2006 MS150 Bike to the Beach were Hill Country *REACT* members. Shane O'Neal NS5D was one of the two Net Control Operators for both days. Charlie Land KC5NKK and his son Daniel operated SAG Van #14. Pat Knight AD5BR was stationed at Break Point #2 on Saturday. The Manley family, Charlie W5BCR,

Barbara KA5RLF and Charlie KD5EXS, was stationed at BP #8 on Saturday and BP #4 on Sunday. Lee Besing N5NTG operated SAG Van #7.



Over 3,000 riders rode their bicycles from San Antonio to Beeville to Corpus Christi, Texas over 2 days. Hams drove 25 SAG Vans, rode motorcycle patrols (6 of 18 were hams), staffed Break Points, rode with Tour Officials and Medical Directors to handle crisis points as they occurred. The weather was cooler than most years, but when the cloud cover burned off around noon on Saturday, the calls for SAG Vans to pick up riders along the road increased dramatically. This year we used VHF repeater frequencies for the SAG and Medical Net, while they used UFH frequencies for SAG to SAG and SAG to Break Point communications.



Hundreds more photos taken during the event are on-line at:

www.SanAntonioHams.org/2006_Slide_Show.

Rick Palm, K1CE reports in the ARES E-letter for October 18:

“The current storm season has been a dud, to the relief of many here on the east coast of peninsular Florida, as well as other areas on the jittery Atlantic seaboard. While it's too early yet to appeal our steeper homeowner's insurance premiums, we are guardedly optimistic for a quiet overall season.”

We did, indeed get lucky this year, though those who *did* get hit might disagree with the phraseology. In spite of predictions, the 2006 hurricane season was not severe. But predictions for potentially severe seasons remain. We'll have to wait and see. And what is this winter going to be like?

The only certainty seems to be that the unusual will be usual. As this issue goes to press, unseasonable thunderstorms in Maine knocked out power for much of the state.



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(Story p 4)

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Maine Governor Gets Ham License

Maine Governor John E. Baldacci became KB1NXP upon passing his Technician's class license test on September 6, 2006. Baldacci may be the only sitting governor holding an amateur radio license.

According to the official state information page, Baldacci, one of eight children, learned early the value of communication. After seeing what amateur radio was able to accomplish following the 1998 ice storm that hit the northeast, Baldacci became interested in obtaining his own license.

Baldacci was first elected to public office in 1978, when he became a member of the Bangor City Council. He was elected to the Maine Senate in 1982. He served two terms in Congress starting in 1994, and was elected governor of Maine in 2002. At this writing, he is running for re-election.

Baldacci has praised the efforts of the local radio community for its efforts, not only during the ice storm, but also in preparing for potential disasters, including threats of terrorism.

According to ARRL, "Baldacci got a taste of Amateur Radio in 2003 when he checked into the 75-meter Maine Sea Gull Net (a National Traffic System net) during a visit with members of the Ellsworth Amateur Wireless Association and other amateurs (including your editor). On that occasion, the governor assured the gathering that the Maine Emergency Management Agency depends on Amateur Radio to support the statewide communications system and said Maine would rely on Amateur Radio volunteers if primary telecommunication systems go down." Baldacci also concurred with amateurs present that any law limiting cell phone use in vehicles had to distinguish between these devices and amateur radio.



(Story p 11)

REACT PR Chairman Ron McCracken says:

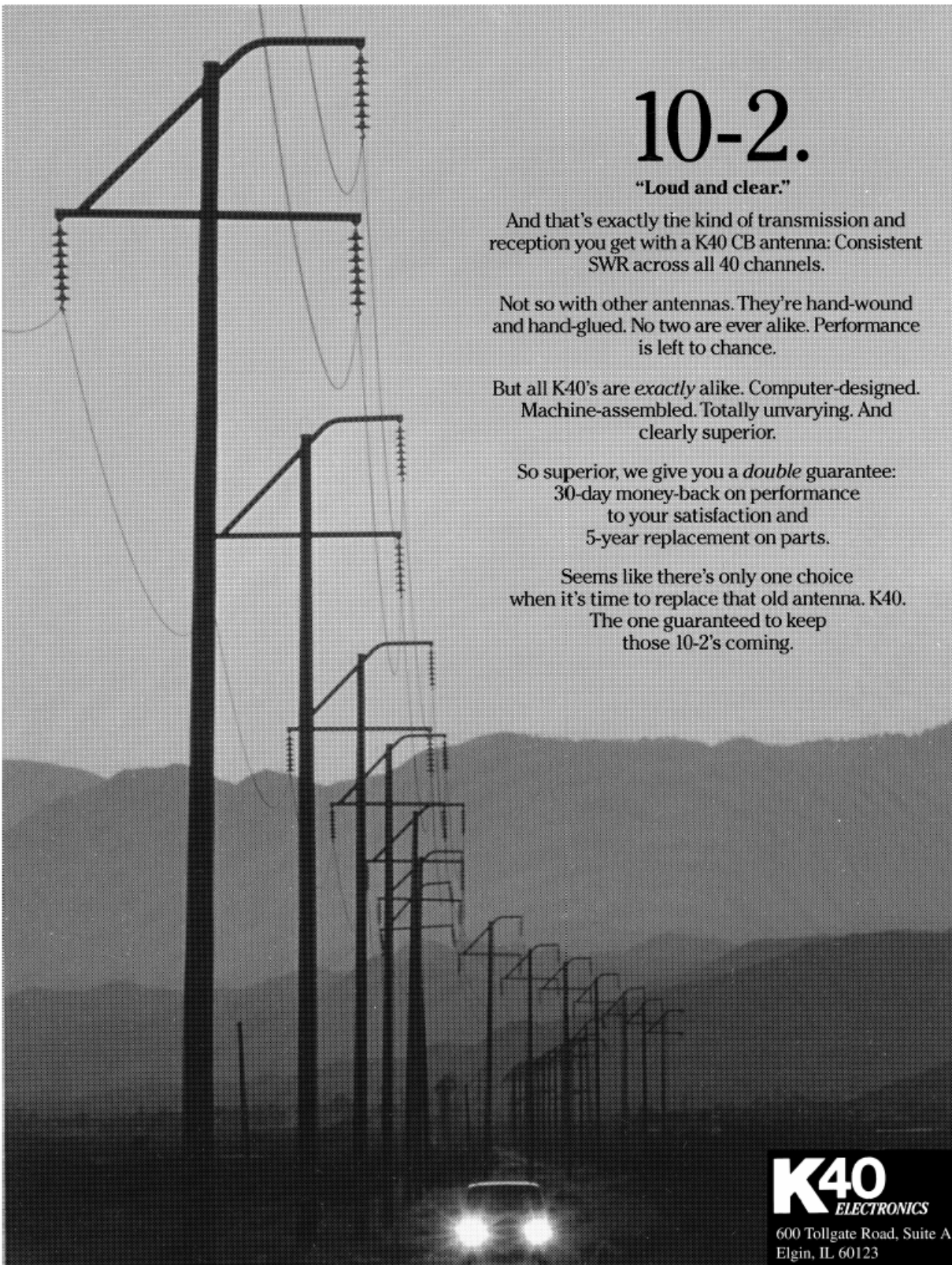
I'm looking for the first Team to succeed in helping a subdivision or neighbourhood set up its SOS network. Visit:

<www.reactintl.org> and <www.nationalsos.com> for ideas to help you. A co-operative venture with your local CERT, amateur club, etc., gets you bonus points.

Likewise, I'm looking for the first Team to conduct and document an SOS test in its area. Help with this is also available on the SOS website. Again, a co-op venture with other radio groups (e.g. REACT, scanner, amateur) earns bonus points. Please compile your test data in the same manner as those posted so they will be consistent for comparison purposes. Thanks.

There. Take your pick. Either should keep your Team out of mischief for a few days. Get photos of your activity on either of these to prove authenticity. Let's see how you get along with this.





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