



# The REACTer



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## The REACT involvement list

**We provide:**

### **Communications support for community activities**

Marathons  
 Fairs  
 Halloween patrol  
 Walkathons  
 Parades  
 Cart races  
 Bike rides  
 Chili cook-off  
 Tractor races  
 Hot air balloons  
 Triathlons  
 Drag races  
 Air shows  
 Motorboat races  
 Road rallies  
 Radio classes  
 Fireworks displays  
 Safety breaks  
 Canoe races  
 Radios for Mexico  
 Animal evacuation  
 Traffic reports  
 Amber alerts  
 Neighborhood Watch  
 National celebrations  
 Easter Seal run/walk  
 Special Populations Programs  
 Vehicle Assistance  
 Search and Rescue



American Red Cross



### **Communications support for agencies and organizations**

American Red Cross  
 Salvation Army  
 Missing person searches  
 March of Dimes  
 Emergency Operations Centers  
 News media  
 Fire watch  
 Special Olympics  
 Toys for Tots  
 Red Flag Patrol  
 Sheriff's Department  
 City Police  
 Sky Warn and NWS/NOAA  
 Accident reports  
 Flood watch  
 CERT  
 School Districts  
 Park Departments  
 Disaster emergency drills  
 Ministry of Transportation  
 National SOS  
 U.S. Coast Guard  
 Hurricane Watch  
 Emergency Rescue Unit Fdtn.  
 Cancer Society  
 M. S. Society  
 Audubon Society  
 V.O.A.D  
 State Agencies  
 Humane Society

#### **THE REACT (Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams) MISSION**

We will provide public service communications to individuals, organizations, and government agencies to save lives, prevent injuries, and give assistance wherever and whenever needed.

We will strive to establish a monitoring network of trained volunteer citizen-based communicators using any and all available means to deliver the message.

**Communications volunteers needed. Information at: [www.reactintl.org](http://www.reactintl.org) and (301)316-2900**

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# The REACTer

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dick Cooper



## A Time of Change for *REACT* International

Well, here we are at the threshold of a new era in the history of *REACT*. The 2008 Annual Meeting held on March 7 & 8, 2008, produced (among other things) a new President for *REACT* International, Inc. Even though I am writing this article prior to the Annual Meeting I know that this change will happen because I have declined to be nominated for a 3rd term as President of RI. Let's put some younger blood at the *REACT* helm. The 4 years that I served have truly given me valuable insight into the workings of *REACT*. I have gained insight into the operations of committees, the corporation office, the structure of *REACT* and everything else that goes on from the budget, to insurance, to all kinds of problems and many other things too numerous to mention here. I am not mentioning this in a negative manner because the President must always be aware of what is hap-

pening in order to make intelligent, informed decisions.

At the RI Annual Meeting in 2006 the term of the office of President had expired and my intention was to decline nomination (after my 1st term) so that someone else could be elected, but obviously that didn't happen. This time I definitely will not take another term as President. I have already made plans to do work for RI on the Ways and Means Committee to try to help RI out of the current financial situation that we are in. In addition, I plan to work on whatever plan or process the Board of Directors chooses regarding the future of *REACT*. Norman Kaplan and I presented a Five Year Plan for the future of *REACT* at the Nashville Board meeting in the summer of 2007, but I believe that the plan submitted is only the very beginning of the work that needs to be done to turn *REACT* around and move in the opposite direction. You will read more about this in later issues of *The REACTer*.

Computers are great. They are great for keeping files – for a long time. In the *REACT* folder in my computer I have a subfolder named Presidents Articles where I keep all of the articles that I have submitted to *the REACTer* as President. I read some of the early ones – January/February 2004, etc. – and found I was writing about many of the same problems then as I do now – need of committee members and other participation, etc. I would hope that this

will change when we get new leadership into RI. Here in my farewell article (just like many of my other articles) I will plead with all *REACT* members to become involved on some level with RI. In my 4 year term as President I have heard a number of members' complain and criticize RI decisions and procedures, but those same members generally don't do anything to make their opinions known to their regional Director or the Board of Directors. When this happens, it's very hard for the Board to take action on any problem when it doesn't get feedback from the membership. Make your opinions known to your regional Director (names are listed inside the front cover of each issue of *The REACTer*) or contact RI and be ready to discuss your views with someone so that your opinions can be properly discussed at a meeting of Board members. How many of you know that the RI Directors and officers meet regularly on the Internet? Any member can join in this meeting. You must download a program from the Internet and install it on your computer but it is very easy to install and work with. Any *REACT* member that has this software is able to join in the meeting. Contact Lee Besing at: [l.besing@reactintl.org](mailto:l.besing@reactintl.org) for more information on TeamSpeak.

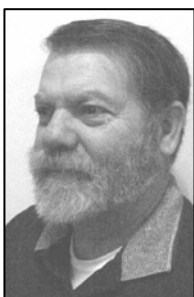
I am proud of my service to *REACT* International, Inc. since I joined the Board at the *REACT* Convention in Grand Island, Nebraska in 1999. Since then I

have held the positions of Region 2 Director, Chairman of the Board (and Vice Chairman for a while), Vice President, Executive Vice President and now President. As I said before this experience has taught me a great deal about *REACT* in general and will help me when I work for RI outside of the Board. One of the greatest benefits of this experience has been meeting people from hundreds of *REACT* Teams across much of the United States, Canada, Trinidad & Tobago, and Puerto Rico. You know who you are and I value our friendships.

Now I will close out my final term as President with a huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped me along the way, and believe me when I say that there were a lot of people that helped by mentoring me and working with me on the various items that came up over the years. I promise that you will hear from me in the future.

*Dick, your leadership will be missed – and we will hold you to your promise to let us hear from you. -- Ed*

**From the Executive Vice President**  
Ed Greany



**WANTED:**  
Person to fill Management Position for a respected In-

ternational Organization

How can the wheel go ‘round without all its spokes in place? The answer is, it can’t. This is what happens with *REACT* International when we don’t have all the spokes in our operating wheel. In this case, the missing spokes are our leaders in the form of volunteer chairpersons managing our important committees.

We have been running on a broken wheel long enough. It’s time to fix the problem and NOW!

I hear comments about how “*REACT* management isn’t working for the organization.” I heard comments like “*REACT* is folding.” Well, you know what? If things don’t change soon that’s exactly what will happen.

For way too long we have been operating without an aggressive Membership Development & Retention Committee. We don’t even have a committee of one – a chairperson. We need a Public Relations Committee including a Chairperson. We need a committee for the next Convention site location. We missed holding a convention last year over the lack of a committee, a chairperson, and a potential hosting Team. The last one was in Corona, California, in 2005. Finally, we need a Ways and Means Committee headed by a chairperson. We need financial stability to operate and dues alone won’t cover the expenses. Your Board of Directors has worked hard to avoid increasing your dues again.

All these things work in unison. Without membership, we don’t have dues coming in to help support the operating costs. Without good P.R., we don’t attract the good members we desperately need. Finally, without a credible Ways and Means, we don’t have efficient funding for our programs.

Your President and I have even had to eliminate some of the committee programs for lack of a leader and/or the energy necessary to allow the committee to work and be effective.

If you have or know someone who possesses the qualities of a good leader and is willing to push forward with our needs, please bring him or her to my attention. We need to repair our broken spokes in order to continue this long journey another for 45 years.



**General Counsel  
Charles A. (Chuck)  
Thompson adds the  
following to his IRS  
report in the Janu-  
ary-February  
REACTer**

I have received several inquiries lately about the requirement for Teams to file with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in 2008.

This can be answered easily:

If your Team received **MORE THAN \$25,000** (without reduction for expenses, prizes, anything), you must file IRS Form 990 or IRS Form 990-EZ.

If your Team doesn't fit the description above, you must file IRS Form 990-N ( the "Postcard Return," which **MUST BE** filed electronically).

Actually, the IRS says "normally receives more than \$25,000" so if your Team doesn't normally receive more than \$25,000, but did so in 2008, you may fall in a special category -- and you need to check with your CPA or the local IRS office. If your Team normally receives more than \$25,000 but didn't in 2008, you probably are still required to file -- check with your CPA or the local IRS office.

*Regardless of what you are required to file, it must be filed by 15 May 2008 (covering the year 2007). Extensions may be re-*

*quested for Form 990 and 990-EZ.*

**DO NOT BE CONFUSED:**

(1) by anything the IRS has sent you,

(2) by the copy of the original *REACT* International 501(c)

(3) letter from the IRS sent with your 2008 ID cards from HQ (which says "more than \$5,000, but that was in 1976), or

(4) by anything else you may have received.

**WHAT IF THE IRS SENDS YOU FORM 990 OR 990-EZ and you don't normally receive more than \$25,000?**

You need to reply, but read the instructions -- they'll probably tell you just to file the front page with a note that you didn't make more than \$25,000 (*and you may also need to check with your CPA or the local IRS office*).

**REMEMBER** -- the key phrase is "received more than \$25,000." If you were involved in fund-raising activities (for example, bingo) and your Team received \$500,000 and paid out \$499,999, your "net profit" was \$1, but you **RECEIVED** \$500,000, and so you must file Form 990.

**NOTE:** RI, is required (as part of its obligations under the 501(c)(3) Group Exemption) to report annually to the IRS each "affiliate" or "subsidiary" covered under the Group Exemption. I have confirmed with the RI office that all Teams and all Councils are included in the annual report to the IRS. Therefore, **the IRS knows about**

**every Team and every Council.**

*If your Team or Council doesn't have its own EIN/TIN, it should apply for one now! Use Form SS-4 or apply by telephone.*

**RI Web Site Facts  
By Johnny Stowers**

The counter we have on the website has been in use since November 8, 2002. In 1698 days since then we have had 13776 unique visitors. This works out to 8 people per day either wanting to find out what *REACT* is about or Team members getting information.

A little over 67% of the visitors to the website have been referred by another website and 32% from various search engines. We have had visitors from 823 different web sites. Yes, links from other web sites do help.

For those of you who maintain a web site for your Team, the most often used keywords in the search engines were:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Word</u>
813	29	react
628	22	radio
185	7	international
140	5	emergency
113	4	gmrs
86	3	band
54	2	citizens
46	2	channel

Another hint for webmasters. About 40% of the visitors to the site did not have Java Script enabled. Be careful about some of the real fancy stuff, you may be

cutting out a large part of your customer base.

## EDITOR'S CORNER Don Tarbet

### Submission Guidelines for *REACTer*:

Electronic submissions are preferred. Please keep manuscripts under 800 words without prior arrangements. Send to:

**<editor1@reactintl.org>.**

Please reduce photos if you can. Paper submissions should go to:

**Don Tarbet  
144 Atkinson Rd.  
Bradford, ME 04410**

**Faxes can go to Jim  
Koritzky at (207) 942-8067**

*We welcome your ideas (though we much prefer complete stories), but decisions as to when and whether to publish must remain ours. If you want immediate feedback, you must so specify and include, in the case of hardcopy submissions, a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. Things do fall through the cracks, so sometimes a note of inquiry is in order.*

*Suggestions as to regular features would also be welcome. And letters... Send in your letters to the editor.*

By the time most of you read this, the March Board Meeting of RI will be history. Watch next issue for minutes. We know there will be changes in *REACT* governance; there may be other changes as well.

One thing that will not change is the need to recruit new members. Many *REACT* Teams engage in various forms of neighborhood watches. Paul Jackson and Jim Koritzky consider these watches to be a potential recruiting tool.

Jackson in a recruiting statement writes:

*If you enjoy the outdoors and strolling through the park, you should consider volunteering for the Neighborhood Park Watch program. This new program is sponsored by the Westerville Parks and Recreation Department and the Westerville Police Department in cooperation with REACT.*

*Neighborhood Park Watch Volunteers spend time in the parks maintaining a visible, trustworthy, and welcome presence. The volunteers act as hosts, providing information, and identifying potential safety problems to Parks and Recreation personnel or the Westerville Police Department.*

Think about this idea. Community members serving community. Volunteer cooperation with official agencies benefits all, and that's something we're

good at. See the inside front cover.

SKYWARN is another effort we can use to recruit volunteers. Here in Maine we're having quite a winter. This is already the second or third snowiest winter (130 inches through 3/1) in the 24 years I have been in this location, with much of the snow season left to come. Last year in April we recorded 36 inches. SKYWARN here adds substantially to official data-gathering sources.

It isn't only in the North that winter weather can be a problem. As we have mentioned before, snow and ice can occur in most states. Jay Flora of Cleveland County *REACT* in Shelby, North Carolina writes of a SKYWARN activation on January 10 of this year. (See photo.) We don't usually think of North Carolina in connection with snow and ice, but it can happen. My own worst winter driving experience occurred in Raleigh, North Carolina, when a heavy rain was followed by a sudden freeze.



Because other problems are more common, official bodies are often less prepared for such conditions in southern states. So we can be prepared.

Remember also that hurricanes are not confined to the Gulf

Coast and the South Atlantic Coast. Nor are tornados confined to the middle of the country. Every state has recorded tornados. Every state.

And fog... That happens everywhere. Remember what happened in Florida recently due to heavy fog.

The list goes on. SKYWARN is one of the means by which we can link ourselves to official agencies to prepare and combat natural disasters. See the SKYWARN patch advertised by the Maryland *REACT* Council on page 16 and Ron McCracken's article on page 15.

And don't forget about earthquakes. California has no monopoly there. Maine has experienced several in the last couple of years, but they have been mild. They may not always be so. One disaster drill in which we participated here centered around the possibility of a major earthquake. And fires. Every state is vulnerable.

Of course, there is a wide range of emergency and disaster situations that are man made. HAZMAT accidents do occur and have the potential for causing major loss of life. Road accidents – including bridge collapses like those in Minnesota. And, of course, there is the ever-present threat of terrorism, either from within the country or from without.

For all these things we need volunteers – including folks monitoring channel 9 – and can use our responses to these

events to help us recruit. And don't make a secret of the many hours we devote to public service. See page 11 for Dale Ellis's statistics for Oklahoma County *REACT*. Publicize awards members have received such as Points of Light (Jan-Feb and p. 10) and those from the American Diabetes Association (p. 9). Let us know of the recruiting plans and activities of your Team.

On another subject: it's the age of the Internet. Does your Team/Council have a web page? It can be a very simple page such as that which Penobscot *REACT* maintains. Or it can be complex. Put the Amber Alert banner on your page. Note the information on key words and other advice in the article by Johnny Stowers on page 4. Check the RI website for links to various *REACT* pages for ideas. We have received word of a new site for Chatham Kent Team (6124) from President Robert McDougall: <[www.react-team-6124-c-k.piczo.com](http://www.react-team-6124-c-k.piczo.com)>

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### From ARRL – Feb 29:

The FCC, ARRL representatives and agents of the various US Air Force units working on developing a plan to mitigate alleged interference from 70 cm ham radio repeaters to PAVE PAWS radar systems on both coasts met February 20 via conference call. The purpose of the conference was to review the status of the mitigation plans at both sites: the Massachusetts

Military Reservation on Cape Cod and Beale AFB, north of Sacramento, California.

Thanks to the cooperation and assistance of the involved repeater owners on Cape Cod, ARRL Regulatory Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, said, "I am pleased to be able to pass along that at this time, the Department of Defense has determined that the levels of harmful interference to the PAVE PAWS radar site on Cape Cod have been sufficiently reduced. As part of this determination, they are not rescheduling additional follow-up testing for that area until sometime in 2009."

Henderson said that this decision doesn't mean New England is back to pre-mitigation repeater operation: "Any mitigation steps that have been taken should remain in place. A repeater that has gone off the air should not be simply turned back on at its original power level -- its previously determined mitigation standard still applies in order to protect the primary user from harmful interference."

Henderson stressed that the entire process is ongoing. "The high degree of voluntary cooperation shown by the owners of Air Force-identified repeaters has helped demonstrate to the DoD that the amateur community takes its responsibility seriously. This should help us retain access to the band in the long run." (cont. p 15)



**Preparedness is an ongoing issue; it is a big part of what *REACT* is about. Each issue of the *REACTer* contains reports of a series of emergencies that Teams have had to face. The key to handling these emergencies – and disasters – is preparedness.**

What does your Team do to prepare for what you may be called on to face? Maybe an SOS drill? Maybe FEMA compliance? An information booth? A disaster drill? An information session for volunteers? SKYWARN training?

Plan and prepare. Let us know how you plan to meet your preparedness needs for 2008 and the years to come.

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

Send us your information at:

<editor1@reactintl.org>  
<reacthq1@reactintl.org>

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

Those who are responsible for community preparedness presentations or for preparedness activities may find the following information useful. This may also be of interest to Public Information Officers, Emergency Management personnel and the Public Education community.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has made files for the *Ready* Campaign's publications available to the public to download at no cost. As a result, organizations can reproduce these materials and help expand the reach of this critical information.

There are three areas of the preparedness focus: Individual & Family Publications; Business Publications; and Ready Kids Publications.

Information concerning this material can be found at the following website:

<[www.ready.gov/america/index.html](http://www.ready.gov/america/index.html)>  
<[www.ready.gov/america/publications/allpubs.html](http://www.ready.gov/america/publications/allpubs.html)>

**Ordering Publications:** Individuals or organizations who would like to order printed copies of *Ready* publications can do so by calling **1-800-BE-READY**. Multiple copies can also be requested by calling the **FEMA Warehouse at 1-800-480-2520**

### Videos Available Also

In order to encourage Americans to prepare themselves, their families, and their communities, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in partnership with The Advertising Council, has created a set of instructional videos. This set is designed to help educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to all kinds of emergencies. The first set of instructional videos, released in English and Spanish, is designed to detail how American families get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the different types of emergencies in their community.

Homeland Security and the Ad Council have also created additional instructional videos with specific information for pet owners, older Americans and individuals with disabilities and other special needs.

To view all of the Ready Campaign's Instructional Videos go to: <<http://www.ready.gov/america/about/instructional.html>> .

# REACT News: Teams and Team Members

## TRAVIS COUNTY REACT: ENJOYMENT AND REMEMBRANCE

By Roger Wines #127, W5WIA

Travis County (Texas) REACT #3022 has been in business since 1976 when we were registered as a Bicentennial Team. Over the years there have been many public events served with communications by the Team, its members, Teams from around the area, volunteers from other organizations, and Hams in general.



Approximately twenty-five years ago the City of Austin, Texas, developed a display of lights for Christmas which is a one mile long trail through a city park with continuously-lit displays all along the trail. There is a stage with live entertainment every night. There are numerous food booths along the trail, a Santa's House for the young ones, a warming pit of fire along with picture taking stations and more. The trail opens to the public every evening for two weeks prior to Christmas from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and the attendance ranges from 15,000-50,000 per evening. Parks and Recreation personnel handle the event with help from

the Parks Police, city EMS crews, Austin Energy personnel with electricians, and vendors.

And volunteers. Every night each display has to be manned to insure all goes well and to report anything needing attention to the proper department. These volunteers are from business groups, schools, scout units, clubs and other groups. They need to be able to communicate, and that's where Travis County REACT comes in. We established our presence with this project from its inception and have been there every operating night since. The Team sets up a net control and after some basic operating instructions issues radios, preset to a particular commercial frequency, to each of the displays with a volunteer. We then have our own REACT members as trail captains support those on the displays by assigning a captain for a few displays each, keeping tabs on those folks and helping them when there is a situation to be handled.

The man-power requirement overburdens our Team, and we have others that help us as captains. All the captains are Amateur Radio Licensed Operators. They come from the San Antonio area and all around Austin to help. We have CERT members, local Ham club members, ARES members and others – as well as some most likely missed for this article. This year we had forty-five volunteers working as trail captains over fifteen nights which equates to seven hundred man-hours of volunteer communications help from our group alone. In addition, add another 1500 man-hours for the trail monitors.

It's difficult to write this without remembering and missing some who have devoted themselves to this project for so long and have spent so much of their time in helping to make this a joyous time for so many that visit every year. There have been a few special members that gave so much and still do that they can never be shown enough gratitude for their help.

Three key members of *REACT* #3022 are especially remembered in this article for all they did for this event and for our Team. Stuart DeLuca, Unit #105 - KC5CGQ, was editor of the *REACTer* and Team President at the time of his death in January, 2005. He was a strong advocate of the trail, and worked it continuously for years.

Jim Coker, Unit #403 - KB5EHP, survived by his wife Paula, Unit #404 - KB5LGQ (now KB5EHP), both having served the Team in various officer positions. We lost Jim in May 2005, and still remember him working the trail even when he really wasn't up to it and being confined to a wheel chair. They both served the Team's effort with the trail every year and helped to work with the parks department representing us at all their meetings.

January 2 this year we lost another friend, Terry Parker, Unit #621 - KC5EFD. Terry was widely active and involved, and he always found something to laugh about. He rarely missed a night at the trail; if he said he would be there, he was. Terry was 47 and although he lived a short life, he touched a lot of people along the way. Terry had personal challenges, as he was born with difficulties when he went an extended period without oxygen and the result was his to live with, but he lived above the difficulties, being kind, generous with his abilities, and a good friend to have.



Terry

This year Terry had the surgery in the early days of the annual trail, and had to recuperate at home and not able to return to work the trail. His passing as reported to us was caused by a blood clot resulting from the surgery. He is missed by us all.

There are many stories to be told about many of the past and current members of Travis County *REACT*, but as life goes on, changes occur, members come and members go and life goes on and we must go on too. We have a mission in life, and our mission is to do the best we can and be the best we can. *REACTers* are the best, and we have lost some of the best ever.

## American Diabetes Association Presents Awards *REACT* Members

By Pat Knight, Hill Country *REACT*  
#4804 (Canyon Lake, Texas)

Two Hill County *REACT* members (Lee Besing, N5NTG and Shane O'Neal, NS5D) were the recipients of an award from the American Diabetes Association in recognition for their efforts to recruit Amateur Radio (Ham Radio) volunteers to support the ADA's 2007 Tour de Cure bike ride. Lee is a member of Hill Country *REACT* Radio Team and helped to recruit and coordinate nearly four dozen ham radio operators for this annual event. Hams were recruited from multiple clubs in multiple counties, including AARO, SARO, SARC. Hams from Travis County *REACT* in Austin, Texas assisted, as did those from Bexar County, Hayes County, and Travis County ARES. It was truly a cooperative effort by multiple clubs and groups, not just *REACT*, that should help build relationships for the future.

Over 1,000 bicycle riders registered to ride from San Antonio, Texas to San Marcos, Texas on the first day, then continuing on to Austin, Texas the second day. Each day riders chose from a 25, 50+, or 80 mile course to ride. The ham radio volunteers drove SAG vans picking up riders along side the courses when they reached the physical limits of themselves or their bicycles. Ham Radio

operators also staffed about a dozen break points (rest stops) to coordinate needed supplies, medical assistance, or the need to take riders on to the finish line.

The awards were presented during the ADA's annual awards ceremony in San Antonio, Texas, on January 15, 2008, by former KENS 5 TV news anchor Albert Flores as the master of ceremonies. The 2008 Tour de Cure event will be on May 17-18th and *REACT* will again be recruiting and coordinating even more volunteers for this year's event.

**Points of Light Revisited (See January-February, 2008, *REACTer*):**

Points of Light award recipient Bill Kofron, Chief Colleton County (South Carolina) *REACT* writes: “(I) got a surprise, a letter from the Governor of South Carolina telling me Congratulations on winning the points of light award. This was unexpected.” *A surprise, maybe, but well-deserved. See below for a copy of Bill’s certificate; Sue Currie (see Jan-Feb issue) got one like it. Have you nominated any REACTer?— Ed.*



**Cleveland County *REACT*  
Jay Flora, Captain**

**Three downed power poles** (photo following), fire, and winds gusting to over 50 mph brought out

Cleveland County (North Carolina) *REACT* to handle traffic control on North Carolina Hwy-226 South of Zion Church Road. The Cleveland fire chief and assistant offered thanks for the assistance.



On February 11 Flora was out again to direct a fire engine to a woods fire a block from his home. *REACTer* Lloyd Idol maintained radio communication with Jay Flora and monitored CB-9 during the event.

**Bandera 100k Endurance  
Trail Run  
By Lee Besing, N5NTG**

The Hill Country State Natural Area (HCSNA) just outside of Bandera, Texas, was the scene of the annual Bandera 100K Endurance Trail run on the weekend of January 5, 2008. This was the third year that *REACT* ham radio operators were coordinating this event to improve participant safety. The event attracted support from hams belonging to various ham clubs as well as non-affiliated hams. With today's cross ham club membership, it is sometimes hard to say that one particular club or group was responsible for coordinating some event when the hams belong to multiple groups, and that is a wonderful thing to be able to say. Whatever event you attend in the San Antonio, Texas, area, you most likely will find a familiar face from our *REACT* Team there already.

One of the minor changes this year was that a few of the other (non-ham) volunteers from the HCSNA (Horse) Patrol and event participants decided to earn their ham license after seeing how

more effective ham radio was. Cell phone coverage in the area is almost non-existent except in certain high altitude. Participants run cross country, on trails, thru the woods, over hill, over dale, across the creek, well... you get the idea. And they run all day and night, using glow sticks along the trail after dark to mark the route.

Normal ham radio repeater coverage isn't much better than cell phones in the area, so we brought in our own portable repeaters and used ATV's (All Terrain Vehicles) and 4x4's to get to the tops of the highest "mountains" in the area. The repeaters (1 commercial, 1 ham UHF/VHF cross band) ran on batteries with solar chargers. Hill County REACT Team President, Charlie KC5NKK, and Barry W5BLH went up there on Friday, the day before, to set up the two repeaters in pre-determined locations, only to find out that the 12 volt sealed lead-acid battery on the ham repeater had a bad cell. Barry brought up a new battery with Anderson Power Pole connectors on Saturday morning and instructed a couple of hams on the ATV over the radio on how to install and reset the repeater for use. That new battery lasted until about 3am the next morning when the moonlight wasn't strong enough to keep it charged.

Last year, the ham volunteers were really stretched tight, because there were two other events happening that same weekend, causing a manpower shortage. Also the weather last year had turned really nasty due to a cold front bringing a 15 degree temperature drop down into the mid 30's and a steady drizzle into the area a day earlier than expected. But this year there were no other ham events on the same weekend, and the weather was wonderful!

The event kicked off at 7:30am on Saturday, and ran 24 hours until sunrise on Sunday. There were 130 runners on the 100k course, 110 runners on the 50k course, and 159 runners on the 25k course. Radio traffic was quiet for the first couple of hours of the event, minor inquiries about where key volunteers might be, or when supplies might arrive at one of the aid stations, and then the proverbial "other shoe" dropped.

Beautiful weather on Saturday in the low 70's with a light breeze didn't stop one runner from breaking his ankle around 9:30a.m. Saturday morning, naturally on a section of trail that the ATV and 4x4 vehicles couldn't reach. REACT member Louis Upton, K1STX (tactical call of "Horse Patrol") was called to assist in retrieving the downed runner and bring him back to the nearest aid station for medical care. Louis rode his horse cross country, breaking off the top segment of his W2IK designed backpack antenna.



(Louis Upton, K1STX, riding his horse with his ham radio backpack, during the Bandera 100k Endurance Trail Run. Photo by Lee Besing N5NTG)

If you had been there to hear on the radio, you would have heard all sorts of strange tactical call signs being used. Like "Nachos," "Chapas," "Last Chance," "Cross Roads," "Lodge," "ATV," "Parking," "Baggage," "Damaged Baggage," (after Sterling, KE5KZE, fell off the back of the ATV) and "Stump Jumper" (when Sterling was stationed out in the middle of the woods on the 25k trail). REACT provided the usual type of support, including medical, supplies and of course "where's our food" type of calls.

You would have learned about runners who forgot to label their "drop bags" with their runner number and name, thus causing delays in changing clothes during the course. The longer routes were set up to let the runners change clothes depending on the weather, warmer clothing in the morning and night, cooler during the day, but obviously the runner can't carry all that along with them, so they

leave “drop bags” at the key aid stations. We also learned whose HT radio batteries wouldn’t last more than a couple of hours without a recharge, thus showing why we always suggest bringing a spare pack. We learned how to reprogram on the fly, trying to transmit on the UHF side, while listening on the VHF side, due to the nature of the cross band repeater set up for use. We learned how to repair broken antennas with duct tape when curious spectators knocked them down. And we learned to bring spare mobile radios.

The last aid station on the 100k route, called “Last Chance,” was “cleared to secure” around 4a.m. Sunday, and by 5a.m. all ham operations had been secured and all but the overnight sleepers had departed. Charlie brought his camper up so that some of the hams could catch some sleep between shifts. All runners were accounted for and all but 6 had completed the route when we departed. Those last 6 runners were on the last home stretch of the course, being shadowed by Mike riding the ATV while he collected the slightly used glow sticks from the route.

This year’s Ham Radio volunteers included Lothar K5LEH, Barry W5BLH, Charlie KC5NKK, David KE5LOU, Pat AD5BR, Sterling KE5KZE, Terry K5ADF, Robb KE5ROB, Louis K1STX, Shane NS5D, Lee N5NTG, Mike AE5AM, and one other unnamed volunteer who showed up with two small kids and said “Hey, I’ve got my ham radio HT in the car, can I help?” The non-*REACT* volunteers have since been invited to join *REACT*, so time will tell if this approach to increasing membership, by inviting non-members to participate in events, will work.

## STATISTICS

By Dale Ellis

Oklahoma County *REACT* #2620 completed enough hours (1944) that if someone was working 8 hours per day every day of the week, that person would have worked from 1 Jan to 31 Aug without a day off. Looking at it another way, working 24 hour per day, an individual would have to work 81 days, or from 1 Jan to 22 Mar.

*REACT Teams put in a lot of hours in public service. You keep track of those hours. Why not use statistics like these for recruitment? – Ed.*

**Roberta Ernston,  
Albert Lea *REACT*  
By Elaine Larson Team Secretary  
and Paul Oby VP Minnesota *REACT*  
Teams Council.**

In mid December Roberta (Bobbi) Ernston of Southern Minnesota Albert Lea *REACT* took the test for her Technician class Ham license. She was the first one to hand it in to the VEs and after discovering a mistake on their part they found that she had scored 100%.

Bobbi had been studying for this test a long time and is very happy with the end result.

The next time you're in the Albert Lea area call for KD0CGV on the 146.880 repeater using a 100.0 tone and give her your 73.



Bobbi

Photo by Ruth Olson, Albert Lea Amateur Radio Club

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## 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](mailto: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, committee chairman, at: <[training1@reactintl.org](mailto:training1@reactintl.org)>

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## CALENDAR

January - February 2008

-March 7 & 8: RI Board Meeting, Suitland,  
Maryland  
- March 23 -- Easter  
-April 5: Deadline for May-June *REACT*er

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## Silent Mics

Daniel C. Pollock,  
Herndon *REACT*  
From: Al Hanger

Daniel C. Pollock, Herndon *REACT*, died December 23 at his home in McLean Virginia. According to the Washington Post, he was “a Marine Corps

colonel who was highly decorated for his combat service on Iwo Jima during World War II...

“Col. Pollack received the Navy Cross, the service’s highest award for bravery other than the Medal of Honor, for his work as a battalion commander with the 5th Marine Division on Iwo Jima in March 1945.

“The citation said that more than half of Col. Pollack’s battalion had been killed or wounded by the fifth day of intense combat against the Japanese. But he continued moving toward the front lines and conducted personal reconnaissance of an area behind Hill 165, ‘the last high ground on the island controlled by the Japanese,’ according to the citation.”

Pollack also received the Purple Heart and “was among the first Americans to lead U.S. forces into Japan at the end of the war.”

Daniel Pollock joined Herndon *REACT* in 1968 where he was active until health problems in recent years limited his involvement.

He is survived by four daughters, 10 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren.

Omer Bangs, KD5MTI,  
Hill Country *REACT* Team  
#4804 (Canyon Lake, Texas)

By Lee Besing

Omer passed away January 6, 2008, due to cancer. His last days were very rough, but his life drained away quickly and peacefully shortly after his wife and family told him it was okay to stop fighting. Omer's memorial service was January 15th at Cranes Mill Baptist Church, in Canyon Lake, Texas.

Omer Bangs was a long time member of the *REACT* Team at Canyon Lake, formerly called Canyon Lake *REACT*, now called Hill Country *RE-*



*ACT*. He was the Team President for over 8 years straight. After retiring from the Border Patrol, and later the INS, Omer trained search dogs for missing person searches and was frequently called out by law enforcement to assist in searches all over the central portion of South Texas. For many years, he was a lead volunteer and the primary search team for the Heidi Search Center (based in San Antonio, Texas) until his health started fading around 2002.

## **PR Tools Your Team Needs By Ron McCracken**

Don't just pass over the ad on page 16 for the Skywarn patch. Check it out. Congratulations to Maryland *REACT* Council on this addition to the collection of PR tools from the field created to help us all. Now, let's support the Maryland *REACT* Council by ordering some if you haven't done so yet. Go together with another Team, if need be, to take advantage of the savings.

Remember, other *REACT* groups have taken the risk of producing great PR tools to help your Team, too. It is a very real, very large risk as you will know if your Team has considered it. Help these Teams recoup some of the money they have laid out. Help your own Team PR in the process.

Oklahoma County *REACT* offers a *REACT* lanyard. Travis County *REACT* has produced an 'all radio services' patch. *REACT* Lake Simcoe has issued an 'emergency broadcast' key-tag. The Team also has magnets, balloons, decals and patches showing the CB-9 road sign graphic. San Angelo *REACT*'s Barbara Jennison has published a novel based on her *REACT* adventures. Take advantage of all these PR tools. Each is generic, so they will work well for any *REACT* Team or Council.

These Teams offer their custom *REACT* items to other Teams at low cost. Take advantage. Your purchases will encourage them to produce more.

Visit <[www.reactintl.org](http://www.reactintl.org)> and check the Team Directory for contact information that will get you prices and ordering information. Act today while it is fresh in your mind.

Has your Team/Council thought about producing a generic PR item to add to the selection? Try it. We will all benefit. And, visit the online *REACT* Supply Store to find more great PR items that can help your Team make its presence known. You will be the winners. – *Note: Of course, anyone desiring to produce an item for sale to other Teams must have it approved by RI if it contains the REACT logo. – Ed.*

## **ARRL – from p 6)**

During the discussion of the Cape Cod radar during the teleconference, the ARRL broached the topic of allowing the resumption of coordinating new repeaters on the 70 cm band in New England. The Air Force has agreed in principle to allow the New England Spectrum Management Council (NESMC) to resume coordination efforts under certain conditions. "These include that in addition to NESMC's normal coordination policies, Longley-Rice signal strength plots are prepared to determine expected signal strength at the radar site," Henderson said.

Henderson said that the ARRL has a "fairly good understanding of what strength level at the site should be workable, even though the DoD has not given us specific information on the sensitivity of the radar. The Longley-Rice plots should indicate if the operating parameters of the proposed repeater might be sufficient to prevent harmful interference to the radar site. The Longley-Rice plots are not the 'last word' in the process, but are a good tool giving the repeater owner and NESMC a reasonable assessment of possible problems."

Henderson reiterated that "any specific mitigation number from the Air Force is an exact measurement, not a 'predicted' number from a computer analysis."

Once NESMC approves a tentative coordination, Henderson explained that NESMC would forward the complete information on the new repeater to the Air Force for authorization on a case-by-case basis, as provided for in Title 47 §2.106 Footnote US7. "During a 60 day trial period, the Air Force would contact NESMC for an immediate shut-down of a new repeater causing harmful interference. If that happens the new repeater would have to remain off the air until it can be successfully mitigated."

During the update discussion of the Beale AFB PAVE PAWS site in California, the DoD was able to report that there was a reduction in harmful interference at the radar, though work remains to be

done to bring the situation at that site to a successful conclusion.

During the teleconference, the FCC reported that it has received excellent compliance in the wake of their phone calls and letters to repeater trustees and owners. This cooperation has made it unnecessary for the FCC to issue any mandatory shut down orders to date. The Commission will continue to be the initial point of contact with the DoD should further mitigation be required based on additional testing at Beale.

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