



The REACTer



Field Day Reports – P 5

Teams and Team Members – 5
Team Field Day Reports – 5
Emergency Ham Portable Go Kit – 12
CERT and *REACT* – 16

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



SKYWARN



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 Fdn.
Cancer Society
M. S. Society
Audubon Society
V.O.A.D
State Agencies
Humane Society
American Diabetes Association
National Multiple Sclerosis 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 and (301) 316-2900

REACT International, Inc.; 5210 Auth Road - Suite 403; Suitland, MD 20746
(301)316-2900 Office (Dora Wilbanks) <reacthq1@reactintl.org> (301)316-2903 Fax
<http://www.reactintl.org>

Contact Directory—OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2009

Officers

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Title</u>
Don Manlove KJ4OUV Cell 804-439-3017 Fax 209-439-3017 <d.manlove@reactintl.org>	President
Ed Greany KB6DOL HP 760-868-8113 <e.greany@reactintl.org>	Executive Vice President
Charles Thompson N5IAG HP 214-368-8223 Fax: 214-691-2322 <c.thompson@reactintl.org>	Vice President & General Counsel
Lee W. Besing N5NTG Cell 210-771-7075 <l.besing@reactintl.org> Fax (866) 261-3598	Secretary
Norman L. Kaplan N3LDM HP 301-316-2900 <n.kaplan@reactintl.org>	Treasurer, Assistant Secretary

Board of Directors

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Title/Region Assigned</u>
Stan Walters AB3EM HP 717-235-7826 <s.walters@reactintl.org>	Region 1 ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY, PA
Don Manlove KJ4OUV See above	Region 2 DE, NJ, MD, VA, KY, WV
John T. Knott N4JTK, KAF6930 HP 321-438-5952 <j.knott@reactintl.org>	Chairman of the Board , Region 3 TN, NC, SC, MS, AL, GA, FL, PR
Ed Kerby, Jr. HP 419-227-3334 Cell: 419-979-3816 <e.kerby@reactintl.org>	Region 4 MI, IN, OH
Laurence O. "Larry" Fry K9FRY HP 608-752-4547 Fax 608-757-2379 <l.fry@reactintl.org>	Vice-Chair , Region 5 ND, SD, NE, MN, IA, WI, IL
B.F "Frank" Jennings N7TRL HP/Fax 360-779-4125 <b.jennings@reactintl.org>	Region 6 AK, HI, WA, OR, ID, MT, WY
Charles "Charlie" Land KC5NKK HP 210-568-092 <cland1@satx.rr.com>	Region 7 AR, LA, NM, CO, KS, MO, OK, TX
Joseph Toth HP (760) 242-0886 <j.toth@reactintl.org>	Region 8 CA, NV, UT, AZ
Kenny Jagadeosingh HP/Fax 868-628-2886 Work 868-628 2886 <k.jagdeosingh@reactintl.org>	Region 9 International Teams

Listening is only half the fun...

POPULAR COMMUNICATIONS

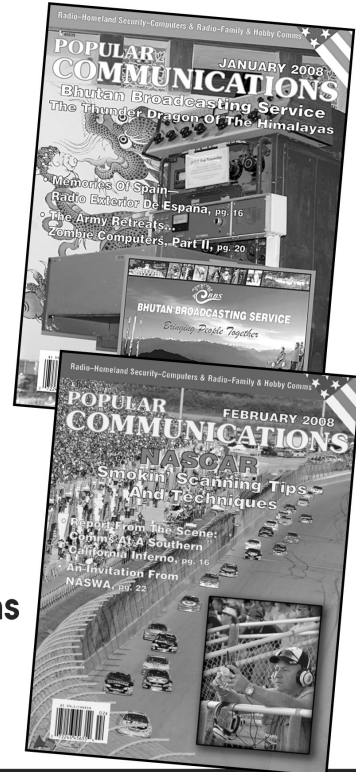
is the other half!

The World's most authoritative monthly magazine for Shortwave Listening and Scanner Monitoring. Read by more active listeners than all other listening publications combined!

If you enjoy radio communications, you'll love

POPULAR COMMUNICATIONS

Get fast home delivery of Popular Communications and save \$30.93 a year over the newsstand price. Save even more on 2 or 3 year subs.



FOR FASTER SERVICE FAX 1-516-681-2926

Name _____ Call _____
Email _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Credit Card # _____ Exp.Date _____

1 year- 12 issues... <input type="checkbox"/> 32.95 (Save \$38.93)	2 years- 24 issues... <input type="checkbox"/> 58.95 (Save \$84.81)	3 years- 36 issues... <input type="checkbox"/> 85.95 (Save \$129.69)
Canada/Mexico- one year <input type="checkbox"/> 42.95, two years <input type="checkbox"/> 78.95, three years <input type="checkbox"/> 115.95, U.S. Dollars.		
Foreign- one year <input type="checkbox"/> 52.95, two years <input type="checkbox"/> 98.95, three years <input type="checkbox"/> 145.95, U.S. Dollars.		

Popular Communications

25 Newbridge Road, Hicksville, NY 11801 • Phone: 516-681-2922 • Fax 516-681-2926
www.popular-communications.com

**REACT International,
Inc.**

Officers

President: Don Manlove KJ4OUV
Executive Vice-President:
Ed Greany, KB6DOL
Vice-President:
Charles Thompson N5IAG
Secretary: Lee W. Besing, N5NTG
Treasurer:
Norman Kaplan, N3LDM

Board of Directors

Chairman:
John Knott, N4JTK
Vice-Chairman:
Larry Fry

Region 1: Stan Walters, AB3EM
Region 2: Don Manlove, KJ4OUV
Region 3: John Knott, N4JTK, KAF6930
Region 4: Ed Kerby, Jr.
Region 5: Larry Fry, K9FRY
Region 6: B.F. "Frank" Jennings, N7TRL
Region 7: Charlie Land, KC5NKK
Region 8: Joseph Toth, KG6BJJ
Region 9: Kenny Jagdeosingh

Publications Review Committee:
review1@reactintl.org
Daughn O'Neill, Chair

Editor: Don Tarbet, KD1XU
Advertising Manager: Ron McCracken,
KG4CVL

Editorial Address:
The REACTer
5210 Auth Rd., Ste. 403
Suitland, MD 20746-4393
editor1@reactintl.org

Circulation Address:
5210 Auth Rd., Ste. 403
Suitland, MD 20746-4393
reacthq1@reactintl.org

REACT International, Inc.
Dora Wilbanks, Office Mgr.
5210 Auth Rd., Ste 403
Suitland, MD 20746-4393
Voice: 301-316-2900
Fax: 301-316-2903
reacthq1@reactintl.org



The REACTer

Volume 43, No. 3 July-August-September 2009

Board/Officers.....	Inside Back Cover
REACT Service	Inside Front Cover
From the President.....	Don Manlove 2
From the Executive Vice President	Ed Greany 3
From the Office	Norman Kaplan 3
Teams and Team Members	5
Team Field Day Reports.....	5
Advertiser's Index	10
Emergency Ham Portable Go Kit	Lee Besing 12
CERT and REACT	Roy Drury 16
Editor's Corner	Don Tarbet 16



Field Day Reports – P 6

The REACTer (ISSN 1055-9167) is the official publication of REACT International, Inc., a nonprofit public service corporation. © 2009 RI. All rights reserved.

Mailed at Periodicals Rate at Suitland, MD, and other mailing offices. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to REACT, 5210 Auth Rd., Suite 403, Suitland, MD 20746-4393**

The REACTer is published quarterly (four issues per year). The subscription price is included in members' dues. Subscription rate for nonmembers is \$7.50 per year (U.S.).

REACT Teams or Councils may reproduce articles in their publications if proper credit is given.

Articles and photo submissions are welcome, but cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage. We are not responsible for unsolicited materials. Please see our **Publication Guidelines** at www.REACTintl.org for more information.

For information regarding advertising, please contact the Advertising Manager at the e-mail address or the Suitland office address shown at left.

The REACTer is available on-line, in full color, at www.REACTintl.org.

Photo Credits: Unless otherwise specified, photos are from the Team featured in the accompanying article or from RI.

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of REACT International.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Don Manlove,
President, RI



My fellow *REACT*ers;

As summer comes to a close, and schools are opening up for the little ones, most of the Teams that we all belong to are gearing up for end of year training, elections, and other such activities. It just seemed like yesterday that we were finishing up the FEMA online training that is required by my Team at the start of Spring each year. Man, time flies when you are having fun!

Over the past few months, I have made a few trips around the country, and I want to thank the *REACT* members that I have come across during my travels. One of the things that we all need to do is commutate among ourselves. You will be surprised at how many *REACT* member Teams are doing new and exciting things within their service area, and keep it all to themselves. Please folks, pass the information on to *REACT* office, your Council, and your Director. What works in your area, just may work in others, and we want to let the *REACT* world know of your accomplishments.

Since I have been the president of RI, I have had an agenda to have the programs that come out of our office and the various committees, going to you, the member, available when needed, as needed, 24/7 by way of the web site. The computer committee has been working many long hours updating the RI web site. The new data base will be rolling in just a few months. This will replace the one that has been in use since the late 90's. And, when was the last time you looked at the RI web site? So many new things are there, there is not enough space in this issue to tell you all about it, so please take a tour of the

various web pages there. Also, if you or your Team has any forms that may be helpful or a copy of a decal that can be used by other members please pass them on to me to be placed in the members only section.

You find in this edition of the *REACT*er, a list of new Teams (page 4) since January 2009; please join us in welcoming them to the *REACT* family.

Reminder, the office in Suitland has new hours of service. They are as follows: Tuesday thru Thursday, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M., EST, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the office is closed. If you call the office, number 301-316-2900, after hours, please be sure to leave a message with your full name, Team number, and a phone number, that the office staff can reach you. Make sure you repeat your contact info clearly, as this will help us in returning a call back to you. And, as always, if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or just want to talk, drop me a line, call or text me at the following:

<d.manlove@reactintl.org> 804-439-3017 4019 W.
Dogwood Ave. Chester, VA 23831.

Please keep your Team happenings, photos, and other news coming, as we pass them along all round the WWW, and to the *REACT*er editor. Also, please let me know what Team functions you have coming up this fall/winter, your Team might get a visit from your President, as I do get around to various areas of the country.

Thanks for your service,

Don E. Manlove, Jr.
President and Director (Region 2)





From The Executive Vice President

Ed Greany

An Answer to Your Neighborhood Interoperability

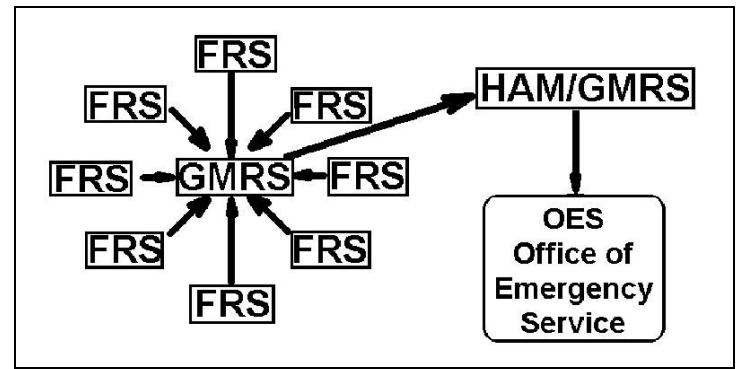
Are you trying to set up a neighborhood communications system among non-radio-neighbors? You know, those neighbors who know how to work a cell phone and TV remote but don't know anything about two-way communications. Well, perhaps I have the answer for you. The system has been tested over and over again and it works.

Convince your neighbor to purchase an inexpensive Family Radio Service (FRS) radio. They cost under \$25 each. Now you will need someone with a General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) license in the neighborhood to act as an FRS control center. This person should also be a licensed amateur radio operator (ham).

With an unlicensed FRS radio, a neighbor may communicate short range in the neighborhood to the licensed GMRS contact. Now the GMRS contact can communicate via a GMRS repeater to outside the affected disaster area or neighborhood. The other option is a licensed ham operator has an FRS radio to communicate to the neighbors with and still relay the emergency traffic outside the disaster area to the Office of Emergency Services or a NET Control. It's that simple.

The beauty is that FRS radios have several channels that are able to legally communicate with licensed GMRS operators. The FRS operator does not need to have a license at all as long as he restricts himself to just those FRS or GMRS Low Power channels on his radio.

Often, neighbors are reluctant to spend hundreds of dollars for a decent disaster radio and possibly an antenna but they will spend \$10 or \$20 for an FRS radio that is simple to use and will suffice in time of emergency. The neighborhood will need to be set up into zones where the FRS neighbors can communicate in range to a central GMRS or ham relay. That ham or GMRS relay then relays their specific neighborhood disaster report to a farther out receiver and eventually to a person doing a neighborhood damage assessment report.



From the Office: Norman Kaplan

Items in no particular order.

The office will be going back to five days a week, 0700 to 1500 Hours (EST on November 1, 2009. Team renewals will be going out from the office starting October 26, 2009. If your Team does not receive your Team renewal by November 22, 2009, please notify the office at 301-316-2900, <reacthq1@reactintl.org>, or at 5210 Auth Rd, Suite 403, Suitland, MD, 20746. Please let us know so we can send your Team a replacement renewal package.

REACT International (RI) Regional Directors in Regions 2, 5 and 8 will be elected in 2010. The nomination forms for Region Director must be in by March 15, 2010. Region 2 is comprised of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky. Region 5 is comprised of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois. Region 8 is com-

prised of Arizona, Nevada, Utah and California. Nomination forms may be gotten from *REACT* headquarters (see above for contact information).

In the Annual Audit for 2008, our CPA went through the office files on each Team. At that time, she stated that *REACT* International needs the following information from each Team: current Constitution and By-Laws, a copy of the minutes from last year (Team, committee and Board Meetings), a copy of any newsletters that the Team publishes, a copy of the Annual Monitoring Report and a copy of any after action report for each event and call out. *REACT* International thanks those Teams that have already filed the reports with RI. The information may be filed by paper copy or on a CD in RTF format.

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.

Currently, if you don't get acknowledgement, inquire. Technical problems have arisen, though we still do prefer electronic submissions.

Charters

Charters received and approved since January 1, 2009.

Team 6145 (1/9/09) Snake River *REACT* -- Middleton, Idaho

Team 6146 (1/25/09) Carroll County Emergency *REACT* Team -- Amsterdam, Ohio

Team 6147 (3/13/09) Coastal Georgia *REACT*-- Hinesville, Georgia

Team 6148 (10/8/09) Frederick County *REACT* Unit -- Hagerstown, Maryland

Team 6149 (3/13/09) *REACT* of Frankfort Ind. -- Frankfort, Indiana

Team 6150 (4/6/09) Sumter County *REACT* -- Sumter, South Carolina

Team 6151 (3/15/09) County Line *REACT* -- Washington, New Jersey

Team 6152 (5/5/09) Coamo *REACT* Rescue Team -- Coamo, Puerto Rico

Team 6153 (8/13/09) *REACT* Radio CB Rescue Team -- Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Team 6154 (8/13/09) Bayamon *REACT* Communications Team -- Bayamon, Puerto Rico

Team 6155 (8/18/09) *REACT* of Hudson County USAR -- Jersey City, New Jersey

Team 6156 (8/13/09) *REACT* Cayey Volunteer Fire Company -- Cayey, Puerto Rico

TEAMS AND TEAM MEMBERS

FIELD DAY REPORTS, 2009

CEDARLOO (Iowa) REACT Joe Hoepfner

June 27 and 28, 2009 two members of CedarLoo REACT 4748 participated in the ARRL Field Day. President Craig Hoepfner and VP Joe Hoepfner operated under the REACT Call or KOCLR for the 24 hour amateur radio exercise operating as a 1E station. That means that we were using a home station under emergency power. In this case it was a battery that supplied power to the equipment, while using the air conditioning of our home station. We didn't make a lot of contacts, but did give the station a workout on SSB and PSK31 after having repaired several of the antennas and feed lines either damaged in the 2008 EF5 tornado that passed just ½ mile north of our location, or from an errant lawn mower. We did have to take a break part way through to discover that an antenna cable had been cut by the lawn mower, and to reroute several antenna cables. This caused a loss of about 2 hours, but we did proceed after these corrections were made.



The above picture shows Joe (KE0J) at the controls for the KOCLR Field Day Station. The equipment consisted of an ICOM IC-706 with Heil headset,

contest voice keyer, Rigblaster Pro for PSK31 and a Dell Computer running Digipan software for PSK.

We did have a visitor on Sunday morning. This was the chief deputy of the county sheriff's department to view the operation and receive a briefing on the ARRL Field Day and how CedarLoo REACT 4748 is able to assist them when/if the need arises.



Craig Hoepfner (N0PB) at the operating position for KOCLR entering log information in the ARRL Contest Logging Program.

Contacts were made on 10, 15, 20, and 40 meter amateur bands during Field Day. Unfortunately we did not work any other REACT units that were participating in Field Day, but maybe next year.

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

By Lee Besing

For the San Antonio Field Day event, we had a half dozen ham clubs combined to hold a single site FD for the entire city. Our combined group in San Antonio ran K5EOC as 7 Alpha, South Texas (7A STX) which meant we had 7 radio transmitters on the air full time, from 1pm to 1pm, CDT.



Hill Country *REACT* Team #4804 was responsible for 2 of the 7 stations. Not bad for our first FD event in many years. Most of our contacts (made by the *REACT* station) were on 75/80 meters during the middle of the night. Our PSK31 station on 10 meters wasn't as successful but we suspected hardware / software configuration errors on a brand new PSK31 system (Digipan on a PC running Windows VISTA Home Premium 64bit). We used all homebrew antennas for the most part, other than one 80 meter dipole antenna that might have been commercially made.

The *REACT* station was a popular destination for visiting hams, partially because of the RV's internal AC keeping it at least 20-30 degrees cooler than the outside weather. We also had several hams request membership info about our Team prior to their departure. Several of the visiting hams were willing to get on the air, under the *REACT* operator's supervision, and made a few contacts which were added to our count.



We also learned (the hard way) that whoever said their sunscreen lotion was water proof and sweat proof, forgot to say "for how long." We made sure everybody kept hydrated with lots of water and

other cold drinks were easily available, and reminded folks to wear their hats and not to stand around in the sun without a good reason (like holding up the end of an antenna guy line until it was secured), but we forgot to remind folks to re-apply their sunscreen lotion every few hours, or to apply it to the front "V" of your neck area, in addition to the back of your neck and legs below the bottom of your shorts.

One of the advance planning things we did to improve our chance of making lots of contacts was for our Team to purchase band pass filters for 10 meter, 20 meter, 40 meter and 75/80 meter bands. This enabled us to block out the other operators when they transmitted and bled over on us. We loaned out the other two band pass filters on Saturday to the other stations to help them. (Yes, we got them back.)



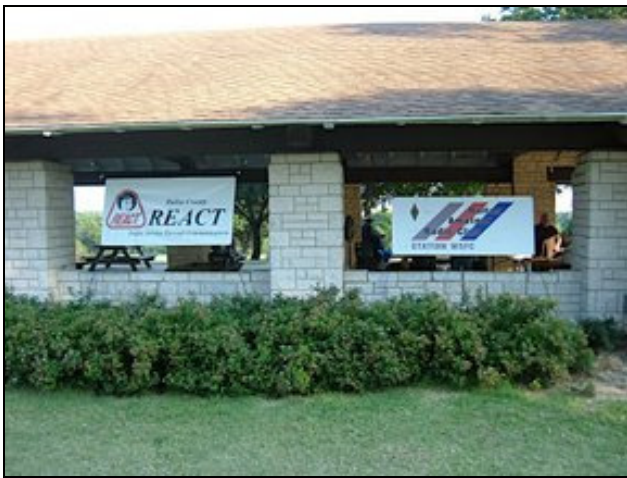
At the end of the event, we felt that our Team is now better prepared to set up and operate emergency communication stations on HF Amateur Radio with a higher degree of success than we might have done before this exercise. By the way, we also burned up close to \$150 in diesel fuel, powering the generator in the RV to keep the AC running all weekend.

Did your Team participate in Field Day? Let us know

DALLAS COUNTY (Texas)

Charles A (Chuck) Thompson LM147
Vice President & General Counsel,
REACT International, Inc.
Secretary/Treasurer, Dallas County
REACT, Inc.

Dallas County REACT (W5DCR) and the Dallas Amateur Radio Club (W5FC) cooperated again this year to conduct ARRL Field Day 2009. Since W5FC call sign was used in last year's inaugural event, the two groups decided to use Dallas County *REACT*'s call W5DCR this year.



A Dallas Field Day Blog was set up by DCR Executive VP Pat Hykkonen DCR45/N5NPL at <<http://www.dallasfieldday.us>>. A good many photos, and some commentary, are posted including a shot of Saturday night's sunset.

The weather was typical -- it's 100 or 101 depending on whom you believe (and yes, we do think it makes a difference), and there was a slight breeze some of the time. Fortunately, DARC has a newly built trailer with AC, and both of DCR's vehicles are equipped, so a good bit of the radio operation was quite pleasant. You can see photos of the DARC trailer and the DCR two-vehicle communications center in the blog.

Field Day 2009 was conducted at the picnic pavilion at Flag Pole Hill, which is about 6 miles north

east of Downtown Dallas and immediately north of White Rock Lake. There was plenty of parking, a covered picnic pavilion which provides shelter on

rainy days and relief from the sun, plenty of parking, and a great line-of-sight (especially from west to south to east).

A number of antennas were erected, including DCR's AS3 tribander, mounted on a Ham-III rotator atop the Team's 50-foot crankup trailer-mounted antenna mast.

This was DCR's 20th Field Day, since starting with a 350-mile one-way trek to Amarillo in the Texas Panhandle for our first one in 1990. That one, and the next four were held in conjunction with the Summer Texas State *REACT* Council meeting held the same weekend. The other four were conducted in Longview, Temple, Mesquite, and Brownwood. After the TSRC changed its meeting date because too many officers, directors, and delegates were staying home for Field Day, DCR's Field Days moved to Lake Ray Hubbard, an eastern Dallas reservoir which straddles the Dallas County-Rockwall County line. In 2000, the site was shifted to Lake Lewisville, north of Dallas (us old-timers still call it Lake Dallas, which it was before it was vastly increased in size). In 2006, we moved to the Dallas Area Red Cross Communications Center, which DCR maintains and operates as needed, and last year, began our co-Field Day with Dallas Amateur Radio Club at Flag Pole Hill.

DARC is one of the oldest amateur radio clubs in the US, having been founded in 1914, and has a membership of about 200 hams. It's second-oldest in Texas, the club at Texas A&M University being a few months older. The current president of DARC is Randy Patterson (who joined DCR in the spring of 2008). Randy is the fifth DCR member to be or have been DARC president. DCR's current president is long-time member (about 36 years) Terry W. Allen DCR34/KC5BHR.

DCR is one of the largest Teams in *REACT*, with membership of about 70. It was founded in 1967, and became affiliated with the ARRL in 1990. It became an ARRL Special Service Club in 1991.

Had only three FD reports this time. Any more? I'd like to at least get a list of participating Teams.

**St Cloud REACT (Minnesota)
Team 3791**
From Larry Peterson (REACT 130)

“They’re Our Eyes on the Skies”

The above headline appeared in the August 3, 2009 St. Cloud, Minnesota, Times. Charlie Reichensperger (REACT 136) and Connie Reichensperger (REACT 137) serve their communities in tracking and reporting weather events. The Times quotes Benton County Sheriff Brad Bennett as saying, “They do a really good job for us. They give us extra time to prepare for severe weather.” Charlie is the volunteer coordinator of the Benton County Weather Spotters.

Charlie Reichensperger got started watching and reporting weather events in the late 1960s, according to the Times. Things have changed, both in technology and numbers of volunteers since that time. As we have reported earlier, many REACTers in all parts of the country have followed his example, saving lives and property through early reporting of potentially dangerous events.

The Reichenspergers have not limited their REACT activities to weather spotting. They have been active, including serving as officers of not only the local Team, but at the state level.

If you are not a involved in SKYWARN or otherwise active in weather spotting, shouldn't you be? Contact your local National Weather Service. We in Penobscot REACT of Maine are active.

**Cleveland County REACT
Shelby, North Carolina**
By Jay Flora

1. On August 19 at 1357 hours. Chief Jay Flora of Cleveland County REACT was called to do traffic control at an accident on Double Shoals Rd, 1/2-mile off North Carolina Hwy-226/Polkville Road. Upon evaluating the situation, Flora called for a

member of the Upper Cleveland Rescue to assist in the task.



2. On August 19 about 1600 Assistant Chief Spencer Jones (Unit R-2) and Donna Jones (Unit R-5) found a car parked beside the road on Highway 74. It turned out the man was out of gas, and Spencer and Donna were able to get him fuel and get him on his way. That is a very busy road, and vehicles stopped alongside the road cause a substantial hazard.

3. August 24 Chief Jay Flora of Cleveland County REACT of Shelby, North Carolina was called to the site of a head-on collision between a dump truck and a pickup in Waco, North Carolina. Flora used his Cleveland County Patrol Car to block off an access road and re-route traffic at the request of fire officials. The head of the Waco Fire Department had not previously known of REACT. He does now, and he offered his thanks.



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.

IDEAS WANTED

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>

Preparedness Month is September, but preparedness is an ongoing issue. 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 2009 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>

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>

<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**

Advertisers Index

National Communications..... 11
Popular Communications..... Back Cover

Did you do something for REACT Month that you didn't tell us about? Well, it's not too late.

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 communities.

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> .

We can never be TOO prepared. But we CAN be underprepared. That is far too common. The articles in this issue – and most other issues – stress preparedness. Are you ready?



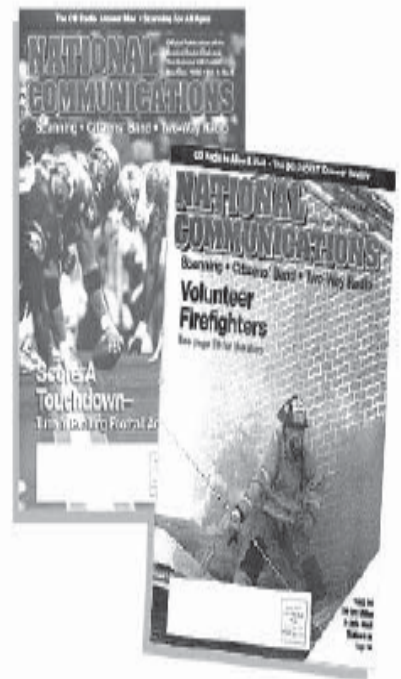
NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

An every other month magazine devoted to the entertainment and education of those interested in Scanners, CB radios, and other electronic means of communications.

As a subscriber to **National Communications**, you will be able to:

- Access over 4 million frequencies for your scanner
- Toll free "help line" for your programming questions
- Opportunity for FREE classified advertising
- Learn new and interesting ways to use your scanner, CB and FRS radios
- Keep up with the "latest and greatest" happenings within the industry
- 40 colorful pages in each issue

To subscribe to **National Communications**, call toll free 1-800-423-1331, log onto our web site at www.nat-com.org or mail to: PO Box 291918, Kettering, OH 45429
A full year's subscription (6 issues) is only \$21.



Every issue is packed with articles, interviews and stories of how to get more out of your scanning, monitoring, and CB radios. There are product reviews and product announcements of interest to those of us who enjoy the hobby of using the radio waves. And of course, advertisements for making your equipment better!

We accept:



For a free preview of **National Communications** log onto www.nat-com.org

Emergency Ham Radio Portable Go-Kit

By Lee Besing, N5NTG
San Antonio, TX

Once upon a time, in a department store not so far away, was a lonely Stanley Mobile Work Center who dreamed of becoming more than just a rolling toolbox when it grew up. Fortunately for it, one day a ham radio operator strolled down the aisle and said “this little guy would make a fantastic portable emergency ham radio go-kit!” The ham radio operator bought the Mobile Work Center and took it home to be modified. This is its story...

Seriously, this rolling toolbox (Stanley Model #01880H) was chosen because of one cost factor and several physical factors. The cost factor was a bonus, about \$20 at multiple locations including Home Depot and Wal-Mart. The unit is one-piece molded heavy duty vinyl, not two pieces latched together like some of the other toolboxes were. The attached wheels were heavy duty and the axle was a one piece solid steel rod that ran from wheel to wheel. In other words, the wheels were not simply attached to each side, and thus it would hold up better over the life of the project.

Access to the bottom half was via a sliding front door, very convenient to be able to drop in some batteries and other items as we'll later describe and show photos of.

The heavy vinyl construction was easy to drill or cut using a heavy box cutter when installing items in the side that required holes.



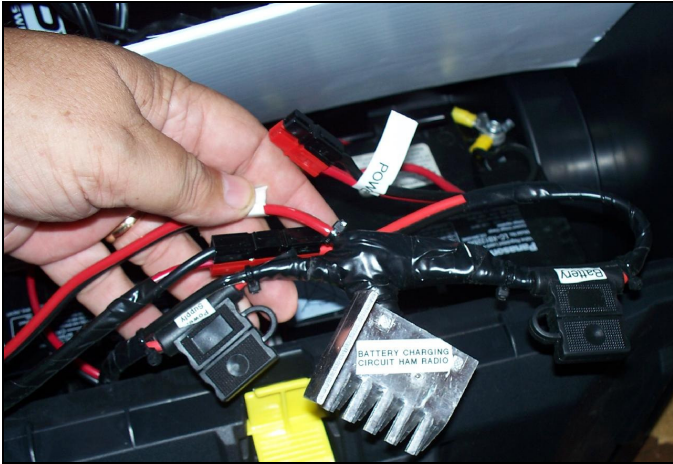
The top half can serve as a toolbox including a parts lid or have room to install a radio and other items. I chose to use it as a toolbox with parts lid for storage and place my radio(s) outside the unit on a folding table for actual operations. Because the handle to lift the unit, or roll the unit was integral to the lid, and thus only connected via the rear hinge and two front clips, I used a metal carabiner clip to act as a safety clip just in case the clips decided to fail and pop the lid when least convenient for me.



Okay, on to the project. Portable radio operation requires power from someplace. You can use 12 volt marine batteries, car batteries, generators, sealed lead acid batteries, etc. There are lots of choices.

I knew a local ham operator who had a source of slightly used (i.e. 1 year old) 28aHr (amp hour) 12 volt sealed lead acid batteries that he sold for \$25 each. I bought two of them to put into the bottom of my kit hooked in series to provide 56 amp hours of 12vdc service. You can buy these types of batteries new from:

<www.batteriesplus.com> or other sources.



That same ham (Bob K5AUW) had designed a home-brew charging circuit that would allow simultaneously charging the batteries while providing power to the radios or other devices, as long as there was an external source of 12vdc power. That's a topic for a different article, but if you contact me direct (see end of article) I will email you the circuit diagram.



I added a sheet of plastic corrugated board (like you get political yard signs made of) to lay on top of the batteries, thus protecting them from shorting out accidentally if something metallic got dropped into

the box. I insulated the terminals with electrical tape just in case, but the plastic liner looked good and allowed me to use the extra area for storage of extension cords, etc.

I used Anderson Power Pole connectors for the majority of my power connections, other than the direct connections to the batteries and switches. The cables from the battery all had Anderson Power Pole connectors, then connected to the charging circuit and then to the external 12vdc connector block (described below) and to the internal 12vdc power supply.

To provide my 12vdc power, I bought a Pyramid 30 amp 12vdc power supply from Amazon.com for \$69.99 (with free shipping). I had shopped around multiple sources, and chose this unit for three reasons, the small size (flat rectangular that would fit behind the batteries), light weight, and reasonable price (plus free shipping). I installed it using double faced mounting tape and stuck it to the inside back of the bottom compartment, behind the batteries and above the axle area. It fit perfectly just as I had hoped it would.

I added a 2-outlet 12vdc power plug to let me use cigarette lighter style power plugs (like the one connected to my DC-AC power converter).

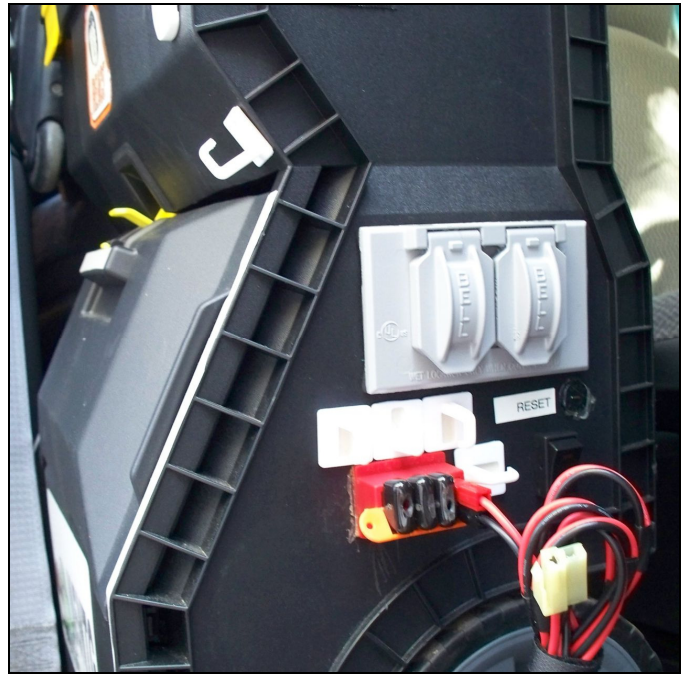


I mounted a 300 watt DC-AC power converter upside down inside the roof of the bottom compartment by drilling 4 mounting screw holes and screwing them in from the top compartment. I used this unit because I already owned it, but if I were going to buy one, I'd get one of the larger capacity units (1000+ watt) on sale from Harbor Freight or other store. Recently another local ham bought a 375 watt unit at a hamfest for \$20, so keep your eyes open for bargains. I use the converter to provide tempo-

rary AC power in the field to charge my portable radios or run my laptop computer, etc. It can't handle much of a load, depending upon the size converter you install, so be cautious what you plug into it. Don't use a surge strip plugged into your converter, because it will cause problems. Using a non-surge power strip is okay, but don't use a surge strip.

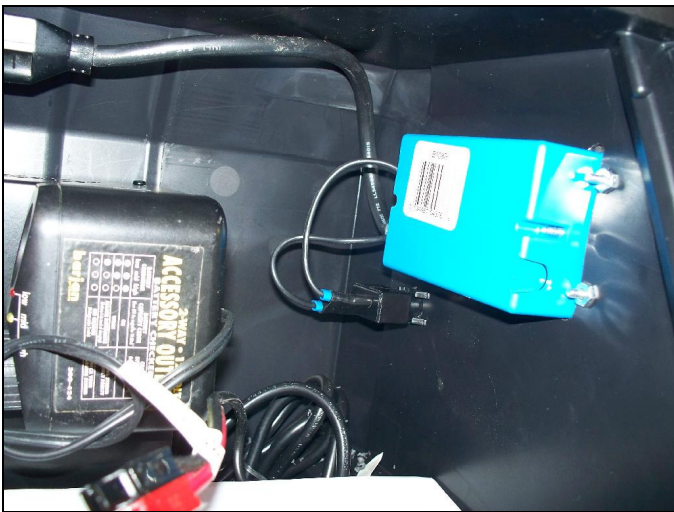
You can use, and should use, a surge strip between your external AC source and the power supply to protect it and to allow powering other AC devices without needing to use the internal converter. You can't run the 12vdc power supply from the converter to charge the batteries and run the radios at the same time.

Perpetual energy doesn't work. You could set up and connect solar charger panels to charge the batteries during daytime operations, but I didn't use that option.

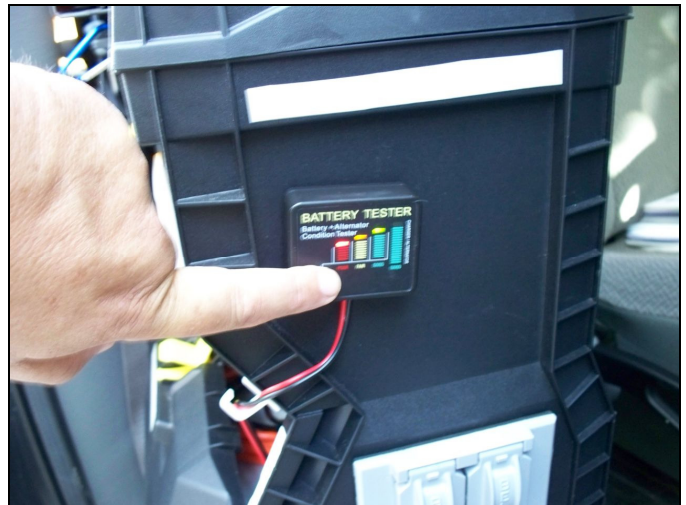


I installed a Red-Dee-2 Power Connector (PS8) from <www.DCPWR.com> to provide the ability to plug up to four (4) Anderson Power Pole equipped cords to obtain 12 vdc power from the outside, and used some plastic clips to create a sort of strain relief mechanism for the cords.

Because I wanted to keep an eye on the voltage of my batteries when not using AC power to keep them charged, I found a battery monitor from Harbor Freight that only cost \$5. I changed the connectors to use Anderson Power Poles instead of the big eyelets designed to fit over the top of an automotive battery terminal, and used Velcro to attach it to the outside above the power outlets.



Because it was inconvenient to reach under there to plug or unplug AC cords from the converter, I decided to install external power jacks on the outside of the box, and use a short extension cord to connect from the converter to that box. I went to Home Depot and bought the plastic outlet box, weather-proof lid, other parts to install. Now I could simply plug into the outside of the toolbox to get power. I added an inline overload fuse (from an old UPS) and an on/off illuminated rocker switch (from Radio Shack) to turn on the converter when needed.



Push the button and the LED's light up to indicate the state of charge or if it needs recharged. Yes, there are several other more expensive gadgets from West Mountain Radio or other sources that show you live readings with LED displays, but this was cheap and how often do you need to check it, anyway? When not in use, it gets put back inside the box for storage.

I added an external fan like you would find on a PC computer case because I was concerned about heat inside the lower compartment with 2 batteries, charging circuit, 12 volt DC power supply and DC-AC power converter. Yes, I could leave the door open, but I was concerned about rain. So I installed the fan and then added some flexible plastic that I cut to shape from something I had bought recently, and attached it so that the air could still blow outward, but rain was unlikely to blow in. I don't plan to operate this unprotected in the rain, but I wanted it to be reasonably rain resistant.



I added an illuminated on/off rocker switch (Radio Shack) to turn the fan on/off from the outside, then discovered that it could turn on accidentally very easily. So I cut a small 1" piece off a PVC pipe to glue around the switch, so that you had to reach inside the pipe to turn it on or off on purpose.

Okay, at this stage, I had all the external power outlets on one side of the toolbox, and the fan on the other side. Everything was mounted semi-permanently inside the box to avoid shifting around

during transport by using double face tape or Velcro. Hard Styrofoam was placed between the batteries to keep them from shifting when the unit was being wheeled around.



It was time for the finishing touches. I added an exterior hook to hang a microphone on the front of the box, just in case, and I decided to decorate the exterior with reflective tape for safety purposes, to increase visibility during night operations and to spiff up the looks a bit. I added some decals to identify it as a *REACT* piece of equipment since I'm a *REACT* member, and added one of the logos (photo above) I use when doing "turtle" operations at bike-a-thon or run-a-thon events.

I've posted more details and many more photos at my blog, <<http://sanantoniohams.org/blog>> or you can contact me via email at:

<lee@besing.com>

CERT and REACT

Is this the right fit for your Team?

By: Roy Drury – K4DCT / Tampa Bay REACT
– Team 6127

What is CERT? The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program helps train people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non-emergency projects that help improve the safety of the community.

It may not be obvious, but there is a natural cohesiveness that can be achieved when working with your local CERT Team. Many CERT Teams utilize FRS or CB for their communications. Some have an Amateur Radio component, some do not. Most CERT Teams however have one basic need, help with radio communications. That is where REACT can help to fill a need. In a CERT program, many times communications is an afterthought until they need it and the capability to communicate is not there. While the CERT program has a training component, many times many of you might already have or be interested in the training. In some cases, if you are acting in the role of a communicator, additional training is not needed, but that is totally dependent on your locality and the CERT program you are working with.

In the current economic times, many localities finding that they have to cut back on staffing for needed emergency services, so in times of disaster or emergency, there are not enough responders to go around. In some localities, CERT is being asked to fill vital roles, for example; Setting up and running a Volunteer Reception Center, Setting up and Running a POD (Point of Distribution) providing personnel to work alongside of paid professionals on re-entry points after a disaster, etc.

So your Team needs to ask itself, “Is working with CERT right for your Team?” I bet the answer will be yes, if so, make contact with your local CERT Team and offer them your communications expertise, I bet you will not be turned down.

EDITOR’S CORNER

We had only three reports on Field Day for this issue (unless one fell through the cracks of my ISP). Surely there were other Teams that participated. Send in reports. I’d like, at least, to get a list of Teams participating.

Read Lee’s article on go (or jump or ready) kits. This is important if we are to be ready to serve in case of emergency. Drills are a good way to test your preparedness. In one we held a few years ago, I managed to go from lying in bed reading with a cat on top of me to on the road prepared for a 72-hour stint in seven minutes. I couldn’t do that now. I’m older and the cat has gained weight, but I’d still bet on 10 minutes.

H1N1 or swine flew is an increasingly important topic. I have heard predictions of 90 thousand deaths this fall from this virus. Maine has declared an emergency, and I suspect other states have also. We would welcome reports – including how REACT could fit in. I represented our Team (and local ARES and my organization that works with the blind) at a major meeting on September 8. There is expected to be a need for ham operators at mass vaccination sites. More later.

For those who are interested in seeing what an active REACT Team is doing these days, contact Johnny Stowers, editor of the “Southwestern REACTer,” published by Southwestern REACT of San Diego County. It’s a good newsletter. Ask Johnny to add you to his email list. Contact Johnny at: <jstowers@sbcglobal.net>

Let us know what’s up with your Team and your area. Then we can let everybody else know.

Don Tarbet
REACTer