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# The REACTer

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# FROM HEADQUARTERS

Norman L. Kaplan



## In no particular order:

(1) During the Summer (June through September) the *REACT* International, Inc. (RI) office will be closed Mondays and Fridays. Dora Wilbanks will be off. She will take a corresponding change in pay. Dora made the offer which was gratefully accepted. Norman Kaplan will be checking both the e-mail and telephone answering machine on a regular basis.

(2) The *REACT* International, Inc., Board of Directors meeting will be held on August 18, and 19, 2006, in St. Louis.

(3) September is the Department of Homeland Security month. The focus of the month will be on family security. As always, *REACT* will have activities during the month. Please send RI a report of any plans that your Team has so we can present a comprehensive description to Homeland Security. In October, please send a report on

your activities to RI so we can send a report to both DHS and to the Teams in a Team Topics report.

(4) It is June as I write this. The Teams should have finished all their *REACT* Month activities. Please send RI a report of your *REACT* month activities.

(5) For those Teams that have not sent RI an Annual Monitoring Report for 2005, please send the report to RI. If you have misplaced or lost the current form, please notify RI and a current form will be sent to you.

(6) RI is still getting *REACT*ers returned to the office. If a member of your Team has moved, please have the Team Secretary send the new address to RI. If a Team member does not have their current telephone number and/or e-mail address at RI, please send this information to RI.

(7) Election Ballots for Regions 1, 4, and 7 have been sent out. Many of the ballots have been returned and counting was underway as this issue went to press. Regions 2, 5 and 8 Directors will be elected next year. Now is the time to start looking for members to run for Directors in 2007. Currently, there is only a single person running for each Director position. The election is a yes/no vote on whether the person is elected. If no votes are sent in for a Regional Director, the person is not elected. Dora Wilbanks, Norman Kaplan and

Barbara Proden will be the Ballot Counters for the 2006 election. Mrs. Proden is a Notary Public who works for one of the lawyers in the office building.

(8) RI still needs the Certificates from any DHS or FEMA course passed by *REACT* members. RI is looking specifically for IS-100, IS-200, IS-700 and IS-800 courses. Any courses should be sent to RI. Frank Jennings has reported in excess of 40 courses taken and passed.

## Ooops!

The callsign of John Knott, Director for Region 3, is KG4VVQ, not KG4WQ as we have been listing it. Sorry about that John.

In the May-June issue we carried an article on Ramsey County *REACT* and its Mid-winter Madness Hamfest on page 5. The second paragraph (under the photo) should read "Pictured are Malene Fish, co-owner of Radio City, and Paul Oby, Team President, discussing a patch Radio City sells that looks like the *REACT* one." Our apologies to Radio City and to Paul. Radio City can be found on the web at <[www.radioinc.com](http://www.radioinc.com)>. We also thank Radio City for their cooperation with *REACT*.



# REACT News: Teams and Team Members

## SERVICE RECOGNIZED



**Paul Oby** of Ramsey County *REACT* in Minnesota was recently awarded a Certificate Of Appreciation for his 3 years as a Board member of Minnesota VOAD by President Donna Bauer.

During his term he worked on the committee for the annual state VOAD conference which annually drew over 200 emergency managers and volunteers from all over Minnesota.

## WELCOME REACT NEGOR

Eric Conrad Epie reports, "*REACT* Negor, Team 6118 of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental, Visayas Island, Philippines, has been officially affiliated with RI as of April 30, 2006.

"We're working with 2 more Teams, slow but steady."

The *REACT*er will publish more information as it becomes available.

**Penobscot *REACT*** helped provide communications support for the annual Kenduskeag Stream Canoe Race in April. Also in April, two members joined a Skywarn training session sponsored by Penobscot County ARES. In May the Team handled communications for an annual birdwalk for blind bird "watchers" on May 13 at the Field's Pond Nature Center of Maine Audubon. Following the birdwalk, the Team gave a short program on radio and emergency communications for blind operators using FRS.

## Canadian Teams Relay AMBER Alerts

**Ontario Provincial Police** had a nice *REACT* Month surprise for Teams there.

*REACT* Teams became part of the province's fledgling AMBER Alert program (missing or at-risk children), just in time for *REACT* Month. *REACT* will now receive e-mail notification of AMBER Alerts directly from OPP simultaneously with TV and radio stations. It ensures accuracy. "Times have changed. It's a complete role reversal," noted

Ron McCracken, a past president of *REACT* International. "For over thirty years Teams have notified OPP of emergencies. Now, OPP will notify *REACT* of emergencies. Our roles with truckers will reverse, too. They have always reported emergencies to *REACT*. Now, on occasion, *REACT* will alert them to emergencies where vehicles are sought regarding child abductions. What a different world."

Some things remain the same. Virtually all truck drivers still rely on CB Channel 19 to exchange information about road conditions, weather, etc. *REACT* Teams will be able to relay the OPP vehicle description to truckers on CB Channel 19 when an AMBER Alert occurs. The ideal vantage point from their cabs, high above other traffic, makes truckers very effective in spotting and reporting a suspect vehicle. They can also pass the AMBER Alert to other truckers as they travel.

*REACT* will have a particularly valuable role to play in rural areas where no overhead signs exist to carry AMBER Alerts. Commercial radio broadcasts can be spotty in those rural areas too, adding to the *REACT* importance.

"We saw an opportunity to serve when OPP began the program two years ago," McCracken recalled. "We approached OPP with the idea and now it has borne fruit. We

couldn't have planned the timing better: **REACT Month.**"

REACT Councils in other areas may wish to contact state police about helping in a similar way with AMBER Alerts. REACTers are in a unique position to use CB to link police and truckers in the effort to end a child abduction before a tragedy occurs.

## Waterloo Regional REACT Assists Police

Rick Weisler  
Executive Vice President  
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada  
Regional REACT

**Waterloo Regional REACT** has assisted with a local program for the third straight year now. Collaboration among WRP. (Waterloo Regional Police), MOT (Ministry of Transportation), Guelph City Police and the MOE (Ministry of Environment) has made this initiative known as Project ERACE into a well-organized and much talked about program.



The main objective of this program is two fold 1) To remove unsafe vehicles on the road whether they are unsafe from

neglect or from modification into "street racers" and 2) to inform the public and owners, what these modifications can do to them or to the environment.

Our main role at these functions, which are carried out through the summer evenings, is to provide lighting with our scene lighting lights and tripod and hand held halogen lamps. This allows the different departments to do safety inspections on the cars and trucks that are brought in by WRP Patrol Officers or MOT officers searching in the area that we are set up in.

This has proven to be an enjoyable evening for the members that come out to these events and has brought the 5 different organizations closer to a common ground while making our streets in the region a safer place for all to enjoy.



There have been some interesting events at these initiatives that most non government agencies would not be privy to. When we are out there we are treated like we are not a volunteer group but like another professional agency, sharing information that the general public would not hear about. Of course we treat this information with great discretion.

Overall going out to these events we as an organization have learned some things that we did not know about how we could operate and have put those suggestions from the different agencies into place to improve ourselves.

## CALENDAR Summer - Fall - 2006

- July 4: Independence Day (US)
- August 5: Deadline for May-June REACTer
- August 18-19: RI Board of Directors meeting in St. Louis
- September: Homeland Security Month  
Emphasis on Family Security



## 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.

If for any reason you do not wish to receive *The REACTer*, let us know. Send a note or e-mail to RI headquarters. However, your dues will not be reduced.

Members outside of the U.S. and Canada may subscribe to *The REACTer* but the subscription fee (\$6 U.S.) is not included in their dues. To subscribe, send your name, full address, and payment to RI headquarters. Nonmembers may subscribe for \$7.50 per year.

Members may order an extra subscription for a family member at a different address, a friend, a local library, or anyone else, at the same rate as members' subscriptions: \$4 per year in the U.S., \$5 in Canada, or \$6 anywhere else.

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

## 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.

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**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](mailto:training@REACTintl.org)>.**

## Training: One Challenge Met; Many Ahead

Don Tarbet

Well, I met Ed's challenge (Executive VP Ed Greany, p. 7, May-June *REACTer*). I finished the *REACT* Ecomm course (Certificate of Training level) in June. My certificate arrived from Tom Currie, Training Chair, on June 22. As I have commented elsewhere, the course is excellent and challenging. I am a Certification Instructor/Examiner for ARRL's three ARECC

courses and consider them excellent. To any licensed hams, I recommend them highly. I also recommend the *REACT* course. Get it at:

<[www.reactintl.org/trng-ecomm-download.htm](http://www.reactintl.org/trng-ecomm-download.htm)> It has a slightly different orientation and serves as an excellent counterpoint for *REACT* members to the ARRL courses and to the FEMA courses.

I am at 14 on FEMA courses, way behind past Board Chairman Frank Jennings – and Training Officer Tom Currie. Which FEMA courses to take beyond the basics (IS 100, 200, 700, and 800) is a matter of personal choice and need, as Currie notes. For September Homeland Security month with its emphasis on family preparedness, IS 22 might be a good one. I plan to take that one and introduce it to my Team.

Ron McCracken reports, “Getting Ready for Disaster - One Family's Experience,” a citizen preparedness DVD from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), has been released to help people get ready for disasters that may impact their families and communities. The DVD guides viewers through important steps of disaster preparedness and addresses critical issues in seven segments. The DVD was designed to be used with ‘Are You Ready? An In-Depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness’ and the accompanying facilitator manual for teaching preparedness principles in small group or classroom settings.

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## NATIONAL SOS

### National SOS and Your Team

Ron McCracken,  
WPZX486; KG4CVL

**Katrina.** What we saw on TV in the early hours of the rescue operation makes **SOS** a very fitting name for this new emergency communications program.

Eric Knight was watching TV too, and he resolved to do what he could to ensure that people had a better chance the next time an emergency arose. Knight is president of UP Aerospace <www.upaerospace.com>, developer of the first private sector, re-usable space craft. He is an engineer and an avid radio operator, both ham and GMRS.

National **SOS** capitalizes on the small, inexpensive FRS radios. Huge numbers of them are already in the public's hands. They are popular, easy to use and store. Most operate on AA batteries that are readily available. In an emergency, they can even be 'pirated' from other electronic equipment around the house.

### Already in Place

*REACT* Teams had been quick to realize the safety potential of FRS radios early on. A number of rescues have since proven their value. Midland Radio launched its "Midland-1" program that encouraged FRS users to monitor FRS-1\* as a 'call' channel. That also established FRS-1 in the minds of people as the channel to use when they needed help.

In increasing numbers *REACT* Teams began monitoring FRS-1 to assist where they could. Thus, parts of the foundation for **SOS** had already been laid long before Katrina. "She" just sparked Knight to bring these players together to make FRS-1 really work for the safety of all. Other organizations like DCERN (DC Emergency Radio Network) are swelling **SOS** ranks day by day.

### How-To

Aside from monitoring FRS-1, the biggest role for *REACT* Teams and others involved in **SOS** will be to teach the public "radio smarts". *REACT*ers recall well from CB-9 that few callers have any idea as to correct emergency message procedure or content. Most simply yell "Help!"

FRS operators must be taught to broadcast *repeatedly* basic, details (**WHERE**, **WHAT**, and **WHO**) in an emergency. That enables anyone who hears them to send help. Often, callers can't hear monitors asking for those critical details.

This will again be the major difficulty with FRS-1, particularly given the short range of FRS.

*REACTers* will have an advantage with their licensed, full-power GMRS radios that give greater range. Those who are amateurs will also be able to pick up calls on their scanners and pass them via ham radio. Others will be able to monitor their own FRS radios to render assistance. There is a place in **SOS** for anyone keen to help others.

### **Start Now**

Many Teams have been monitoring FRS-1 along with CB-9 and GMRS-20 (462.675 MHz) for some time to expand their service to the community. If your Team hasn't, now is the time to "start your engines" and "get in gear". Not only will you benefit your town but the current interest in FRS can bring your Team new and *younger* members since they particularly enjoy FRS.

Offer Team speakers to churches, homeowner associations, community organizations, etc. Let them know how easily they can use FRS radio to maintain neighborhood communications. Help them choose an FRS channel to use (not FRS-1, since its reservation for urgent calls is encouraged). Encourage them to drill weekly to keep their radio skills sharp.

Only days from this writing, in Connecticut, the first state-wide pilot test of **SOS** will occur (see next article – Ed). DHS officials there are very enthusiastic about the FRS "self-help" system. Tests in other states nationwide are planned before the hurricane season reaches its peak. Plan now to help in your state's test. Begin monitoring FRS-1 today. Issue a media release to inform people that your Team is monitoring. Issue another when the state drill nears.

To get up-to-the-minute reports on National **SOS** progress, send a blank e-mail to: <REACT-L-request@gtibbousmoon.com> . Type only the word **Subscribe** on the subject line. Type the same one word **Subscribe** in the message area. That's it. You should begin receiving updates and other *REACT* news. It is free, thanks to *REACTer* David Moore.

National **SOS** can save lives, with your help. Add FRS-1 to your monitoring and encourage others (they need not be *REACTers*) to do so. Its short range means that FRS-1 will need thousands of monitors to work well. Since it is also a "call" channel, people are much more likely to help out.

As you can see, there is lots to do. FRS-1\* can help rejuvenate your Team. New challenges. New members. New rewards for your efforts. We are counting on you. More importantly, your friends and neighbors are counting on you. Do yourself proud.

\* (no tone)

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**Public Emergency Communications Drill in Connecticut "a Remarkable Success"; Thousands Estimated to Have Participated.**

**National SOS Radio Network drill involved all of Connecticut's citizens, plus a special test of a Hartford-area receiving station.**

HARTFORD -- June 19, 2006 -- On Saturday, June 17th, the National SOS Radio Network – <[www.NationalSOS.com](http://www.NationalSOS.com)> -- conducted America's first test of a new emergency communication system.

The public emergency drill, open to all Connecticut residents, occurred from 1:00 p.m. to  
**(to p. 8)**

**HAS YOUR TEAM TRIED FRS?  
CHECK RECENT *REACTERS* FOR  
IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS.**

3:00 p.m. local time. According to National SOS founder, Eric Knight, "We were very satisfied with all aspects of the drill. Within hours of completion of the statewide drill, we received a wave of e-mails and phone calls from Connecticut residents located all over the state. From the sheer volume of calls and e-mails we received -- and are still piling in -- we estimate that a few thousand people throughout the state participated. We couldn't be more pleased."

Knight continued, "Many people thanked us for informing them of the use of Family Radio Service radios for neighborhood and community communications. People were generally surprised at how simple the radios were to use, and how easy it was to talk to us and their neighbors."

The National SOS public emergency network is comprised of the 100 million low-cost Family Radio Service (FRS) and FRS-compatible radios already in use for camping, boating, hiking, biking, etc. In addition, 700,000 amateur (ham) radio operators, 70,000 licensed General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) users, and hundreds of thousands of scanner users are encouraged to augment and participate in the network.

Knight also said, "We simultaneously conducted an experimental test of what we called a 'Hartford-area receiving station' -- whereby residents in central Connecticut used their FRS-compatible radios to communi-

cate with our central location. Spanning the two-hour duration of the drill, we had dozens and dozens of crystal-clear radio conversations with the general public throughout the region. Many people were 15 to 20 miles away. Our furthest contact, that we actually verified by phone-calling the location after the drill, was an amazing 105.48 miles; the person was holding his radio while standing outside of a restaurant in Londonderry, New Hampshire. That distance is most certainly an anomaly. The conditions happened to be just right. It's important to reinforce that the National SOS Radio Network is totally designed for neighborhood and very local community communications. Nonetheless, it's amazing what can occur with a simple half-watt FRS radio."

Knight added, "We also had people contact us during all sorts of outdoor activities, such as when they were riding their bikes. And one person was particularly proud of herself to make a radio contact. This person said she wasn't technically inclined at all -- and didn't even own a computer. But she figured out how to set the radio to the proper channel and contact us. You could hear the genuine feeling of accomplishment in her voice."

Knight added, "What really surprised us was how orderly the radio conversations were. We were certainly prepared for communication chaos, with hundreds of people trying to contact us at the same time. But the chaos didn't occur."

Knight went on to say, "I have to give the public great credit for the common courtesy they used. People simply took their turn. We've thus discovered that ordinary citizens, with zero formal communications training, can effectively communicate during extremely heavy radio congestion -- as what might occur during a real emergency. That was one of the most important lessons we learned."

"As I mentioned, based on the volume of calls and e-mails, we estimate that a few thousand Connecticut residents participated in some way -- and that's a remarkable measure of success," Knight said. "Given that we are a totally volunteer, one-hundred-percent 'grass-roots' organization, we have to tip our caps to the media that greatly helped with public exposure. I also have to thank the wonderful ham and GMRS volunteers here in Connecticut that really helped the drill succeed."

Knight also said regarding the Hartford-area drill, "It will take us a while to compile all of the data, including plotting the general locations of the radio contacts. We will make the data available on our Web site <[www.NationalSOS.com](http://www.NationalSOS.com)> as soon as all of the information is assembled."

It should be noted that the Hartford-area receiving station tests were performed under strict FCC regulations. The citizens were instructed and reminded to use the low-power (half-watt) setting on their FRS

radios, to adhere to pertinent FRS regulations. The receiving station was also operated under an FCC GMRS license, and conformed to all pertinent GMRS regulations.

### **Role of ham radio operators, GMRS operators, and scanner users.**

Hams, GMRS operators, and scanner users are encouraged to participate in emergency network operations and emergency drills. GMRS operators can directly communicate with the FRS users in their communities, and are encouraged to advise and assist the untrained

public in radio-communication protocols. Ham radio operators, using their amateur radio gear, cannot legally communicate with FRS radios during non-emergency situations. In a true emergency, the FCC waives this restriction. During emergency drills, hams are encouraged to use their own FRS radios and apply their radio expertise to help the surrounding public communicate effectively. Hams and scanner operators can also monitor the regional FRS traffic, and test the reception range of their equipment during drills.

### **About the National SOS Radio Network.**

The National SOS Radio Network is an entirely volunteer operation, staffed by ham radio and GMRS radio operators nationwide. The National SOS Radio Network fully endorses the "Family / Neighborhood Emergency Communications" protocols as described by EMCOM at: <[www.emcomus.org/commwp.html](http://www.emcomus.org/commwp.html)> For more information on the National SOS Radio Network, please visit the National SOS website.

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## **IDEAS AND INFORMATION**

### **Visit – A – Vet**

Here's an **easy** project for your Team over the summer, or anytime. Go visit a vet, especially one confined to a VA hospital.

There are still a few WW II vets languishing in VA hospitals. They tend to be forgotten most of the year. Go brighten their day on occasion. Take along a small treat. Go in uniform. Uniforms will establish a link with them right away. Your Team can blitz their ward or residence.

There are hospitalized vets from Iraq too, not to mention Viet Nam and Korea. They could also use some encouragement and appreciation.

Do it soon. Do it a few times a year. **REACT Month** would be one good time, but go **early** in the month. They will get lots of attention on Memorial Day. Mark it on your planning calendar now. Take along your Team album to give them an idea of your contributions to the community.

This idea comes from a teenager. She organized similar visits for WW II vets to mark the D-Day anniversary. You should have seen the glow on those vets' faces at the gesture. Give it a try. Get some photos. Send us copies.

Ron McCracken  
PR Chairman

### **WILDFIRE!**

*Don Manlove, Director for Region 2, got this item from a FEMA and Home land Security e-mail list that he subscribes to. The material affects the REACT Teams in fire-prone areas. See the March-April REACTer.*

The United States has witnessed the early arrival of the 2006 Wildland Fire Season. For example, wildfires have already swept across thousands of acres in Texas, New Mexico, and Florida. According to a Government Accountability Office report (GAO-06-671R) issued earlier this month,

it is possible that this wildfire season will offer new challenges beyond what has been experienced in previous years. Experts believe that catastrophic damage from wildland fires will probably continue to increase. "The number of acres burned by wildland fires annually from 2000 to 2005 was 70 percent greater than the average burned annually during the 1990s."

In the past five years the wildland/urban interface created a new frontier requiring innovative rules of engagement, which demanded much more from fire departments. In today's rapidly expanding wildland/urban interface, firefighters are facing wildfire disasters with increasing frequency. Consequently, the necessity to protect the critical infrastructures of wildland firefighting organizations has never been greater. The Emergency Management and Response-Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) asserts that this is particularly true for their personnel who are the foremost among internal critical infrastructures.

The GAO report reinforced several tasks that agencies must complete prior to implementing a cohesive wildland fire management strategy. The EMR-ISAC affirms that the following tasks contribute to the protection of wildfire responder critical infrastructures:

- Finish data systems needed to identify the extent, severity, and location of wildland fire threats to local communities and ecosystems.
- Update local fire management plans to better specify the actions necessary to effectively address these threats.
- Assess the cost-effectiveness and affordability of options for reducing the ample supply of fuel for fires.

Ensure reliable mechanisms exist to communicate among wildfire responders and critical infrastructure stakeholders when threatened by wildfires.

On a related matter, the U.S. Fire Administration, in the Department of Homeland Security Preparedness Directorate, just announced the availability of a new website with training information for personnel who may be involved in

wildland firefighting. It provides information about the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) curriculum, training program, training material, standards, and related areas of the NWCG interagency training program.

Acting U.S. Fire Administrator Charlie Dickinson, who also serves on the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, said that "The opportunities being offered on this new website will be of tremendous help to the structural fire community in dealing with wildland fire situations, especially in the urban interface." Managed by the NWCG Training Working Team, the website can be seen at: <http://training.nwcgt.gov>.

### **REACTers helping fellow REACTers**

Tom Jenkins , LM 534, President Valley Wide REACT 4956, Boise, Idaho

It started with a trip to Seattle Washington for the Pacific North West REACT Council meeting. I, Mark Smith (delegate) and Mai Jenkins (alternate). Well the trip went very well until Sunday morning when we were ready to return. Wouldn't you know it; everything seemed to go wrong! At first it seemed the car's head gasket had blown, but came to find out that a spark plug had blown out of the cylinder. Now picture this happening 500 miles from home. Along came fellow REACT members Alan and Marilyn Friend who called to say goodbye and would see us later. That is when the bad news hit them. Well no worries, as Allen put it. They had my car towed to a friend's house.

They said for us to load everything in their Hyundai Santa Fe – which was rather cozy with all us in it. After we hit the road we dropped them off in Vancouver, Washington. They said we could take the car and go back to Boise and that they would pick it up later.

Thanks cannot express our gratitude or repay the friendship of people like Alan and Marilyn, but perhaps the best payment we can offer is to call them fellow REACTers and friends.

## EMAIL & REACT: Don't get left behind

By Ron McCracken

Have you visited the *REACT* International website at: <[www.REACTintl.org](http://www.REACTintl.org)> recently? Did you check your Team listing under “**Teams and Councils**” on the left side of the Home page? If you haven't checked lately, you should take a look very soon.

You may be startled to find that your Team listing shows no e-mail address. You should be startled, since e-mail has become the first choice of many today. Community groups who would like your Team to help with an event, organizations that want to share information with your Team, and potential new members, are likely to use e-mail.

Without an e-mail address in your Team listing, you are likely being left behind. The “**Teams and Councils**” directory is a member service. Your Team should be taking full advantage of it. If no e-mail address appears in your Team listing, at your next Team meeting you should ask “Why?”

Is there actually a *REACT* Team anywhere today without *at least* one member who has e-mail? That means virtually every Team can certainly show

an e-mail address in its Team listing. Why, then, are so many blank? In a communications organization?

Check also the Team listings for neighboring Teams. If you find one with no e-mail address, take action. Offer to help them get a free e-mail address with Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail, etc., at a public library, seniors' center, church, etc. Help them submit the new address to the “**Teams and Councils**” area on the *REACT* website and to *REACT-L*, too. You will be doing them a tremendous service.

E-mail is a powerful PR tool for your Team. It is also an important source of information for your Team. Directors in several *REACT* Regions maintain e-mail lists so they can pass information to Teams quickly. Your Team needs to take whatever steps are necessary to participate. Ensure that in the e-mail era you are not left behind.

[OK, Ron, I've done it for our TEAM]



## SILENT MICS

Mark Schrick



It is with the utmost sadness that I report the loss of another one of our long-time CREST *REACT* members. He was known to us by many names depending on the situation and we may have referred to him as "Bloodhound", "Sergeant-at-Arms", "9,5", "WPOJ436" or just simply by his name Mark Schrick.

Mark has been a member of our CREST Team most recently since 1998 but was a member long before that when our Team was known as Corona-Norco *REACT*.

Mark died June 1 en route to the CREST General Membership Meeting which he NEVER missed serving as our Sergeant-at-Arms for many years although he lived a long distance away and had no transportation. He did what he loved to do and did it well. He was as reliable as a rock when giving him any assignment. Mark was heard giving a traffic report on his bus while heading for his Mom's place

just about one mile from our Team meeting place. He never reached Mom's place. He was found on the ground between the bus stop and Mom's.

I recall Mark when he had only a handheld police scanner and loved to listen to the calls every chance he got. He then got a CB radio and began monitoring and taking *REACT* calls. Eventually, he progressed to GMRS where he was a cornerstone of our efforts in monitoring for emergency calls and acting as one of our valuable Traffic Watch Monitors giving road information to commuters daily. He got his own personal GMRS call sign (WPOJ436) and could always be counted on to be there if we needed him.

During the 2005 *REACT* International Convention hosted by our Team he tried several times until he passed his Amateur Radio License testing and received the call KI6ADI. He kidded ADI stood for "any damn idiot". Never did I see him without his humor or quick smile.

I spoke with Mark on the (GMRS) radio Wednesday. He had asked for my help in joining ARRL. His computer was broken and he wanted badly to join and belong. I offered to help him. During the conversation, he said he had the phone number for ARRL and, thanks for my offer, but he'll just call them and do it over the phone. He did. The next day (yester-

day), I received a phone call from him all excited and relaying his ARRL membership number 2000186116 to me. He was very proud of his accomplishments and wanted his "Mum" to be proud of him too.

Nothing kept him down. He attacked the *REACT* Emergency Communications Course and took both the closed-book test and the open-book test the same day. He took both tests closed-book. While he didn't receive a passing score he was planning on a retake soon. This course is a monumental step for a friend I met when he had only a hand-held scanner.

Mark never missed a Team event or meeting. His favorite event was working the Ramada Express Off-Road Rally in the Grand Canyon which he worked side-by-side with one of his many mentors, Rob Clark. Mark could not wait to work the Rally this year because he was a ham now. He never worked part of an event; he worked it from start to stop as so many of the dedicated members of CREST *REACT* do. He lived and died CREST *REACT*. This was his only true passion in life and he did it well. Another event Mark was fond of was the Temecula Tractor Races where this year he got to ride on Ed's old 1946 Farmall tractor - a symbol of Mark's childhood.

Like so many of our silent mics, Mark will surely be

missed as there is no replacing our Bloodhound.

Mark was like glue. He stuck to us all through the good and the bad and was a friend you could count on no matter what the situation. He will long be remembered as "9,5" by literally hundreds of communicators. He is survived by Jackie "Mom" Schrick of Corona, his brother Marvin Schrick of Boulder City, Nevada, his nephews Jerry Schrick of Yucaipa and Terry Schrick of Norco, and numerous cousins whom he loved dearly.

Mark has now transferred to the Eternal Rest *REACT* Team along with our other departed members Frank (6), Steve (36), Goody (42), Jim (45), Maureen (77), and Mary (329). God Bless them all.

Ed, President  
CREST COMMUNICATIONS  
*REACT* TEAM #4252  
Corona, California

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## Dean Pace



**Dean L. Pace: March 17, 1925 - February 17, 2006**

Dean L. Pace (DCR Unit 37, KAD 6878) joined Dallas County *REACT* in 1974, and

spent countless hours volunteering with our Team. His activities included monitoring CB Channel 9 and GMRS, working our booth at Texas Stadium, Special Olympics, Free Ride Home program, White Rock Marathon, countless walks, duathlons, and triathlons, and representing DCR at charity bingo. Dean also served a term on the DCR Board of Directors and for many years was "Country Store" keeper.

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### Bill Hunsberger



### William Hunsberger, Captain Unit 78, Reading, Pennsylvania, *REACT* Team C604

Family, Friends, members of Reading *REACT* Team C604, and the community experienced a great loss with the passing William Hunsberger. Members of the Team called him leader, mentor, and friend.

Since I became a member of Reading *REACT* he was a mentor and an inspiration to me. For years he was the one that Reading Police Department looked to make sure things were covered. As he did

so often, he calmly explained to us how the Team was going to do so much with so little resources. He skillfully insured that each member understood what they needed to do. He knew how to handle unique members, like me, that were eager and often surprised him with new ideas at all the wrong times. He has been the steady rock for a Team and a dependable friend for the members. He spent hours monitoring emergency frequencies. He was an example to us on handling emergency calls and interference on the radio. Still he found time to help each of us with emergencies in our personal lives.

There was a lighter side to William. He would let us know when we were ready and poised for each event. It was at that time, when we needed it most, he would quickly relieve the tension in the air with his humor. There was always assurance that all was well when Unit 78 was on the air.

The greatest honor I personally received within *REACT* is his signature prominently inscribed on my application for life membership. Everyone will surely miss his laughter, guidance and presence. We are assured there will be someone monitoring when we call for help, from the community of silent mics.

Alfred M. Fronefield  
Reading *REACT* Unit 31  
*REACT* LM 508

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From the 6/2/2006 Email News :

### 2006 NORTH ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON OFFICIALLY UNDER WAY

Scientists within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predict an 80-percent chance of an above-normal 2006 north Atlantic hurricane/tropical storm season, which runs from June 1 through November 30. A repeat performance of the devastating 2005 season is unlikely, however.

Weather experts at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, National Hurricane Center and Climate Prediction Center produced this year's outlook: [www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/outlooks/hurricane.shtml](http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/outlooks/hurricane.shtml).

"For the 2006 north Atlantic hurricane season NOAA is predicting 13 to 16 named storms, with eight to 10 becoming hurricanes, of which four to six could become 'major' hurricanes of Category 3 strength or higher," says NOAA Administrator Conrad Lautenbacher.

The Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) [www.hwn.org](http://www.hwn.org) activates on 14.325 MHz when major tropical storms threaten the US. It works in with WX4NHC [www.wx4nhc.org](http://www.wx4nhc.org) at the National Hurricane Center to relay real-time ground-level weather data to forecasters.

On average, the north Atlantic hurricane season produces 11 named storms, with six becoming hurricanes, including two major hurricanes. In 2005, the Atlantic hurricane season experienced a record 28 storms, including 15 hurricanes. Seven were "major," and a record four hurricanes hit the US.

While NOAA is not forecasting a rerun of last year's season, the potential for hurricanes to strike the US is "high," Lautenbacher said.

The first named storm of the 2006 season was "Alberto." The name "Katrina" has been removed from the list of storm names.

### **AMATEUR RADIO VOLUNTEERS RESPOND FOLLOWING INDONESIAN EARTHQUAKE**

Amateur Radio operators in Indonesia are providing emergency communication for relief operations in the wake of a 6.3 magnitude earthquake May 27 affecting Yogyakarta and surrounding area. The quake has left more than 6200 people dead, injured more than 30,000 and leveled entire communities. Some 650,000 people are reported homeless. Indonesia's International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) membership, the Organization of Amateur Radio for Indonesia (ORARI) has been coordinating an emergency communication network comprised of so-called "Zulu Stations" and individual volunteer radio amateurs. As is the practice in In-

donesia, ORARI has designated several zulu-suffix emergency communication stations to handle disaster-related traffic on HF and VHF.

"Beside several local emergency zulu stations and operators, there is an emergency zulu station portable from Jakarta, YC0ZRA, operated by Achmad Sanusi, YCOLJH, and Budi Sabara, YCOCSR," reports Wyn Purwinto, AB2QV. A native of Indonesia, Purwinto has been gathering information on the disaster response from his home in New York. He says the portable station also supports the Indonesian Offroad Federation (IOF) with its heavy-duty all wheel drive vehicles. IOF volunteers transported food and supplies following the 2004 tsunami.

### **SKYWARN VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE NOAA ENVIRONMENTAL HERO AWARD**

South Florida SKYWARN Coordinator Don Morris, KG4JHH, of Miami, and his South Florida SKYWARN Team have received a 2006 NOAA Environmental Hero Award for outstanding volunteer service during the 2005 hurricane season.

Morris and his SKYWARN Team volunteered more than 100 hours to staff Amateur Radio station WX4MIA, located at the NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office in Miami. The volunteers gathered real-time hurricane dam-

age and weather reports, disseminated NWS information and warnings and verified NWS warnings with on-the-spot information.

"The intent of the award is to recognize all of us who have worked on SKYWARN and/or WX4MIA," said Morris, who accepted the plaque during a May 22 presentation. "Local Amateur Radio is the main infrastructure we depend on for SKYWARN. It is way cool to be part of it." Morris also credited those who filed reports by telephone, Internet or fax or who have "just been ready if needed."

Along with other SKYWARN volunteers and even family members, Morris kept the WX4MIA severe weather net in constant operation as Hurricane Katrina moved ashore near Hallandale Beach and then southwest across Miami-Dade County. He did the same thing for Hurricane Wilma, staying all night right through landfall around 6 AM in Collier County and through noon when Wilma finally moved off the Palm Beach County coastline near Jupiter.

Over the years, NOAA said, Morris has volunteered hundreds of hours as "the voice" of WX4MIA, soliciting storm reports and disseminating the latest warnings and statements for hurricanes and severe storms.

Established in 1995 and given annually in conjunction with Earth Day, the Environmental Hero Award is presented to

individuals and organizations volunteering their time and energy to help NOAA carry out its mission.--NOAA; Evelyn Gauzens, W4WYR

### **From the 5/17/06 ARES E-letter by Rick Palm, K1CE**

[Editor Palm introduces the following statement on the need for training. "On the eve of hurricane season here in Dixie, the following are the timely observations of Daisy Crepeau, KT4KW, and Ray Crepeau, K1HG, who were deployed to Hancock County, Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina, and to Palm Beach County, Florida, in the wake of Hurricane Wilma last season." This piece specifically refers to ham operators and the ARRL, but is also relevant to *REACT*.]

**Training:** No longer is the ham with an HT adequately able to respond. Nor is the ham with mobile equipment or even a radio equipped "jump kit." Amateur operators need to be adequately trained. The ARRL ARECC courses should be required, period. FEMA training, consisting of courses ICS 700, 800, 100, and 200 also should be required. Hams need to understand and be able to operate under the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Training to operate under extreme stress is needed.

We saw a new ham arrive who didn't understand that two-way radio communication required

releasing the PTT button to hear the other party. This individual also needed a crash course in the phonetic alphabet. An extreme case perhaps, but such operators were liabilities, not assets. Proper training and credentialing would prevent this.

**Credentialing:** FEMA, most state Emergency Management departments, law enforcement agencies, and even the Red Cross do not recognize hams with a local badge. ...

**Resource Typing:** We need a system of Amateur Radio "resource types" that FEMA (or anyone needing communications support) can request when needed. See the work of the World Radio Relay League and their idea of "Amateur Radio Communications Teams" (ARCT) <[www.emcomm.org](http://www.emcomm.org)> and <[www.wrrl.org](http://www.wrrl.org)>. FEMA is in the process of specifying "resources." We need to be in that system.

**Deployment Tasking:** Pre-departure briefings covering assignments, duties and responsibilities in the deployed area, and conditions there, should be plainly explained and understood. When we went to Mississippi we were sent to the wrong place and spent half a day finding where we were to go.

**Message Handling:** Passing messages from point A to point B is the primary mission during emergency responses. Butchering of messages passed to the EOC or to action personnel occurred in Mississippi.

So, message handling training is absolutely necessary: The radiogram format gets the job done.

**Recognition:** The Red Cross is mandated by the federal government to manage shelter care and mass feeding of disaster casualties. The ARRL has many MOUs with a number of different agencies both federal and private. But in the real world they don't mean a thing. The Red Cross prefers to use persons who have been through their training sequences. FEMA couldn't care less about hams in spite of an MOU. And the list goes on and on. The ARRL needs to become recognized as a "Non Government Organization" (NGO), which will be called upon. – Ray Crepeau, K1HG, and Daisy Crepeau, KT4KW

### **Bryce Rummery K1GAX, Maine SEC, comments on the above in his May SECgram:**

"Much of what was said here comes down to training. How good is the training program in your county or district. Now is the time for training and not when a disaster happens. We need to learn from the mistakes of others and not repeat those same mistakes ourselves! We all don't need to reinvent the wheel. As has been said: 'Those who ignore the mistakes of history are doomed to repeat them'."

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(from p. 5)

Free copies of the DVD (FEMA 500) and the Are You Ready guides (IS-22 and IS-22FG) are available through the FEMA Distribution Center at: (800) 480-2520. Requests are currently limited to one DVD per caller.

"Video files, a transcript, and the guide can also be downloaded from:

<[www.fema.gov/areyouready/](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/)>."

Sounds like a good place to start.

Take a look at the list at <<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/S/crslist.asp>>. For some offerings you will be taken to another site because of demand, but you *can* get there from here. Tailor the course to your needs and the needs of your Team. Check with your EOC for recommendations. And don't forget National SOS (p. 6 this issue).



JEB BUSH  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA

## Amateur Radio Month

WHEREAS, Florida is home to a large number of licensed Amateur Radio operators; and

WHEREAS, Florida amateur radio operators aid the public when emergency communication is needed; and

WHEREAS, amateur radio hobbyists communicate with fellow enthusiasts throughout the world, establishing a medium that improves international relations; and

WHEREAS, amateur radio operators are involved in programs that assist the rehabilitation of disabled individuals in the development of radio as a hobby; and

WHEREAS, during the American Radio Relay League's Field Day emergency preparedness exercise, June 24 - 25, 2006, Amateur Radio operators will practice their communication skills to ensure their ability to respond effectively during an emergency;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jeb Bush, Governor of the state of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing June 2006 as Amateur Radio Month.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the state of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capital, this 30<sup>th</sup> day of May in the year two thousand six.

*Jeb Bush*  
GOVERNOR