

August 2, 2020



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NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

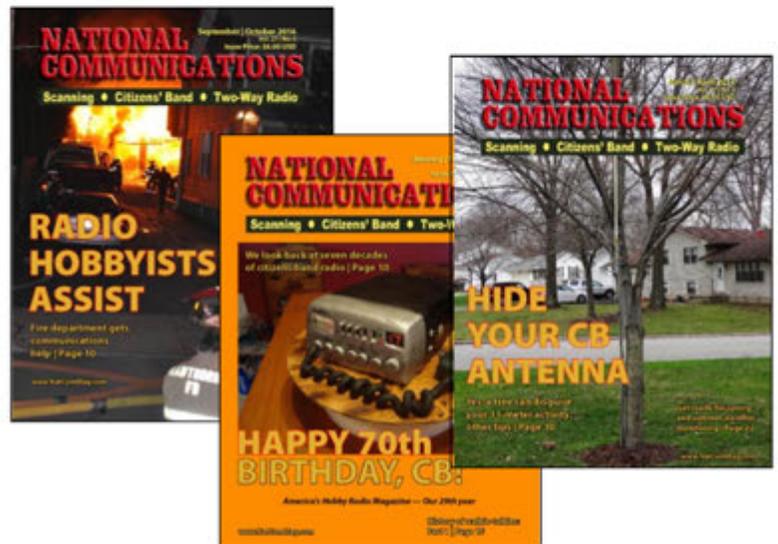
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A Word from the Editor

Will Stanley, Editor, The *REACTer*

August is National Night Out!

If you are unfamiliar with this event, it is an evening in which neighbors get out and greet each other, party, talk, have fun and more in an effort to get to know your area. This tends to help keep crime down in your neighborhood.

From NationalNightOut.com: "National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Millions of neighbors take part in National Night Out across thousands of communities from all fifty states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide on the first Tuesday in August (Texas and select areas celebrate on the first Tuesday in October). Neighborhoods host block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts and various other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events, visits from emergency personnel, exhibits and much, much more."

So, if you are not a part of this annual event - get started!



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William Stanley
Editor

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Your article and photo submissions are vital to our success! Articles, high resolution photos and inquiries about advertising in The REACTer can be emailed to: editor@theREACTer.com

The *REACTer* magazine is available and open to all interested persons at: www.thereacter.com

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SUBMITTING **TEAM NEWS**

Is EASY!

Just follow this guideline...

NAME of Person Reporting— **TEAM NUMBER**— **TEAM LOCATION**

DESCRIPTION of **ACTIVITIES** (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How)

Provide this info for each event in your report

INCLUDE PICTURES—attach them to your email—don't send .PDFs

(Caption: **WHO**, **WHAT** and **WHERE** each picture shows)

NAME of Photographer

SEND the entire report (with pictures attached) to:

EDITOR@THEREACTER.COM

SEE HOW EASY THAT WAS?

So Easy, even a caveman could do it! (sorry, Geico, I couldn't resist)



ATTENTION:
ALL REACT MEMBERS
and
ALL HAM OPERATORS



**YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US
ON THE
REACT INTERNATIONAL
WORLDWIDE NET
EVERY TUESDAY AT 9 P.M. EST**

Contact nets@REACTIntl.org
for information on how
to get on the net





NEWS

FROM THE

FRONT LINES

Correction:

In last month's issue, we identified the Oklahoma County *REACT* member in this picture as John Goodman. His name is actually Harry Goodman. We apologize for the error.



San Angelo *REACT*
(Texas)

Submitted by King Walker

San Angelo *REACT* has been kept busy!

A lady was driving down the street when she had a medical problem. She lost control of her car and her Ford took out two power poles along the highway in town. Six police units were sent back to service due to *REACT*'s assistance. Five *REACT* members closed down a four lane highway section for three blocks.

In July, the Team assisted San Angelo PD and AEP

in directing traffic at some downed power lines. The location was between University and Knickerbocker on Jackson Street, in San Angelo Texas.

We were there for seven hours. That freed up two supervisors (one from SAPD and one from Angelo State University PD) and two more officers.

Someone must have been studying utility diagrams as this one was the trifecta! The crash took out a Three Phase line, a Two Phase line, a cable and such and was right next to a fire hydrant and a gas line.



Extra points were awarded for the street light on the pole. The Nissan that hit the pole was pushed by an accident with a vehicle pulling out

of the restaurant nearby.

Four *REACT* Team members were on site.



York County REACT

(Pennsylvania)

Submitted by Stan Walters

York County *REACT* has kept itself busy during this time of Covid. We are about to restart our monthly meetings, which have been on hold for the past several months.

We have been out helping with traffic at Food Distribution sites. Most of the regular events we do have been cancelled. The first food distribution event was, to put it lightly, a mess. The venue was too small for the number of cars that arrived and traffic control was almost non-existent.

York County *REACT* stepped in to help with the second event. We found a much better, larger venue, and established 'cone lanes' to help direct traffic and things went much better.

We have been involved in finishing out the local EOC, We worked with the EMA people to get this done. Nearly every volunteer group is a part of YARS (York Ares Races Skywarn). Anybody wanting to help with any event goes through this agency. It is a good system.

As for fundraising, Pennsylvania has a law that mandates all electronics must be recycled rather than being disposed of. Our Team operates a computer recycling service. We take in old computers and take them apart, then sell the pieces to a recycler. It doesn't provide a large amount of money but it helps the Team with expenses.

Blackberry REACT

(California)

Submitted by John Mosby

As is probably true everywhere, most of the events that our Team does have been cancelled, so the Team has some downtime. We are filling part of that time with online training, so we make sure that everybody participating in any multi-agency event is doing thing the same way.

Federal City REACT

(Washington DC)

Submitted by Darrell Paris

Federal City *REACT* is using this time of Covid to make sure our radios and equipment are up to date and functioning correctly.

We still have our mobile units out and about and sometimes they run into incidents that require assistance. We help as best as we are able.

Heartland REACT

(Nebraska)

Submitted by Jeremy Barrett

Members of Heartland *REACT* helped on July 19th with the annual Omaha Triathlon.

The Team fielded 14 members and performed tasks such as blocking entrances into the park, traffic control, directing participants on the course, and kept track of participants throughout the entire race.



Members of Heartland REACT monitoring the route of the Omaha Triathlon



A Heartland REACT vehicle blocking off the Triathlon route from regular traffic

They were out from 4:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m., putting in a total of 84 manhours.

The event was held at Omaha's Standing Bear Lake.



Training for the Future

Kirk Paxson
RI Traffic System Manager

Why train?

Honestly, writing this column is a good example. I have never trained to be a columnist, so I ask you, the reader, to set your expectations a little lower than you would expect from a more accomplished writer.

Here's the catch, why should a *REACT* volunteer train? Can't they just fall back on the excuse I was not trained to do that, they asked for a volunteer and here I am standing in sandals, black shorts and a black shirt on a road covered by broken glass from a motor vehicle accident to help direct traffic at night. Or how about your team has been asked to provide communications support for a race, and a giant dog starts chasing the runners, you as a radio operator call into net control to report the incident, but you are barely readable so you use your own homebrew phonetics to announce that a "mad dog is loose" and you with limited communications experience spells "mad" with "Male Alpha Dog".

Of course, these are whimsical illustrations that I hope would never occur, but the point is that every *REACT* volunteer should strive to be professional in every way. Being a professional, begins with learning, applying what you learned to specific or similar situations you are in and then practicing it over and over again until you are proficient.

Now that I have attempted to establish training is necessary to increase individual professionalism, I think it is important to establish who a *REACT* volunteer is and what they do. Even before I joined *REACT*, I felt *REACT* Teams and members were modern day Minutemen, UShistory.org has a concise history of the minuteman from as early as 1645. The article describes minutemen as a small hand-picked elite force which were required to be highly mobile and able to assemble quickly. They were also chosen for their enthusiasm and reliability to defend their communities.¹

REACT teams are very similar to their counterparts, the minutemen. The minuteman concept is not

unique to the United States, however. Most countries had groups of volunteers who formed to defend and protect the citizens of their community. *REACT* teams are founded on this same principal - to serve a local purpose for the community they live in within the guidelines of *REACT* Bylaws and the Team Charter agreement. The article points out that a serious problem with groups of minutemen was lack of central leadership.

This is not the case with *REACT* teams as there is a command structure that is in place to help direct an all-volunteer force of enthusiastic radio communicators to become more proficient in their radio communications skills as well as how to provide their service to the community.

I have been asked 'what *REACT* training courses should I take?'

To begin with it is essential to understand communications basics.

It does not matter if you use a citizen's band radio or an amateur hi frequency radio, the use of proper phonetics and pro-words is essential to being a professional. The first course I would recommend is 101 Emergency Communications, however, you should consult with your team leadership. All teams serve a local purpose and other training may be more important initially. After this, team leadership and Regional Directors should determine which courses and hands on training is most needed. It would not hurt to include the team members in on these discussions so you have better buy-in from the members. Director/Secretary/Training Committee John Mahon can also be a valuable resource to teams as he not only was involved in the development of the training, he has been working at taking the courses and associated tests also.

In a future article I will expand on Phonetics and get into the details of Pro-Word usage in radio communications. Here is a list of *REACT* Courses that are available. There are also others available from DHS/FEMA and ARRL. I do recommend *REACT*

courses because they will expose you to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) for *REACT* Operations. The *REACT* courses are at this link <https://reactintl.org/training/> and are listed below.

Unless your team leadership says otherwise I suggest your take the EMCOMM course at this link <https://reactintl.org/training/emcom/> first. I have combined all the course material in one PDF that you can view or download here:

<https://bit.ly/EMCOMM-REACT>.

If any teams want to teach this course in their classroom with at least three participants, printed copies of this course book can be made available. Contact the training committee for more information:

Training@REACTIntl.org.

¹Ronemus, Andrew. "Minutemen." *US History*, www.ushistory.org/people/minutemen.htm

Here is the list of *REACT* Training courses that are currently available:

- 101 Emergency Communications - An in-depth coverage of the theory, equipment, and operating practices for emergency communications in the Amateur and Personal Radio Services.
- 102 Introduction to Land Search and Rescue - Introduces the member to procedures used during searches for missing persons and to detection of and search for electronic distress beacons.
- 103B Protecting Personal and Sensitive Information - Provides guidelines for the protecting of personal information and operationally sensitive information during emergency operations.
- 103C Using the Zello Voice Traffic and Operations Nets - Covers technical procedures for installation and use of the Zello internet radio application for emergency communications nets.
- 104 Monitoring – An in-depth coverage of procedures for monitoring emergency communications frequencies and handling calls for assistance or reports of emergency situations by the general public and by emergency beacons.
- 105 Introduction to Net Operations – Introduces the member to the functions, procedures, and types of formal emergency communications nets.
- 106B Family Radio Service – An introduction to

the use of Family Radio Service radios for emergency communications, including relevant radio theory, and the current FCC rules for this service.

- 109A Messages – The Radiogram – An in-depth coverage of the format and content of the international standard Amateur Radio radiogram as used in emergency communications.
- 109B Messages – ICS 213 General Message – An in-depth coverage of the format and content of the ICS 213 message, including the use of standard templates for ICS 213 messages.
- 110 Deployment Awareness – Introduces members to how and when a Team deploys to do work in major emergencies and disasters and to the challenges of working in the disaster environment.
- 111 Basics of Drills and Exercises – Introduces the member to the types, purposes, and composition of exercises that can be used for training at the Team level and to *REACT's* ALERTEX series of online international exercises.
- 113 Disaster Basics – An overview of the most common types of disasters that *REACT* Teams may experience and the hazards and impacts these events generate that may influence how response and recovery operations are conducted.
- 114 Alerting – A description of *REACT* International's emergency alerting system and guidelines for Teams in establishing their own alerting systems for emergency response.
- 115 The Emergency Operations Plan – Describes the role and functions of emergency operations plans in guiding response, and addresses the process Team's should use in writing a Team emergency Operations Plan.
- 116 Introduction to Net Control – Introduces the member to the role of Net Control Stations in managing effective radio communications in disasters and addresses the Net Control Station's duties and procedures.
- 117 Spot Reporting – Covers how, when, and to whom to report weather and disaster impacts using short reports on the radiogram format.
- 120 *REACT* Traffic System Operator Basic Familiarization – Provides an overview of how *REACT's* system for originating, transmitting, and delivering alerts, warnings, and formal messages functions.



Silent Mics



*With a heavy heart, **The REACTer** wishes to notify our **REACT** family of the passing of these members*



Diane Neff

1948 - 2020

Diane Neff, a member of Dresden *REACT* #4811, passed away on July 14, 2020.

Diane was born July 20, 1948 in Zanesville, OH and lived in Crooksville, OH. She was unmarried and has been a *REACT* member since 2017.

Diane liked eating out, playing bingo, going mushroom hunting with her 2 sisters, fishing and going to the movies.

Diane was a valuable member of Dresden *REACT* and will be missed by all.



Charles H. "Charlie" Roth

1964-2020

Heartland *REACT* is saddened to report that Charles "Charlie" H. Roth, passed away on Sunday, June 21, 2020.

Charlie was born on June 14, 1964. Charlie enjoyed newspaper photography, ham radio and storm chasing.

He was in his sixth year of service with Heartland *REACT* and served on the Board as well as Chief of Operations.

Over 50 *REACT* members (including some from Dodge County *REACT*) signed and presented a flag to Charlie's wife Laura Roth (Unit 93).

15 members from Heartland *REACT*, as well as the president (& family) from Dodge County *REACT*, attended Charlie's funeral in uniform and presented a final salute and radio call.

The men and women of Heartland *REACT* are forever grateful and proud to have served with Charlie and will never forget his service.

2020 Election Results

Elections were held for the Directors' seats for Regions 3, 6 and 9. Nominations were received and validated on April 1, 2020. Votes were counted at the June 1, 2020 Special Board Meeting.



Joe Zych was re-elected to the Director's seat for Region Three. Joe is a member of Star Mountain *REACT* in Tennessee.



Robby Goswami was re-elected to the Director's seat for Region Nine. Robby is a member of Trinidad & Tobago *REACT* Ltd.



There were no nominations for Region Six. Tom Jenkins applied for and was appointed to fulfill the unexpired term. Tom is a member of Valley Wide *REACT* in Idaho.

The Directors are elected for a three year term. Anyone appointed to a seat is appointed to fill out any unfulfilled term. Elections in 2021 will be for Regions 1, 4 and 7. If you are interested in running, get your nomination papers to *REACT* International no later than March 15, 2021. There can be no allowance for nominations received after that date. Make sure you allow for delays in mail or email.



Emergency Communications: Now What?

Keith McDonald, REACT Traffic 111

As a Communications Specialist involved in public safety, much of my week is spent communicating during emergencies. Generally, I am using handheld portable radios or mobile radios with vehicle-mounted repeaters or tower-mounted repeaters that have a continuous power supply. When a major catastrophe unfolds, I may be forced to transition from communicating during an emergency to emergency communications because the radio system power supply may have failed, the repeaters may have come offline due to infrastructure collapse. Now what?

Whether you are directly involved in public safety or affiliated with Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) like *REACT*, CERT, or the American Red Cross, it is recommended that you consider “Now what?” and contemplate what your options are if you are asked to help with radio communications.

The request to help may be to assist at a Medical Tent during a pre-planned road race and forward requests for EMS or for additional drinking water. The request may be to standby the Command Post and relay requests for manpower or equipment during an unplanned event. But what if the request is to hike to the top of a nearby hill and relay critical communications from a technical rescue team working in a ravine on the other side of the hill? This is usually the moment that you realize that there isn’t a road to the peak, there isn’t any electrical service, that anything that you bring has to be carried in... and you hadn’t really pre-planned for the potential need for Emergency Communications.

A major component of emergency communications is thinking and working outside of the box. Unusual circumstances often create unexpected problems that may ultimately require creative solutions. I’ll discuss a few of the solutions that I have found through personal experience.

Antennas: whether you are using a VHF portable or a UHF mobile, chances are that it uses a vertically polarized antenna. The antenna is mounted or used in

an upright position and the electromagnetic radio waves travel outward perpendicularly from the antenna when the radio transmits. Altering the angle or the length of the antenna can have dramatic effects on the antenna performance, but sometimes we will use the polarization characteristics to our advantage. If you were on a hilltop and communicating with a technical rescue team in a valley, this might be a good time to tilt the antenna at a 45 degree angle so that the radio waves descend into the valley, not pass over it. Increasing the antenna length may also increase your transmission and reception range.



Figure 1

In Figure 1, the radios are BOTH Baofeng UV-5R V2+ VHF / UHF Dual Band portable radios. The radio on the left is using the stock antenna and battery, while the radio on the right is using the BTECH BL-5L 3800mAh Lithium Ion Battery Pack, a Nagoya NA-771 16 inch Dual Band Antenna with 2.5dBi Gain, and a QHM22 Platinum Series Shoulder Microphone.

Another way to increase your antenna capabilities is to carry an adapter for using a mounted antenna.

In Figure 2, an SMA to UHF adapter cable can be used with the portable radio to connect to an external mounted antenna.



Figure 2



Figure 3

With the SMA to UHF adapter cable attached to the Baofeng UV-5R V2+ radio, I am ready to connect to an external antenna. Most magnetic mount antennas come with eighteen feet of cable so the magnetic mount can be placed much higher than the radio or outside of the shelter you may be using to avoid the sun or the rain, but having a steel surface available to use as a ground plane may also be an issue.

One solution that came out of my hilltop event was to purchase a 55 gallon drum galvanized steel drum cover for \$28 USD. (Figure 4) The cover is 24 inches in diameter and can be ordered without bung holes so it is very light weight. The drum cover has also come in handy when we have had to deploy with rental vehicles that were found to have aluminum bodies and the mag mount slides right off the roof.



Figure 4

Figure 5 shows the Baofeng UV-5R V2+ radio with the SMA to UHF adapter cable connected to the Nagoya UT-72 Super Loading Coil 19-Inch Magnetic Mount VHF/UHF (144/430Mhz) Antenna. The 19 inch Dual Band antenna increases the antenna gain by 3.5dBi.



Figure 5

If the hilltop assignment is anticipated to be several hours, another option may be adding an external power source. In Figure 6, I have added a Powerwerx PWR-box Portable Power Box

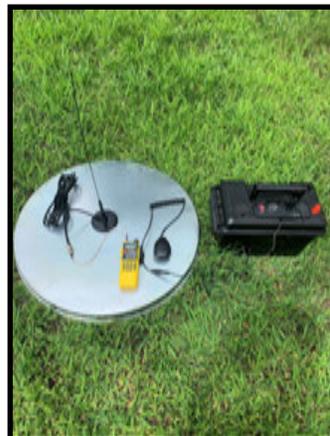


Figure 6

with a Bioenno 20 Ah battery and a BTECH BT1013 USB to 2.5MM battery charge port transformer cable to charge the Baofeng battery using the PWRbox.

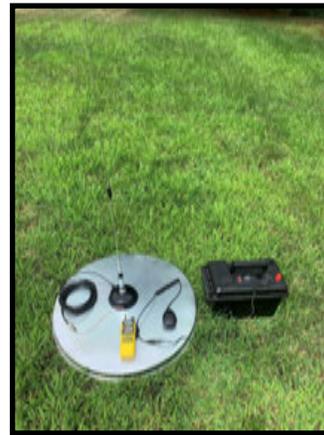


Figure 7

In Figure 7, I have switched to the Nagoya RB-50 NMO Magnetic Mount and installed the Nagoya TB-320A 144/220/430Mhz Triple Band Antenna. The 38.5 inch antenna increases the UHF gain to 5.5dBi. While the depicted radios are Baofeng, this concept of adaptability and expandability will work with any of my radios.

(Picture 08 - Figure 8: adding my Motorola XTS2500)

In Figure 8, I have removed the Baofeng portable radio and I have connected my encrypted Motorola Model III XTS2500 portable radio with the GPS microphone that I use for technical rescue callouts. But what if you need more than 5 watts?



Figure 8

(Picture 09 - Figure 9: adding the BTECH UV-25X4 Quad Band Mobile Radio)

If greater power and range are needed, it is just as easy for me to add the BTECH UV-25X4 25 watt Quad Band Mobile Radio to the system.

Whatever your communications forte, take a few moments to ponder your communications equipment and what your options are for power and portability. When your served agency calls you for help, you'll already have a functional communications plan in mind when you are faced with answering...

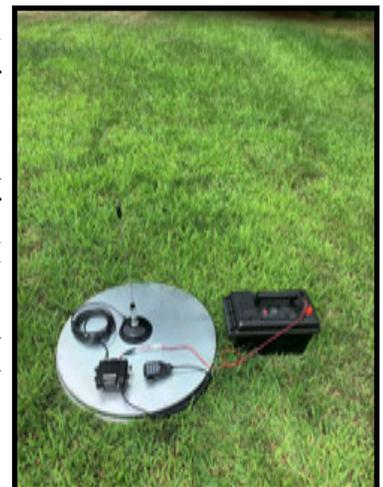


Figure 9

“Now what?”

REACT INTERNATIONAL WORLDWIDE ZELLO NET

Please join us every Saturday night at 9 pm EST
(8 pm during Daylight Savings Time) on the
REACT MEMBERS
Zello Channel

All Communicators Are Welcome!

NO LICENSE REQUIRED

use your Internet connected computer or smart phone.

The Zello app is available for download from <http://www.zello.com>



**Download the Zello Walkie-Talkie app for your platform.
Create an account with a username (i.e: a call sign) and
password, then add the *REACT MEMBERS* channel.**

Press the Push-to-Talk button to transmit.

**VOLUNTEER TO BE A
NET OPERATOR!**

REACT International Event Calendar

AUGUST 2020

1.....REACTer Published
1.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
4.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
8.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
11.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
15.....Deadline for September REACTer
15.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
18.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
22.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
25.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
29.....Zello World Wide Net ((:00 p.m. ET)

SEPTEMBER 2020

1.....REACTer Published
1.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
5.....Zello World WEide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
7.....**Labor Day (US)**
8.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
12.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
15.....Deadline for October REACTer
15.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
19.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
22.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
26.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
29.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)

OCTOBER 2020

1REACTer Published
3Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
6REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
10.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
13.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
15.....Deadline for November REACTer
17.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
20.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
24.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
27.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
31.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
31.....**Halloween (US)**

NOVEMBER 2020

1.....REACTer Published
3.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
7.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
10.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
14Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
15.....Deadline for December REACTer
17.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
21.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
24.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
26.....**Thanksgiving Day (US)**
28.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)

DECEMBER 2020

1.....REACTer Published
1.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
5.....Zello World WEide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
8.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
12.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
15.....Deadline for October REACTer
15.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
19.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
22.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
24.....**Christmas Eve**
25.....**Christmas**
26.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
29.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
31.....**New Years Eve**

January 2021

1.....**New Year's Day**
1.....REACTer Published
2.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
5.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
9.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
12.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
16.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
19.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
23.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
26.....REACT World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)
30.....Zello World Wide Net (9:00 p.m. ET)



To add items to this calendar, contact:

REACT International: 301-316-2900 (Inter-Office Phone: Ext 114)

email: editor@thereacter.com

Items on the calendar are as accurate as we can make them but are subject to change.

Any questions ... contact the person in charge of the event

Most National/International Holidays are now in the calendar. They are in CAPITAL PRINT

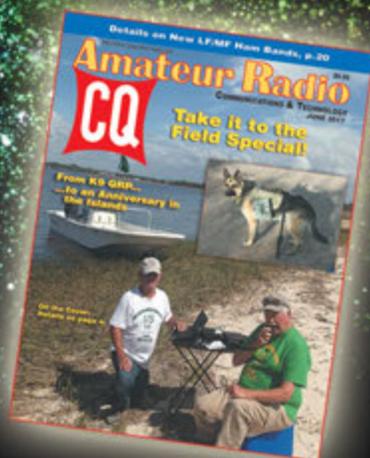


Amateur Radio



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