

June 2007



Newsletter of the County of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

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Captain's Corner

by Ken Bourne, W6HK, Chief Radio Officer

We are proud to offer our congratulations to OCSD Emergency Communications Coordinator Marten Miller, KF6ZLQ, and Randy Benicky, N6PRL, who received Orange County EMS awards on May 23, 2007.

The County of Orange Health Care Agency, Health Disaster Management, Emergency Medical Services, recognized Marten for "Exceptional Performance: Teamwork in EMS."

Marten was nominated for the award because of his Orange County Communications work. He has worked for the County for 20 years, starting as a Communications Coordinator II with Control One in 1985, and working his way up to Supervising Communications Coordinator in 1988, then Communications Training Officer in 1999, and to Emergency Communications Coordinator a few months ago.

In his 11 years as the Training Officer, Marten provided radio communications training classes to prospective Mobile Intensive Care Nurses and to paramedics who are new to Orange County, as well as those persons in paramedic training. Marten has also had lead responsibility for training City and County law enforcement, fire services, lifeguard, paramedic, and public-works personnel on the operation of the 800-MHz system, as well as interfacing with HCA and Emergency Management. Marten has also been the Ballot Transportation Project Manager for the past several elections, coordinating the movement of

ballots from Collection Centers to the Vote Tally Center.

EMS presented Randy with the Heart-Saver Award for an incident in January 2006. At that time, while

Randy was serving as an OCSD Sergeant at the Central Justice Center, a juror on the third floor was having a heart attack. Randy went to the OCSD security desk and picked up an AED (automated external defibrillator). He put the pads on the victim, the AED immediately started charging, and Randy issued a shock. Sgt. Daniel Lurie and Sheriff Special Officer (SSO) Robert Sims started CPR. After one minute the AED assessed the victim again and started charging. Randy issued a second shock and revived the victim.



OCSD ECC Marten Miller, KF6ZLQ (right) receives EMS award

**The Next
OCRACES
Meeting is**

**June 4, 2007
1930 Hours**

**840 N. Eckhoff St.,
Suite 104, Orange**

**Featured Speaker:
Ralph Sbragia,
W6CSP, regarding
Field Day**



Orange County Sheriff's Department
Michael S. Carona, Sheriff-Coroner



OCSD Sgt. Randy Benicky, N6PRL (second from right) receives EMS HeartSaver Award. The other recipients were Sgt. Daniel Lurie and SSO Robert Sims

The Pebble in the Pond Syndrome

by Ralph Sbragia, CSP, W6CSP, Radio Officer

We've all heard the adage: "Drop a pebble in a pond and watch the ripples spread." When it comes to safety in our lives, sometimes we fail to consider seriously the potential ramifications of our actions. Take the following quote from a Saturday, May 12, 2007, article reporting on the Santa Catalina Island fire on the Fox News Web site by Associated Press Reporter Gillian Flaccus:

"The fire appeared to have been ignited by contractors working on antennas at a radio station in the island's interior, Avalon Fire Chief Steven Hoefs said. Bill Agresta, chief engineer at station KBRT-AM, said three contractors had been cutting steel antenna cable with a gas-powered circular saw Thursday when the fire ignited. Agresta said he saw a small blaze and ran inside the station to call 911. By the time he returned, it had moved several hundred feet downhill and engulfed the contractors' tool truck."

Cutting steel antenna cable with any circular saw seems like a simple enough activity, something similar to activities we all have done at one time or another. But when you combine the sparks from the metal-cutting blade with tinder-dry fuel and dry gusty winds, you have a recipe for disaster known as the Fire Triangle: Heat, Fuel, Oxygen. Covering the work area with noncombustible fire blankets or wetting it down might have been all the crew needed to do to break the triangle. The property owner clearing combustible brush from around the base of the antenna tower would have had the same result. Regardless of the method chosen, any number of controls were available that would have prevented a fire that cost one family their home and several businesses their out buildings, all that in addition to the costs of deploying, feeding (both personnel and equipment), and demobilizing hundreds of fire fighters and apparatus to the island.

That fact that this massive natural disaster had its cause in activities being performed by communications professionals led me to wonder if it were not time for us as amateur radio operators to review three common areas of potential hazards for us:

Fire Prevention

Fire prevention sounds easy enough: Keep fuels, heat, and oxygen away from each other. Since we're all surrounded by oxygen, then it really comes down to keeping heat away from any fuel source. Unfortunately, as was demonstrated in Catalina, this is not always as self evident as we might believe. Fire safety really involves developing two habits: Store combustibles and flammables properly; and be constantly aware of ignition sources.

Store combustibles (flash point >100°F) in a well ordered manner relatively free of dust or lint and away from significant heat sources. Flammables with their flash points below 100°F must not only be stored in proper safety-type containers, but should be stored well away or even in a separate location from any source of heat or spark.

Being aware of ignition sources means more than just paying attention before and during an activity that produces sparks. We need to constantly remember the stationary sources (such as pilot lights, burners that electronically light automatically, light and other switches, etc.). Even plugging in certain appliances (such as wall adapters) can produce a spark as the utility side of the transformer draws current to charge.

Fall Prevention

We've each done it: worked on a roof edge without any protection, climbed an "A" frame ladder and stood on the steps that are marked "Danger – Not a Step" or used that same ladder to access an elevated area by leaning it up against a vertical surface.

Falls kill more of us in the United States, both at home and on the job, than just about any other unintentional injury except motor vehicle collisions. (For the most recent period studied and published (1996-1998)

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The Pebble in the Pond Syndrome *Continued from page 2*

motor-vehicle collisions resulted in approximately 18 deaths per 100,000 population per year while falls resulted in almost five deaths (although this number has been gradually increasing from 1992 to 1998).

So how do we protect ourselves from fatal falls? First, use ladders the way they are designed and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Not the right ladder for the job? Rent, borrow, or purchase the right one. Uneven surface? Use ladder accessories that adjust the legs and outriggers for more stability. Most importantly, don't use improvised ladders (i.e., the bookshelf, kitchen cabinets, or washing machine) to reach items out of reach—get a ladder.

But proper ladder use is only one way we protect ourselves from falls. We also need to protect ourselves any time we are more than 6 feet above another level. A 6-foot fall can produce significant energies that may result in broken bones, internal injuries, and or death. When working at elevations, be aware of your surroundings: Is there a guard railing at the edge? Is it in good condition and of adequate construction? Is the working surface clean of grit, grease, and tools that could lead to a trip and fall? If the edge is unprotected, are you maintaining an adequate distance from it or do you need a personal fall-arrest system? Are we working alone, or do we have someone with us to observe if we get distracted and expose ourselves to a dangerous fall?

Protection From Energy Sources

As hams, we work around and maybe even take for granted the killing ability of electricity, even household voltages. But electricity is only one form of energy (although probably the most common) we need to be aware of. In our homes and shacks we can encounter hydraulic pressure, gravitational energy (such as heavy boxes stored above head height or a vehicle on jacks), and compressed gases (such as various products purchased in spray cans).

We protect ourselves for energy sources via Lock Out, Tag Out, or LOTO. Using LOTO can be as easy as unplugging an appliance or radio before we begin to remove the covers, grounding capacitors inside a device, pulling (or at least turning off and tagging) the circuit breaker for the branch circuit we're about to work on, or putting the vehicle on stands and chocking any tires still on the ground.

Wrapping Up

It may seem self evident, but in addition to the actions discussed above, we must also make sure that we are at our best when performing activities that involve injury risks. That means being aware that we are properly hydrated and protecting ourselves from environmental sources of heat or cold that could affect our judgment; taking into account our use of prescription or over-the-counter medication that could affect our alertness and attention and, lastly, being aware that even a small amount of alcohol can affect our judgment and ability to recognize hazards. Alcohol can come from more than just the traditional sources, too. There are new malted beverages packaged to look like the popular energy drinks, yet they contain up to 7.5% alcohol.

One cannot completely cover all the potential hazards and controls related to these three subjects in just a few pages. I hope this article will get you thinking about what and how you do what you do and what risks you are taking. We all need to be aware of the distant results a pebble can have when dropped in a pond.

Next OCRACES Meeting: June 4, 2007

.The next County of Orange RACES meeting will be on Monday, June 7, 2007, at 7:30 PM, at OCSD/ Communications, 840 N. Eckhoff Street, Suite 104, in Orange. Radio Officer Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP, will review our missions and goals for Field Day (April 23-24). If time permits, we will watch a very interesting documentary on "Civil Defense: The War at Home."

OCRACES Field Day 2007

by Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP, Radio Officer

Field Day 2007 will be, as always, the last full weekend in June, or Saturday the 23rd through Sunday the 24th. OCRACES will once again operate from the highest elevation point in Craig Park in Fullerton (near Brea). Our primary mission will be to keep two operating stations on the air throughout the 24 hours of the event. The equipment to be used for this mission will be the OCRACES Communications Van and W6CSP's Communications Trailer. One aspect of this mission will be the use of two High Sierra screwdriver antennas in close proximity while on different bands and to see how this affects the operating stations.

Secondary missions will include:

- ◆ To conduct propagation experiments with a variety of nontraditional field-deployable antennas.
- ◆ To conduct experiments with the remote operations of an HF transceiver via a laptop and wireless connection.
- ◆ To host as many visitors and guests as possible throughout the weekend.
- ◆ To have an enjoyable and well-attended picnic supper on Saturday of the event.
- ◆ To have each OCRACES member attend for as much time as possible to become familiar with the field deployment of the van and the operations of the equipment contained within.

At the May OCRACES breakfast there was some discussion that Placentia RACES may join us as part of a mutual-aid exercise, but this has yet to be confirmed. Look for more information via e-mail in the near future, if you have not already received some.

Robert Stoffel Named Division Director

. We are excited to announce that Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ, is the new Director for the Orange County Sheriff's Department, Communications Division.

Robert began his career with the County of Orange in the 1980s as an extra-help employee at Control One. He started working full-time in November 1989, and served as the Chief of Operations at Control One until he was appointed Emergency Communications Coordinator. In 2005, Robert was promoted to Assistant Director for the OCS D Communications Division.

In his various positions, Robert has worked closely with several high-level organizations including the Orange County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association, the Orange County Fire Chief's Association, California Fire Chief's Association, SONGS, American Red Cross, CHP, CPRA, and HCA/EMS. In addition, Robert has provided leadership to OCRACES, and served as liaison to city RACES organizations in Orange County.



OCRACES to Exhibit at OC Fair on July 31st

County of Orange RACES will exhibit its capabilities on July 31, 2007, from 5:00 PM until 11:00 PM, at the Ham Radio Booth at the Orange County Fair. This will be an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to the public how radio amateurs provide communications during times of disaster.

The Ham Radio Booth will be open every day (July 13th through August 5th) and during all hours of the Fair. City RACES units and other amateur radio organizations are scheduled to exhibit. Besides demonstrating emergency communications capabilities, all groups will explain the many aspects of amateur radio to the public. We especially want to introduce amateur radio to young people, and to recruit new RACES members from the radio amateurs who visit the booth.

Watching The Web

*Web Sites of Interest to RACES Personnel
by Ken Bourne, W6HK, Chief Radio Officer*

Digital Dan's Disaster Links
<http://www.disasterlinks.net/>

Digital Dan's Disaster Links

CBS News Producer and Technologist "Digital Dan" Dubno created and maintains a portal at <http://www.disasterlinks.net> covering hundreds of disaster links ranging from biological weapons and oil spills to tsunamis and typhoons. Categories include:

- ◆ Disasters—Comprehensive
- ◆ Airplane Disasters
- ◆ Avalanche
- ◆ Biological & Chemical Weapons/Contamination
- ◆ Cyber Crime and Computer Infrastructure
- ◆ Disaster Communications (Ham Radio Links)
- ◆ Disaster Education
- ◆ Disaster Imagery
- ◆ Disaster Monitoring Software & Notification
- ◆ Disease
- ◆ Drought
- ◆ Earthquakes
- ◆ El Nino—La Nina
- ◆ Emergency Management
- ◆ Floods
- ◆ Heat
- ◆ Hurricanes
- ◆ Icebergs
- ◆ International Disasters
- ◆ Landslides
- ◆ Lightning
- ◆ Oceans, Marine Weather, Imagery, and Data
- ◆ Oil Spills
- ◆ Relief Agencies and Organizations
- ◆ Severe Weather
- ◆ State Disaster Agencies
- ◆ Space Weather
- ◆ Terrorism
- ◆ Tornadoes
- ◆ Tsunamis
- ◆ Typhoons
- ◆ Volcanoes
- ◆ Weather Maps and Charts
- ◆ Wild Fires

OCRACES Van at EMS Tailgate on June 2nd

As we go to press, County of Orange RACES is preparing to exhibit our emergency communications response vehicle at the Fifth Annual EMS Tailgate Celebration at Angel Stadium on Saturday, June 2, 2007. The event is held by Orange County Emergency Medical Services (OCEMS), Health Disaster Management / Orange County Health Care Agency. The event occurs from 4:00 PM to 5:45 PM, but we need to arrive between 3:00 PM and 3:30 PM for setup.

Emergency vehicles from several agencies will be on display at the event. This will be an opportunity for us to examine those vehicles for ideas we can incorporate, and to offer our capabilities to those agencies.

Free hotdogs and beverages will be provided. Besides the OCRACES van, exhibits will include fire trucks, ambulances, police cars, and other emergency vehicles. The event is followed by an Angels versus Baltimore Orioles game, beginning at 6:05 PM.

RACES News from Around the County

"RACES News" provides an opportunity to share information from all City & County RACES organizations in Orange County.

[American Red Cross/Orange County/Communications](#)

Red Cross held a successful Communications Boot Camp on Saturday, May 5, 2007, at their headquarters parking lot in Santa Ana, under the leadership of Gordon West, WB6NOA.

Several of the participants exhibited their own portable and mobile stations with special capabilities, including antennas and masts, ATV, WiFi, Winlink, portable PA system, etc.

Signal-strength tests were conducted with hand-held radios over a range from the event to a base station in Costa Mesa.

At the end of the event, a tour was given of the well-equipped Orange County Red Cross EOC.

[County of Orange](#)

We are sad to report that Dixie Baird, beloved wife of the late OCRACES Sergeant Al Baird, KC6TWI, passed away on May 4, 2007. She was 78 years old. Graveside services were held on May 10th at the Santa Ana cemetery. She is survived by five children, 11 grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Al passed away April 30, 2000, and was a great friend to OCRACES members and a strong supporter of our activities, with Dixie's encouragement.

City/County RACES Meeting: June 25th

The next City/County RACES meeting is on Monday, June 25, 2007, at 7:00 PM, at 840 N. Eckhoff Street, Suite 104, in Orange. Brenda Emrick, KI6EXL, CERT Coordinator, Costa Mesa Fire Prevention Bureau, who has developed plans for the Orange County California Citizen Corps Council (OCCCCC) Volunteer Mutual Aid Drill (VMAD) to be held on September 15-16, 2007, will present details of the planned drill at this meeting. All County and City RACES units will be involved in this drill.

At 6:30 PM, prior to the regular 7:00 PM meeting, Radio Officers and RACES Coordinators from all Cities and the County who are involved in Baker to Vegas will meet to discuss creating our own "mutual aid" communications setup. Leading the discussion will be Deborah Klein, Volunteer Coordinator, Orange Police Department, and OCRACES Radio Officer Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP. Under consideration is a consolidated operations center/command post in Pahrump, staffed by representatives of City and County RACES units.

OCRACES to Exhibit at HAMCON on Sept. 8th

The next ARRL Southwestern Division Convention, called HAMCON 2007, will occur on September 7-9, 2007, at the Marriott Hotel, 3635 Fashion Way, in Torrance. OCRACES will have a table in the hall leading to the exhibit area, and will also display our emergency communications response vehicle outside the hotel. We urge all members to be present at least on Saturday, September 8th, to explain our operations to convention visitors, and to recruit new members for OCRACES. We also invite members of City RACES units and all amateur radio emergency communications groups in Orange County to spend time at our table to hand out literature and to promote their activities.

June 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 EMS Tailgate, Angel Stadium
3	4 Monthly Meeting & Weekly Net	5	6	7	8	9 RACES Breakfast, Mimi's in Tustin
10	11 Weekly Net	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Weekly Net	19	20	21	22	23 Field Day
24 Field Day	25 City/County Meeting & Weekly Net	26	27	28	29	30

Upcoming Events:

- Jun 2: EMS Tailgate, Angel Stadium, 4 PM
- Jun 4: OCRACES monthly meeting, 7:30 PM, Eckhoff St.
- Jun 9: RACES Breakfast, Mimi's, 8 AM
- Jun 23-24: Field Day
- Jun 25: City/County RACES meeting
- Jul 28: Southwest ACS Meeting, Riverside, 9 AM
- Jul 31: Orange County Fair booth duty, 5-11 PM



www.ocraces.org



Mission Statement

County of Orange RACES has made a commitment to provide all Public Safety departments in Orange County with the most efficient response possible to supplement emergency/disaster and routine Public Safety communications events and activities. We will provide the highest level of service using Amateur and Public Safety radio resources coupled with technology, teamwork, safety, and excellence. We will do so in an efficient, professional, and courteous manner, accepting accountability for all actions. We dedicate ourselves to working in partnership with the Public Safety community to professionally excel in the ability to provide emergency communications resources and services.

County of Orange RACES Frequencies:

- 6m: 52.62 MHz output, 52.12 MHz input, 103.5 PL
- 2m: 146.895 MHz output, 146.295 MHz input, 136.5 PL *
- 23cm: 1282.025 MHz output, 1270.025 MHz input, 88.5 PL
- 1.25m: 223.76 MHz output, 222.16 MHz input, 110.9 PL
- 70 cm: 449.180 MHz output, 444.180 MHz input, 107.2 PL

* Primary Net - Mondays, 1900 Hours

Program Coordinator

Marten Miller, KF6ZLQ
(714) 704-7917

Radio Officers

Scott Byington, KC6MMF
Harvey Packard, KM6BV
Joe Selikov, KB6EID
Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP

Chief Radio Officer

Ken Bourne, W6HK
(714) 997-0073

Assistant Radio Officers

Jack Barth, AB6VC
Jim Carter, WB6HAG
Ernest Fierheller, KG6LXT

County of Orange RACES

OCSD/Communications
840 N. Eckhoff St. Suite 104
Orange, CA 92868-1021

Telephone – (714) 704-7917
Fax – (714) 704-7902
Email – OCRACES@ocgov.com

County of Orange RACES

OCSD/Communications
840 N. Eckhoff St. Suite 104
Orange, CA 92868-1021

Telephone – (714) 704-7917
Fax – (714) 704-7902
Email – OCRACES@ocgov.com

Visit Our Website
www.ocraces.org
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Questions or Comments?
Contact the *NetControl* Editor
w6hk@ocraces.org



**“W6KRW ...
Serving
Orange County”**

Meet your County of Orange RACES Members!



Ken Bourne
W6HK

Scott Byington
KC6MMF

Harvey Packard
KM6BV

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Jim Carter
WB6HAG

Ernest Fierheller
KG6LXT

Randy Benicky
N6PRL

Bill Borg
KG6PEX

Chuck Dolan
KG6UJC

Nancee Graff
N6ZRB

Ray Grimes
N8RG



Walter Kroy
KC6HAM

Martin La Rocque
N6NTH

John Roberts
W6JOR

Tony Sanchez
AE6QT

Steve Sobodos
KN6UX

Tom Stroud
N6FDZ

Tom Tracey
KC6FIC