

September 2004



Newsletter of the County of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service



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## Captain's Corner

by Ray Grimes N8RG, Chief Radio Officer

The biggest U.S. news lately has been Hurricane Charlie that struck Western and Central Florida. Though this happened far from Southern California, we must not take the position that this disaster happened somewhere else and doesn't affect us. Do you recall Hurricane Linda in September of 1997? Hurricane Linda was reported with 185 mph sustained winds and gusts to 220 mph. The most memorable factor of Hurricane Linda was that it was expected to reach Southern California, but fortunately didn't. That would have been a catastrophe, as our construction standards simply wouldn't stand up to that degree of abuse.

As global weather trends change, it would be foolish to say that a hurricane could never happen here. With respect to disaster prevention and risk management practices, we must consider the risk at hand and the cost of mitigating the threat. As we have learned from decades of earthquake experiences, people are willing to commit time and money for disaster prevention right after these incidents, but quickly lose interest sometime after the threat has passed. I have had an opportunity to influence telecommunications disaster hardening standards and policies for several large

U.S. cities. It is almost to be expected that the first reaction to discussing earthquakes and tornados is that "these things never happen here." There are many commonalties in preparing and handling disasters that apply, whether an act of terrorism, an earthquake, wildfire, flood, tornado or hurricane. First responder protection, disaster assessment, and communication are the first priorities in all of these events, followed by deployment of emergency relief and rescue resources. I congratulate the many ham radio operators who assisted by providing local and long distance emergency communications and on-scene support during and after Hurricane Charlie. Keep these concepts in mind as you prepare for the September 15th Operational Area Exercise.

As OCRACES is your program, I would like to ask that you let me know if there are any programs that you would like to see in OCRACES, or specialized training that we can offer at general meetings, or as field trips. We would also be interested in contacting possible guest speakers for future OCRACES general meetings. Please let me know your thoughts.

The Next  
OCRACES  
Meeting is

September 13th  
1930 Hours

840 N. Eckhoff St.  
Orange, CA



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

## September 13th OCRACES Meeting

We will not have a meeting on Labor Day.  
Our September 13th meeting will start at 1930 hours at 840 N. Eckhoff Street in Orange.

## ***OCRACES REQUESTED FOR OA DRILL***

***By Jim Carter, WB6HAG***

The Orange County Sheriff's Department has requested OCRACES assistance for their September 15, 2004, multi-disciplinary field exercise to be held at the Orange County Fairgrounds and the OCSD Training Facility in Orange.

The need for ATV and SSTV operators and shadows are required in order to support this major event starting at 0800 and ending around 1600 hours. Shadows will assist ATV and SSTV operators while providing operator safety assistance. Our video feed will also be sent to other agencies from our communications vehicle.

I realize this is a work day for many of us, but this is a very valuable training exercise that will assist you should a major event occur. We know it will happen, but we just don't know when.

A total of 12 OCRACES members are required to support this exercise, which will have local, state and federal agency participation. This event will also provide high visibility to OCRACES capabilities and performance. Presently, Ray Grimes, Jim Carter, Harvey Packard, Joe Selikov, Scott Byington, Carol Matthews, Bryan Hovde and Steve Sobodos have graciously volunteered their time. However, we are four members short. If you want to learn ATV or SSTV operations, now is the time. Training will be provided before the exercise. Also, we will have a test run during our September OCRACES meeting night.

I am still looking for additional volunteers for this assignment. Please contact me at [jimcarterocraces@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jimcarterocraces@sbcglobal.net) with your interest. This is one event you won't want to miss!

## ***CITY/COUNTY RACES EXERCISE***

***By Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ***

The annual City/County RACES exercise is Saturday, October 2, 2004, from 0900 until 1100 hours. All City RACES organizations, as well as County RACES and the HDSCS are encouraged to participate using radio equipment from their city Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This is our one chance each year to exchange messages between the various city and County EOC's using the RACES radio equipment located inside your EOC. The focus of this exercise will be communicating by voice, primarily between your EOC and all surrounding city EOC's and secondarily, the County EOC. Those organizations that wish to test ATV and/or SSTV may also do so.

The scenario will be a toxic release that has impacted all parts of the county. A secondary theme will be high winds. An exercise plan "draft" has been developed and distributed to all participants via e-mail. The final exercise plan will be distributed in late September. The critique will take place on October 25, 2004, our last City/County RACES meeting of the year.

At a minimum, the following messages shall be prepared in advance by each participating RACES organization: one message from City to County, three messages from City to a minimum of four adjacent Cities, one message from City to HDSCS, and one message from City to Red Cross via HDSCS. The County EOC will provide one message to each participating RACES organization. This is our largest annual county-wide RACES exercise, thanks in advance for your participation! [Continued on Page 3](#)

# **“WATCHING THE WEB”**

## ***Web Sites of Interest to RACES Personnel***

By Ken Bourne, W6HK  
Radio Officer, County of Orange RACES

This new monthly column in *NetControl* will feature a Web site that provides information useful to RACES members. We will launch this column by featuring the national RACES Web site, [www.races.net](http://www.races.net), maintained by this author for several years. The national RACES Web site contains several pages.

- ◆ “What Is RACES?” covers the definitions, purposes, and missions of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service.
- ◆ “FCC RACES Rules” covers all current FCC Rules & Regulations pertaining to the use of Amateur Radio for emergency communications.
- ◆ “Volunteer Protection Act” covers the 1997 Congressional action that provides certain protections to volunteers, nonprofit organizations, and governmental entities in lawsuits based on the activities of volunteers.
- ◆ “RACES News” covers FCC RACES Rules actions (including petition dismissals) during recent years.
- ◆ “Links” is a long list of links (over 1,000) to RACES, ACS, ARES, ARPSC, SKYWARN, SATERN, and other Amateur Radio emergency communications Web sites (including international). Browsing these sites may provide good ideas to incorporate into OCRACES. Also listed are links to Amateur Radio publications, non-Amateur disaster/emergency/public-safety Web sites, government agencies (mostly federal), mailing lists/reflectors, manufacturers of RACES patches/badges/decals/caps, weather agencies and organizations, FCC license data base, etc.

- ◆ “Standard Power Connector” provides details on using and installing Anderson Powerpoles.

This author invites suggestions on improving the national RACES Web site, to increase its usefulness to all Radio Amateurs involved with emergency communications. Please feel free to contact me at [w6hk@ocraces.org](mailto:w6hk@ocraces.org).

## **CITY/COUNTY EXERCISE**

*Continued from Page 2*

Here are the “RSVP’s” as of August 30, 2004. Please RSVP to [Robert.Stoffel@ocgov.com](mailto:Robert.Stoffel@ocgov.com) as soon as possible. We are looking for as close to 100% participation as possible.

### Participating (YES/NO) - Modes (Voice/ATV/SSTV)

Anaheim -  
Brea -  
Buena Park -  
Costa Mesa - YES - Voice / ATV / SSTV  
Cypress - YES - Voice / ATV  
Fountain Valley -  
Fullerton - YES - Voice  
Huntington Beach -  
Irvine -  
La Palma - NO  
Laguna Beach -  
Laguna Niguel -  
Laguna Woods - YES - Voice / ATV  
Los Alamitos - YES - Voice  
Mission Viejo -  
Newport Beach -  
Orange - YES - Voice / ATV / SSTV  
Orange County - YES - Voice / ATV / SSTV  
Placentia - YES - Voice  
Seal Beach -  
Westminster -  
Yorba Linda -  
HDSCS - YES - Voice

## **TSUNAMI ALERT TEST COMING 9/15/04**

At 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, September 15th the West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center will conduct a Tsunami Warning test. The purpose of this test is to evaluate communications for use in dissemination of tsunami warnings and watches. The National Weather Service (NWS) and Orange County Emergency Alert System (EAS) partners will also participate in the test. NWS forecast offices along the U.S. west coast and in Alaska will participate in this test by disseminating a routine monthly test message with special information about the test via NOAA weather radio stations. Local broadcast and cable systems will also transmit their monthly EAS test in conjunction with this tsunami warning test. Questions regarding this test should be directed to Edwin Clark, NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist, at EDWIN.CLARK@NOAA.GOV or (858) 675-8700, extension 223.

## **THE WILDFIRE TRAP** **by Ray Grimes, N8RG**

I recently attended the CPRA (California Public-Safety Radio Association) chapter meeting of APCO International (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials) in San Diego and enjoyed a most informative presentation on the San Diego County Sheriff's "After-Action Report" related to the 2003 wildfires, presented by Commander Scott McClintock, Law Enforcement Services Bureau, North and Rural Command. The commander said some things that made me pause and think. For all of the years that I have been a first responder, I have never seen anything that applied to our role as RACES communicators in print or discussed about vehicle behavior in proximity to a wildfire. The commander mentioned incidents where deputy sheriffs were attempting to drive out of the reach of a fast-moving wildfire and their cars lost performance, and in some cases, stalled out. I thought of RACES activities in the past, where we performed duties as forward observers during brush fires. Our thinking was that when the fire moved close enough, we would drive out of the area to safety. I did some research on the Internet and found numerous stories about firefighters almost losing their lives (and in some cases, firefighters did die) because fire apparatus wouldn't start, or ceased to operate while driving. There are effects from a wildfire that are well known by experienced brushfire experts but may not be known to urban firefighters and police officers who rarely if ever, experience these extreme conditions. It makes complete sense that a vehicle combustion engine might be oxygen starved in a wildfire. Smoke and airborne particulate matter can block vehicle air filters. Some might be surprised to learn that a wildfire consumes very large amounts of oxygen. In trying to outrun a wildfire in a vehicle, extreme heat will be encountered that can melt tires and affect onboard electronic systems such as electronic ignitions and vehicle computers. A wildfire will also rob much of the available oxygen in the area, causing engine oxygen starvation and an over-rich engine fuel mixture. A wildfire can move at an amazing speed across the ground, at something in excess of 6 miles per hour. You may only have minutes to react when you realize a fire in the distance is coming your way at an alarming rate. While the best choice of the moment may be to outrun the approaching wildfire in your vehicle, it is extremely important to recognize that you should never place yourself in the position of possibly having to make a run for your life, and that your car or truck may not get you out of trouble. Vehicles require service after being operated in a wildfire area. Air filters should be changed promptly. Failure to change the air filter can result in O2 sensor errors and resultant fuel injection problems, with gas mileage reduced by as much as 20%. Fine smoke and ash particles can get through an air filter into an engine manifold and can buildup grit in engine oil, risking damage to the engine. Diesel engines are particularly susceptible to smoke and ash getting into the engine and causing major damage. Some vehicles contain cabin filters that help to rid the car interior of pollen and other airborne allergens. These filters are not designed to filter heavy smoke and ash from the air surrounding a large fire. Failure to have cabin air filters serviced after a wildfire encounter may reduce performance of the vehicle air conditioning system.

## “USING YOUR AMATEUR RADIO RESOURCE” CLASS OFFERED BY HOSPITAL DISASTER SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

April Moell, WA6OPS, Emergency Coordinator for the Hospital Disaster Support Communications System (HDSCS), will be conducting an upcoming class titled “Using Your Amateur Radio Resource.”

The class will be presented at Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian on September 9<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Center (Room 2) from 9:30 – 11:00.

This class is opened to all interested hospital personnel, and will compare Amateur Radio with other communications resources used in the hospital setting.

Additionally, April will review how HDSCS functions in Orange County; discuss when/how to activate the system; explain how messages are sent via amateur radio; and discuss confidentiality concerns.

For further information, questions or to RSVP, please contact April Moell at (714) 879-6895 or via e-mail at [emcom4hosp@aol.com](mailto:emcom4hosp@aol.com). Additional information about HDSCS can be found at [www.HDSCS.org](http://www.HDSCS.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

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## ***RACES News from Around the County***

### ***News, Information, Special Events ...***

**PLACENTIA RACES** – The Placentia Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and other amateur radio operators are currently offering a 5-week class, which will prepare individuals to take and pass the FCC Technician Class Radio license exam, according to the Placentia RACES Coordinator, Michael McConaha, KB6SEI.

With that license, individuals will be able to conduct two-way radio communications on approved frequencies above 50 MHz. The Amateur Radio class is offered to all Orange County residents and will be held five successive weeks starting on Thursday, August 5, at 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Each class will last one and a half to two hours in length. On the sixth week an official exam session will be conducted for the Technician Class license. All individuals passing the test will become licensed radio amateurs.

Subjects covered include: Basic electrical principles, types of radio frequency emissions, basic radio wave propagation theory, simple circuit design, how to operate a radio station, FCC rules governing radio transmissions, choosing an antenna, and radio frequency radiation safety.

### **LAGUNA BEACH RACES** –

For the 6th consecutive year Laguna Beach Emergency Communications Team (RACES) provided support for the Pacific Coast Triathlon, on July 25, 2004 at the Crystal Cove State Park, reports Arlene Schwartz, KE6GFI.

The event consisted of a 1/2 mile swim, 12 mile bike ride and 3 mile run. The overall winner finished the entire event in 1 hour and 2 minutes.

We are appreciative of the five amateurs who volunteered their time to serve at this event. They were: Robert Smith, KG6RTU; Betty Gallagher, KC6ZLY; Ron Kaufmann, WH6ANA; Arlene Schwartz, KE6GFI, and John Kountz, KE6GFF, who served as net control. Being on station by 5:30 am is no easy matter!

Perhaps you might have seen the net control station pictured in the Orange County Register's July 26, 2004 sports pages when they photographed the winning runner and ran a story about the event.

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

**Please send your  
news to:**

**OCRACES@  
ocgov.com**

# September 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 <i>Labor Day Weekly Net</i>	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 <i>Meeting &amp; Weekly Net</i>	14	15 <i>OA Exercise, OCRACES activation</i>	16	17	18
19	20 <i>Weekly Net</i>	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 <i>Weekly Net</i>	28	29	30		

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **September 13:** OCRACES monthly meeting, 840 N. Eckhoff Street, Orange, 1930 hours
- **September 15:** Operational Area Exercise, Orange County Fairgrounds, OCRACES activation
- **October 2:** Annual City/County RACES Exercise, 0900-1100 hours
- **October 4:** OCRACES monthly meeting, 840 N. Eckhoff Street, Orange, 1930 hours
- **October 25:** City/County RACES Meeting, 840 N. Eckhoff Street, Orange, 1900 hrs.

## HISTORICAL EQUIPMENT SLATED FOR MUSEUM



**Teo (left) checks for speeders in the hallway with an early 1960's radar gun, as Mike holds a 1950's signal generator.**

RACES members and visitors to the OCSD/Communications Eckhoff facility may think they have entered a museum when they walk down the second floor hallway and see shelves filled with antique radios and obsolete (and sometimes unidentifiable) equipment. The equipment may be outdated, but every piece has a story to tell. OCSD/Communications employees Mike Strand, W6HAJ and Teofil Nicolae are working on the important and interesting task of cataloguing the equipment. A photograph is being taken of each item to accompany a description of its use and importance to the history of Orange County radio communications.



**Here are various items that are a part of Orange County "radio history" being prepared for a future Sheriff's Department museum.**

The equipment will then be boxed and stored in anticipation of becoming part of a museum exhibit sponsored by the Sheriff's Department. If you haven't had a chance to look at the eclectic mixture of plastic and metal, you might want to check it out now.

# County of Orange RACES

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It's Where It's @!

Questions or Comments?  
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## County of Orange RACES History

The *Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)* was created in the early 1950's by the Federal government. On December 1, 1953, by resolution of the Orange County Board of Supervisors, the Orange County Communicators Club was authorized to become part of the *Orange County Civil Defense*. For the next 30 years, the *RACES* organization in Orange County was a group of Amateur Radio communicators that supported not only Orange County but also cities in the County during a time of emergency. In the mid-1980's, the cities in Orange County realized the benefits of Amateur Radio and began to form their own *RACES* organizations. Today, County of Orange *RACES* is recognized as one of the leading *RACES* organizations in the state. Our *RACES* program is administered by *OCSD/Communications* under the leadership of Emer-

gency Communications Coordinator Robert Stoffel, *KD6DAG*, and Chief Radio Officer Ray Grimes, *N8RG*. Our volunteers provide disaster, emergency and special event communications support to *Orange County Public Safety* agencies, and meet monthly for training and special activities. *RACES* supports the County by using various modes of Amateur Radio communications including voice, Morse Code, amateur satellite, amateur television, slow-scan television and various digital modes. County of Orange *RACES* has a dedicated radio room at the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and an emergency response communications vehicle that provides both Amateur Radio and Public Safety communications support at any emergency, disaster or special event location.



"W6KRW ...  
Serving  
Orange County"



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