



County of Orange RACES NET CONTROL



December 2000

Newsletter of the County of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

Proposed Band Plan Change

By: Jane Avnet, k8jaa

A motion was made at the TASMA October General meeting to modify the current TASMA Band Plan <<http://www.qsl.net/tasma/bp9812.htm>> to allow an additional odd split repeater.

The current TASMA Band Plan was adopted in December 1998 after much thought and hard work by the then Board of Directors and a committee headed by Jim Keck, N6JIM, formed for that purpose. It took a year to come up with a plan that everyone could agree on.

The motion was made by the users of the frequencies in question who currently operate an uncoordinated repeater on them. This set of frequencies, 146.490/147.495, is in the middle of two of the simplex portions of the TASMA Band Plan.

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Holiday Greetings

On behalf of the County of Orange and OCSD/Communications, I would like to take this opportunity and say "thanks" to OCRACES members for their participation this year. Your time and efforts are appreciated not only by our staff, but also by the many public safety departments we have served during the year 2000. I would also like to acknowledge the various city RACES organizations here in Orange County, and thank the city coordinator and radio officer for recognizing the value of a RACES program in their own community. As we enter the final month of 2000, I send Christmas greetings and a happy new year to all!

Robert A. Stoffel, KD6DAQ
OCRACES Program Coordinator
Orange County RACES Operational Area Coordinator

If you are a member of TASMA, please come to the Annual meeting and vote on this issue. If you are a simplex user or have an opinion on this issue and are not a member of TASMA, come to the meeting and voice your opinion. A partial list of simplex use frequencies can be found at:
<<http://www.qsl.net/tasma/simplex.htm>>

You can see from this list that these simplex frequencies in question are used by RACES groups in Southern

California.

Editor's note: Jane Avnet can be reached at: k8jaa@arrl.net

December Meeting

The December 4th OCRACES meeting will be a combination dinner and meeting. See Holiday Dinner information on page 2 of this Newsletter for further details.

Upcoming Events

December 4	Closed OCRACES Meeting/Holiday Dinner 1900 Hours
December 14	OCSD/Communications Holiday Party, 1130 Hours
January 8	OCRACES General Meeting, 1930 hours, Eckhoff
January 29	City / County RACES Meeting, 1930 hours, Eckhoff
February 5	OCRACES General Meeting, 1930 hours, Eckhoff
March 5	OCRACES General Meeting, 1930 hours, Eckhoff

Captain's Corner

by: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

It makes you stop and reflect when you consider that there's only 25 shopping days to Christmas, and it is almost the year 2001! It is now certain that civilization will fall short of the expectations of Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clark's '2001: A Space Odyssey'. Stanley and Arthur didn't have the imagination though, to envision the Election 2000 Odyssey. It was just one year ago that we were all concerned with Y2K and maybe the end of civilization, or at least the self-destruction of our computers, which to some, would be the end of civilization.

As in years before, I have asked each of you to consider what equipment you need to improve our OCRACES services. This is an excellent opportunity to upgrade our existing systems and to venture into new technologies for which to serve our county better.

November was another stellar month for OCRACES. I would like to recognize all of you who supported the November 7 Election. Orange County at least, knows how to get the vote collection job done right, thanks to you.

OCRACES will be entertaining on December 4. There will be a RACES holiday dinner gathering in Buena Park. I personally invite all of our RACES city/county friends to join us. Robert Stoffel has provided detailed information in this Net Control, with location, pricing, and starting time. We will also collect Christmas toys at the dinner party, as we have in past years. Robert will provide details for that program also.

OCRACES supported the Statewide EMS Disaster Exercise and the Veteran's Day Parade this month. Jim Carter, WB6HAG, Ralph Sbragia, KD6FYT and I flew to Palm Springs on November 18. We made a technical presentation for the Coachella Valley RACES group on PSK-31 and SSTV. Our lower desert friends were very excited about these new communications modes, as were the emergency services people who also attended.

I would like to again thank Delia Kraft, KF6UYW who presented an outstanding discussion on the OCSO Operations Support Division at Loma Ridge. Her presentation greatly helped us to fully understand the complexity and responsibilities of the various dispatcher and 911 calltaker functions.

Holiday Dinner

By: Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ, Emergency Communications Coordinator

At our last meeting we discussed combining the December meeting and holiday dinner, and discussed the type of restaurant desired. Since a buffet style was least preferred, I have located an Italian Restaurant that has very good food at reasonable prices. We can have a large open room for our exclusive use, pay using separate checks, and order directly off the normal menu. There is a wide variety on the menu with prices for appetizers ranging from \$3.95 to \$7.95 and dinner items from \$6.95 to \$14.95. This "OCRACES Holiday Dinner" will replace our normal December meeting. Here are the details:

Who: OCRACES members and their families
Date: Monday, December 4, 2000
Time: 1900 Hours
Location: Cucina! Cucina! Italian Cafe
Radisson Resort Knott's Berry Farm
7675 Crescent Avenue, Buena Park
(On Crescent two blocks west of Beach Blvd.)
Parking: Free parking at the hotel, enter from Crescent Avenue
Weekly Net: Due to the time of dinner, we will run a Net for cities but not for OCRACES members
RSVP: Please RSVP to me by November 27th with the total number of persons in your party attending

Thanks, and happy holidays!

Meetings:

General: First Monday of Month
(open to public) @ 1930 hr

Meeting Location:

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

County RACES Frequencies:

6 m: 52.62 MHz output, 52.12
MHz input, 103.5 Hz PL

2 m: 146.895 MHz output,
146.295 MHz input, 136.5 PL;
(primary net Mondays, 1900 hrs)

2 m: Packet: 145.07 MHz
(1830 - 1900 hours)

1.25 m: 223.76 MHz output,
222.16 MHz input, 110.9 Hz PL

70 cm: 449.180 MHz output,
444.180 MHz input, 107.2 Hz
PL (private)

OCRACES Web Page:

<http://www.ocraces.org>

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Did You Know?

COPP's

by: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

COPP is not a misspelling of cops but an acronym for Cops on Patrol Phone, a program sponsored by Ericsson and the Wireless Foundation. The COPP program in 2000 alone has provided free cellular telephones and service to six communities nationwide, to help fight crime. The Wireless Foundation has provided over 13,000 cellular telephones to 12,000 neighborhood watch groups since its inception four years ago. These phones are programmed with 911 and a non-emergency number. Motorola has a similar program which provides important emergency communications to neighborhood volunteer groups.

from: RadioResource Magazine, August, 2000
P. 95, Community Watch Groups...

Fire and Law Appreciation Days at Knott's

By: Roger Woodcock, KF6CJJ

Yes it's true....

Knott's Berry Farm has extended it's annual Fire and Law appreciation days to include reserve and volunteer fire and law enforcement employees. So anytime between November 18th thru December 15th just show your Sheriff/OCRaces I.D. and receive two tickets for you and a guest and up to 2 additional tickets for dependent children. (Good for that day only and you must be present and with your I.D. to enter the park). You can also get up to 8 additional tickets for \$10.00 each.

Have fun !!!

Visual Communications

Coordinator: Jim Carter WB6HAG

Web Page: <http://www.qsl.net/wb6hag/>

SSTV NET – Last month, we reviewed ways for improving net participation and requested suggestions from all RACES groups. The SSTV net will be discussed at the January 29 City/County meeting and the SSTV net has been suspended until then.

Palm Springs – The City of Palm Springs requested OCRACES to provide an SSTV presentation to their city, November 18th. In attendance were RACES members from Palm Springs and surrounding cities, their local Fire Chief and the SW ARRL Assistant Director. It was interesting to watch the attendee's excitement over SSTV. Their local Fire Chief was so excited that he stated he would be making an equipment purchase for use on their 800 MHz frequency. Palm Springs RACES members discussed placing SSTV on the tramway to remotely send SSTV pictures to their EOC.

New ATV Member – Martin LaRocque (N6NTH), is our newest ATV member. Martin brings many years of ATV experience and design technology to our Visual Communications Committee. He recently developed a character generator video overlay, designed an ATV repeater that operates on the same frequency as our other portable repeater and designed other video circuits that will be useful to our cause. Martin, welcome to Visual Communications!

700 MHz Blues

By: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

You may have occasionally wondered why a number of major police and fire departments have not replaced or upgraded their radio communications systems in the past several years, and continue to suffer from channel congestion and lack of interoperability with other agencies? The answer is complex. Some government agencies such as the County of Orange have had the foresight and resources to plan ahead and started developing their 800 MHz systems years ago. This is the product of having a professional communications department which considers the future when purchasing new systems. Many agencies held off purchasing new systems or changing bands while watching the APCO 25 digital communications specification evolve over the years. It would not be prudent to purchase new equipment that would be obsolete in a few years or couldn't accommodate new technologies such as mobile data and mobile video. Most radio systems have an expected life of anywhere from 7 to 15 years, with many agencies still using equipment installed over 20 years ago. A large problem is also public safety funding. Major 'hi-tech' systems can cost millions of dollars, requiring a large staff of administrators and technical people to maintain it. This is influencing government officials to consider private sector communications systems as cost-effective alternatives. That in itself is the topic of what could be a long separate article.

700 MHz (TV channels 60 through 69, 746 to 806 MHz) was supposed to offer the relief that public safety agencies need so badly. 700 MHz would be a new public safety band which would offer more spectrum than all of existing Land Mobile Radio bands combined now provide. As might be expected, numerous system operators other than public safety are also petitioning the FCC to share this spectrum. There are some significant issues for the FCC to decide upon, such as the proposed operation of low powered consumer wireless devices and low-power TV carrying Internet services in the guard bands between 700 MHz and adjacent services (that doesn't sound much like clear spectrum). It was greatly optimistic to think that the present UHF TV broadcast users would quickly vacate this spectrum. The FCC made a deal with the TV broadcasters to allow them to develop High Definition Digital TV broadcast services on other channels, in trade for them vacating 700 MHz. The public safety agencies and radio equipment manufacturers are waiting (impatiently) for the TV broadcasters to actually move out. That likely won't happen very quickly, as the changeover to digital TV services is not moving very quickly. There are issues to be resolved between the cable TV companies and TV broadcasters regarding the necessity to offer both analog and digital TV feeds to subscribers. Until the public accepts digital TV and purchases sufficient quantities of digital ready TV sets, the TV broadcasters won't be motivated to abandon the 700 MHz spectrum. Regardless of these reasons, the TV broadcasters are supposed to fully abandon the 700 MHz spectrum by December 31, 2006. It is quite likely that the TV broadcasters will still be occupying the 700 MHz spectrum long after that date, unless the FCC takes a stronger position. The public safety operators will just have to wait for the outcome, and will likely not be developing many new systems before that time.

from: RadioResource Magazine, August, 2000,
pg. 6, Dispatch, Hamilton, Laura, Editor

Volunteer Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities to help others during the holidays. Here are a few:

Operation Santa Claus

Location: 1928 South Grand Avenue #C, Santa Ana 92701

Minimum age: 15

Contact: Shirley Jandron - (714) 834-2850 or Shirley.Jandron@ocgov.com

Toys for Tots

Location: Corner of El Toro Road & Rockfield Blvd. in the city of Lake Forest

Minimum age: 10 (minors 10 through 15 must be accompanied by an adult)

Contact: Jane Dawson - (714) 834-7440 or Jane.Dawson@ocgov.com

Senior Santas and Friends

Location: 1501 St. Andrew Place, Santa Ana 92705

Contact: Shirley Jandron - (714) 834-2850 or Shirley.Jandron@ocgov.com.

Please call or e-mail the above contacts for dates and times of service.