

July 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

What an outstanding month for OCRACES! June started with the American Red Cross Disaster Academy at CSU Fullerton, with our OCRACES vehicle on display. A number of favorable comments were heard from attendees, comparing the RACES vehicle to a downsized version of the OCSO Samantha communications trailer. The June 7th OCRACES general meeting provided an excellent opportunity for all members to receive additional training on the RACES vehicle setup and operations. Thanks to Scott Byington, KC6MMF for all of his hard work, and for providing much of the training. Also thanks to Jim Carter, WB6HAG for providing training for the onboard visual communications systems.

the new Orange County Fire Authority RFOTC, combined with the City/County RACES meeting. The OCFA RFOTC houses a state of the art fire communications



dispatch center. The City/County RACES meeting was informative, covering news from all RACES groups including HDSCS, plus a Baker to Vegas debriefing by Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP. The October 2nd annual City/County RACES Exercise was discussed and event scenarios of a hazardous release and high winds were selected by the group. July will be a quieter month, with no general RACES meeting due to the July 4th weekend holiday. I would like to announce that Ernest Fierheller, KG6LXT has passed the OCSO background investigation and is accepted as an OCRACES member to be assigned to Charlie Squad. Congratulations Ernest! This is a time to remind everyone again, as we approach hot summer weather, to remain available and prepared to respond to wildfire disasters.

Field Day was a great success, thanks to Harvey Packard, KM6BV who was this year's event coordinator. RACES participation was quite good, with members operating both the RACES vehicle at the EOC parking lot and the OCRACES radio room equipment within the EOC. Jack Barth, AB6VC successfully demonstrated fast scan television and SSTV. Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ provided training to OCRACES members on the public safety CRT dispatch console and the new OCRACES computer system. Ray Grimes, N8RG provided training on programming and operation of the Kenwood TM-742 transceivers that are widely in use in the EOC and OCRACES vehicle.

The best was saved for last, with a tour of

The Next
OCRACES
Meeting is

August 2nd
1930 Hours

840 N. Eckhoff St.
Orange, CA



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

August 2nd OCRACES Meeting

OCRACES will not have a meeting in July.
Our August meeting will start at 1930 hours at 840 N. Eckhoff Street in Orange.

RACES FIELD DAY PHOTO PAGE

OCRACES participated in Field Day, operating out of the RACES communications vehicle and the Loma Ridge EOC RACES Radio Room.

Here are some images captured by RACES Chief Radio Officer Ray Grimes of the activity that occurred on June 26th.



OCFA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF AIR OPS

Long before the fire season of 1993, dedicated members of the Orange County Fire Department were proposing plans to acquire and operate their own firefighting helicopters. Legend has it that in 1978 the "Orange Ranger Unit" was scheduled to get a helicopter. They were so sure that they quickly formed a Helitack Crew, although the helicopter never materialized. That setback did not discourage the department.



With the transition from CDF to the Orange County Fire Department, members of the organization continued to recognize the need for their own firefighting helicopters. Although supported by the Fire Chief, OCFD was unable to convince the County Board of Supervisors faced with growing budget concerns.

October of 1993 brought with it the most devastating fire season that Orange County has ever faced. 36,000 acres burned and 469 homes were destroyed or severely damaged. After-action reports published that year emphasized the fact that the OCFD did not have firefighting helicopters, and that "OCFD's Laguna incident command staff believed immediate air support could have made the Laguna Fire manageable during the first quarter hour of its spread". Reports like these helped persuade the Orange County Board of Supervisors to approve the OCFD to enter into a one-year contract for a firefighting helicopter with pilots, mechanics, a fuel truck and a fuel truck driver. The first contract for helicopter service was with Evergreen Helicopters Inc. When that contract ended in 1995, they entered into a new contract for pilot services with San Joaquin Helicopters. In April of 1998 the OCFA ended its contract with San Joaquin and hired both Gerry Casman and Jim Davidson as their first OCFA Fire Pilots.

It took only one year at John Wayne Airport to convince OCFA that a new home was needed. Although it was centrally located, JWA did not meet

their needs. Long delays in responding to fires due to arriving and departing jetliners, along with expensive hanger space, forced OCFA to explore other options. One of those explorations led them to a remote corner of Fullerton Municipal Airport (left).



With 4,680 square feet of hanger space and approximately 1,400 square feet of office space, the Air Ops Hanger includes specialized maintenance equipment, repair

facilities and parts storage. Two helicopters can be moved in and out of the hanger on specially designed landing pad dollies.

When the Marines left El Toro, they took with them the only rescue hoist equipped helicopter in Orange County. The Marine Search and Rescue helicopter was the last resort for many backcountry rescues. Recognizing the need for this specialized capability, OCFA purchased an externally mounted rescue hoist. This state of the art rescue tool incorporates various safety, self-sensing, and redundancy features, including the translating drum cable management system. In other words, the cable won't fall off or get tangled. The hoist operator can raise or lower victims, rescuers or equipment on a 290-foot cable at speeds up to 250 feet per minute.

Congratulations to the dedicated Air Operations team at the Orange County Fire Authority on the celebration of 10 years of service to the citizens of Orange County.



SUSAN MARKEY NAMED ACTING COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION DIRECTOR

The Communications Division lost a great leader when Division Director Joseph Robben retired. However, we know the Division remains in good hands with the announcement that Susan Markey has been named as the Acting Director. Susan has been a member of Communications for ten years, and is familiar with all of the Division's functions including management, technical, financial, engineering, and administrative support. She is highly respected by her co-workers and members of Orange County's public safety community, and is always available to provide assistance when needed. It is comforting to know the Division will continue to operate as it did under the direction of Joe Robben—as a professional and well-respected unit of the Orange County Sheriff's Department.



County of Orange RACES now conducts the 146.895 RACES Net from our communications vehicle on the first Monday of each month. RACES member Tom Stroud, N6FDZ (left) had the honor of conducting the first "official" net from inside the RACES communications vehicle.

HDSCS ACTIVATED DURING FIELD DAY

On June 26, members of HDSCS began setting up Field Day stations on the parking lots and lawns of Huntington Beach Hospital (HBH). "Dave West of HBH is a great host," says April Moell, WA6OPS, the HDSCS founder and ARES Emergency Coordinator. "This is the third year that we have had Field Day there. The hospital goes all out to give us a great site, and in turn we educate the staff on the services that Amateur Radio can do and has done." At 8:30 AM, WA6OPS received a page indicating a communications failure at West Anaheim Medical Center (WAMC). She immediately dispatched Tom Gaccione, WB2LRH, and Cheryl Simpson, KD6MWZ, from HBH to WAMC. Then she and K0OV made calls on the group's primary repeater and on their cell phones to activate four other members who live close to WAMC. Twenty minutes after the page, WB2LRH and KD6MWZ were in the WAMC parking lot. The other four responders soon followed. The hospital's phone technician, arriving just after Tom and Cheryl, discovered that a power supply failure had caused all internal telephone system extensions within the 219-bed facility to go down. As the tech worked on the phone problem, HDSCS operators dispersed to critical areas to be ready for any urgent messages during the outage. Paul Broden, K6MHD, went to the switchboard (PBX) area, Fred Lochner, WA6FRA, was stationed in the Emergency Department and Woody Woodward, KJ6LE, went to Intensive Care (ICU). Tom Gaccione, WB2LRH, roamed the hospital with the Nursing Supervisor and Susan Hafner "shadowed" the Disaster Coordinator. Cheryl Simpson, KD6MWZ, relayed traffic between the internal and external nets from her vehicle. WA6OPS was Net Control and David Mofford, W7KTS, provided a landline link from his home station. *Continued on Page 7*



HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... FCC!

By Ray Grimes, N8RG

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) turns 70 years old on Thursday, July 1, the effective date of the Communications Act of 1934 where Congress authorized it as an independent federal agency.

Although amended since, the 'Act'--all 333 pages of it--remains in effect. The 'Act' establishes the authority of the FCC, allowing it to issue license grants, to regulate spectrum, and ultimately to regulate interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable.

The FCC in 1934 inherited the resources of the former Federal Radio Commission (FRC) that was established in 1927 and signed into power by

then President Coolidge. QST magazine in its August, 1934 printing with respect to the creation of the FCC as it affects amateur radio, stated that "The radio part of the law is almost exactly the same as before, and there is no change in any amateur regulation".

Much has changed with the FCC, having endured periods of technical and social change and federal deregulation that have challenged and redirected its fundamental resources and spectrum management philosophies.

Thanks to: The ARRL letter, Vol. 23, No. 26, June 25, 2004



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

LAGUNA BEACH RACES –

“We had a successful field day,” reports Arlene Schwartz, KE6GFI. “I am amazed at the log which shows the stations that we worked, coast to coast and from the Yukon Territory to the Virgin Islands.” Most of those stations were worked on 20 meters, but Laguna Beach RACES tuned the inverted V to 15 meters at times, and also worked stations using 2 meters FM, 70cm FM and SSB, and a few 6 meter contacts.

Boy Scout Troop 1698, who were hiking from Laguna Hills to the ocean, stopped by. They were most interested in ham radio, and their scout leader's grandfather had been a ham. He asked a lot of questions and it's possible the troop may look at amateur radio as an activity this summer. Another visitor was involved in her Middle School activities, and she stayed and talked for almost 30 minutes. Laguna Beach RACES also received press coverage in the Laguna Beach Independent newspaper.

HUNTINGTON BEACH RACES –

HBRACES has for the past year been faced with how to manage the Fire Department Tactical Command Trailer. This large piece of rolling real estate was offered to RACES with several restrictions. HBRACES tried to come up with a way to meet the requirements but as with most volunteer organizations it proved to be too much of a burden and RACES was unable to meet the requirements.

Peter Shores, AD6TN, HBRACES Technical officer thought that the group still needed some form of portable communication equipment which could perform in a similar fashion as the Tactical Command

Trailer but with less required effort and a faster response time. Having a Dodge van in his driveway gave him the idea to construct a communications center that would replace the trailer and from this the RACES communications van has developed.

Several members contributed their skills and voila! HBRACES now has a white van, bristling with antennas and large letters on the roof so the HB helicopter readily identify it from the air.

The following list of capabilities is just the beginning ... American Red Cross VHF/UHF, Orange County EOC-to-EOC, Orange County RACES VHF/UHF, Orange County Fire 800 MHz, Huntington Beach RACES VHF/UHF, Amateur Radio HF/VHF/UHF, AT&T Cellular Telephone, and an onboard 2 KW portable generator. In the near future they intend to add the ATV and SSTV functions to further round out the van's capabilities.

YORBA LINDA RACES – Loren Mathews, K9YCG has resigned as the Yorba Linda RACES Chief Radio Officer.

“My business has forced me to relocate to Central Florida, and I enjoyed my 9 years working with the RACES group,” said Loren. Although relocated, business commitments will require him to be in Yorba Linda approximately 50% of the time, and Loren hopes to still assist when he can.

Jim Jobst, K6JNJ is now Chief Radio Officer, and can be reached by e-mail at jnjobst@hotmail.com.

“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

July 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 <i>Weekly Net</i>	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 <i>Weekly Net</i>	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 <i>Weekly Net</i>	20	21	22 <i>Vehicle Presentation for IDEC</i>	23	24
25	26 <i>Weekly Net</i>	27	28	29	30	31

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **July:** No OCRACES meeting
- **July 22:** OCRACES vehicle presentation for IDEC
- **August 2:** 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

HDSCS FIELD DAY ACTIVITY *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4*

Repairs to the phone system were completed and tested at 10:30 AM. HDSCS operators remained on station in the facility for an additional 30 minutes to ensure that everything in the system was stable. Then they left, after receiving profound thanks from the hospital staff.



Meanwhile, Field Day setup continued in Huntington Beach, getting HDSCS on the air at the official start time in Class 2A. Twenty members participated in all. The public relations table was just as busy as the on-air stations, as 25 hospital staff and local visitors came by to learn about Amateur Radio and how it can support agencies in disasters, large and small. Bryan Hanley, (photo, left) Disaster Coordinator of Orange County Emergency Medical Services (OCEMS), drove in for a visit shortly after noon. In his trunk was a big box of Emergency Communicator vests that had just been procured by his agency, funded by a Homeland Security grant. Each HDSCS member will keep a vest in his or her Go Kit to wear when appropriate in future activations.

At 2 PM, all of the operators put down mikes and keys for a special presentation by Dr. Fadi Essmaeel, a representative of the office of US Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (photo, right). The Congressman himself had planned to attend, but was called away at the last minute for a TV news appearance. He had become aware of the accomplishments of HDSCS about a month before, when WA6OPS participated in a Domestic Preparedness training course for medical personnel that was organized by the his office. Dr. Essmaeel presented HDSCS with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition.



County of Orange RACES

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www.ocrages.org
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.



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