

March, 2006



Newsletter of the County of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

Captain's Corner

by Ken Bourne, W6HK, Chief Radio Officer

Inside this issue:

- Captain's Corner** 1
- Election Support** 3
- Flash Flood Safety** 4
- Watching the Web** 5
- Baker-to-Vegas** 5
- RACES News** 6
- Calendar** 7

February was a proud month to be an OCRACES member. On Monday, February 6, at 0428, the Orange County Fire Authority issued an alarm with reference to the Sierra Fire. On arrival, OCFA was confronted with a 5-10 acre vegetation fire in heavy brush at Sierra Peak in the Cleveland National Forest, with a rapid rate of spread. Eventually, 10,854 acres burned. Scott Byington, KC6MMF, called me at about 0800, after noticing a considerable amount of smoke from the mountains, and wondering what I was hearing on the OCFA trunked system. Meanwhile, I was hearing many sirens wailing from OCFA and City of Orange fire engines.

At about 0825, OCSO Emergency Communications Coordinator Marten Miller, KF6ZLQ, advised me of conditions. OCSO/Communications Training Officer Pat Campobasso, KF6PND, then sent an advisory page to all OCRACES members. At about 0842, Marten advised me that the EOC was activated, and that a RACES operator needed to join him there. Scott responded to the EOC immediately, and Chuck Dolan, KG6UJC, followed about an hour later. They were relieved at about 1630 by Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP.



Hillside is consumed by fire



Above and below: Fire personnel took their stand along the 241 Toll Road to prevent the fire from reaching homes



**The Next
OCRACES
Meeting is**

**March 6, 2006
1930 Hours
Loma Ridge, 2644
Santiago Cyn Rd. Sil-
verado, CA**

**Our featured
speaker will be
OCRACES member
Bryan Hovde,
KD7CRA**



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

Continued on page 2

Captain's Corner *Continued from page 1*

Bill Borg, KG6PEX, relieved Ralph at about 1900, so Ralph could attend the OCRACES meeting at Eckhoff and discuss Baker-to-Vegas preparations. At 0400 Tuesday morning, Harvey Packard, KM6BV, reported to the EOC. He was relieved at 0800 by Joe Selikov, KB6EID. Tony Sanchez, AE6QT, advised he could relieve Joe at 1300, and Nancee Graff, N6ZRB, said she would take the next shift after that. However, by early Tuesday afternoon, RACES operations were no longer required, and Joe was able to secure operations.

During this activation, many OCRACES members advised they were eager to participate wherever needed. Thanks especially to those members who responded during their normal working hours and to those who operated the "red eye" shifts.

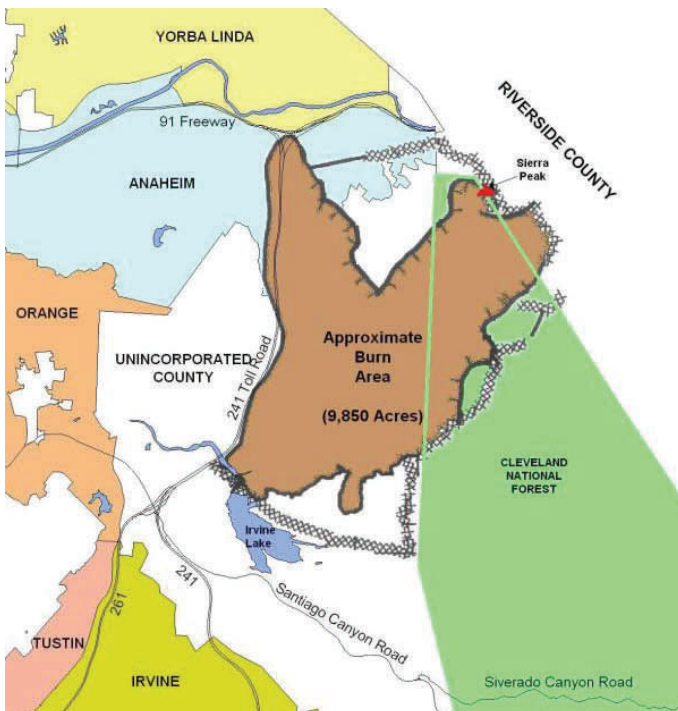
OCFA expressed their appreciation for the OCRACES activation. Although we had advised that some of our members were trained for Severe Fire Weather Patrol duties, a patrol request was not issued. Afterwards, OCFA said they recognized the importance of OCRACES implementing Fire Patrols during critical RED FLAG conditions. We will schedule a training/review session on Patrol procedures at an upcoming OCRACES meeting.



An ominous cloud of smoke hangs over North Orange County



Unified Command was established at Irvine Regional Park



This picture shows just how close the fire came to the Sierra Peak radio site

Continued on page 2

Captain's Corner

Continued from page 2



Wednesday, February 22, was another day to be proud to be an OCRACES member. This was the day that Radio Officer Scott Byington, KC6MMF, received a Sheriff's Department Gold Star Award! This award is presented to OCSD employees and volunteers, recognizing exceptional performance and service to the Department. OCSD/Communications Assistant Director Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ, nominated Scott last year for his efforts in supporting the RACES program, including the RACES emergency communications response vehicle and other technologies such as Winlink. The ceremony focusing on Scott's award was impressive, and included not only his achievements but also details about the importance of the RACES program and amateur radio. Several OCSD deputies, officers, and other employees also received the Gold Star Award. Observing their achievements made us very proud to be a unit within OCSD. Congratulations Scott!



Our next OCRACES meeting will be up on Loma Ridge, on Monday, March 6, at 1930 hours. Our featured speaker is Bryan Hovde, KD7CRA, who is now a Sheriff's radio dispatcher. We will walk through Dispatch and take a look at the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) and radio systems. Then Bryan will talk about his job function and Dispatch capabilities. His presentation will conclude with a question-and-answer session and sharing some stories.

RACES Support Requested for Elections

It is election season again in Orange County with at least three elections scheduled in 2006. The first scheduled election this year is the 35th State Senate District Election on April 11, 2006. This election will not be Countywide but will require 10 Collection Centers scattered throughout the County. It will be similar in size to the 48th Congressional District Election last December.

As in past elections, OCSD/Communications will be managing the transportation of ballots from Collection Centers throughout the County to the Vote Tally Center (VTC) in Santa Ana. RACES support is again requested to provide communications support between Collection Centers and the VTC.

The responsibilities of the communicators will be to transmit information to the Vote Tally Center regarding the activities at the Collection Center as well as request information from the VTC as necessary. We will once again be using our communications link to provide the Registrar of Voters personnel with real-time information on the movement of precinct ballot boxes. RACES communicators will advise Net Control of the precinct numbers on each box loaded into the van once the loading is complete and the van is departing in route to the VTC.

If you haven't received the official email request for support yet, expect to see it in the very near future. We will need RACES communicators at each of the 10 Collection Centers as well as at the VTC. The Collection Centers used for this election will be as follows: Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Los Alamitos, Westminster and Laguna Niguel.

Further down the road we have the June 6, 2006, Primary Election and the November 7, 2006, General Election. These will be Countywide elections with all 23 Collection Centers activated. We will need everyone's help to meet our commitment for these elections. Your support is always appreciated.

Flash Flood Safety

Adapted from an OCFAs safety bulletin by BC John Bond, Chief Safety Officer



Flash floods and flooding are consistently the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. You can dramatically reduce your chance of injury or death by taking time to prepare and preplan your actions in the event that you encounter a flash flood condition.

What causes flash flooding?

Several factors contribute to flash flooding. The two key elements are rainfall intensity and duration. Topography, soil conditions, and ground cover also play an important role. Flash floods may occur within just a few minutes or may result after hours of excessive rainfall. Flash floods can roll boulders, tear out trees, destroy buildings and bridges, and scour out new channels. Floodwaters can reach heights of 10 to 20 feet and often carry a deadly cargo of debris. Flood producing rains can also trigger catastrophic debris slides, especially in areas that have been recently ravaged by wildfire.

How can I protect myself?

Regardless of how a flood occurs, the rule for being safe is simple: head for higher ground and stay away from floodwater. It is exceedingly dangerous to try to walk, swim, or drive in floodwater. Take time to scout out and become familiar with areas that are prone to flooding before weather conditions become critical.

Even when there are no signs of a flood, be alert to conditions that cause floods:

- Heavy rain for several hours, or steady rain for several days, can saturate the ground.
- Distant thunder indicates a distant thunderstorm that could send runoff your way. Runoff can produce deadly flash floods that appear without warning, particularly in certain types of terrain like arroyos and streambeds.
- Other distant events such as a dam break or release of water holding debris.

If you are outdoors, you should:

- Stay out of areas subject to flooding. (Dips, low spots, canyons and washes)

- Climb to high ground and stay there. Move away from dangerous floodwater.
- If you come upon a flowing stream, stop turn around and find another way. Most flood fatalities are caused by people attempting to drive through water or attempting to cross swiftly moving water. As little as six inches of fast moving water can sweep you off your feet. **NEVER** try to walk, swim or work in swift-water.

If you are driving, you should:

- Avoid already flooded areas and areas subject to sudden flooding. The depth of water is not always obvious. The roadbed may be washed out under the water and you could become stranded or trapped. Also, standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines. Rapidly rising water may stall the engine, engulf the vehicle and its occupants, and sweep them away.
- Stay away from underpasses. Driving into an underpass can put you in five to six feet of water.
- Turn around and find another route if you come upon rapidly rising water.
- Abandon your vehicle immediately and climb to higher ground if your vehicle becomes surrounded by water or the engine stalls, and if you can safely get out. The lateral force of one foot of water moving 10 mph is about 500 lbs. For every foot water rises up the side of a vehicle, it displaces 1500 lbs of the vehicle's weight. Two feet of water moving 10 mph will literally float most vehicles including SUVs and pickup trucks.

Watch, Warning:

Watches and warnings are issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) and broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio and local radio and television stations.

- A **Flood WATCH** or **Flash Flood WATCH** means a flooding is possible in your area. A **Flood WARNING** or **Flash Flood WARNING** means that flooding is occurring or will occur very soon. A watch is the first level of alert and a warning indicates that a flash flood or flooding is imminent in a specific area.

Finally, as with all hazardous environments, always evaluate your "Risk vs. Gain" and base all decisions on keeping yourself safe. Remember that both standing and flowing water may contain various types of chemical and bio-hazard materials. Proper post exposure decontamination and exposure documentation should occur.

Watching The Web

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

If you are a dedicated bargain hunter for unusual and hard-to-find electronic parts, Surplus Sales of Nebraska has a fascinating Web site for you to browse at <http://www.surplussales.com>.

Just a few of their parts include RF dummyloads, a remote-base network monitoring system, feed-thru insulators, coaxial attenuators, standoff insulators, linear solenoids, silver-bearing solder, twist locks, rocker switches, breaker and switch boxes, power supplies, nugget and muffin fans, markers, air variable capacitors, digital magnetic pickups, galvanometers, XLR connectors, suppression beads and cores, transient voltage surge suppressor, energy center and transfer switch, miniature VU meters, stepping motors, waveguide, dc transducers, network project box, heatsinks, lightning protectors, neodymium magnets, and much more.

If you don't know where to find a rare part for your project, be sure to check the Surplus Sales of Nebraska Web site.



Baker-to-Vegas 2006

by Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP

With the annual Baker to Vegas Challenge cup less that a month away, the time for final preparations has begun. At the March RACES meeting, some of the specifics of our operations in Baker, Pahrump and Las Vegas were discussed. Since that meeting will take place after I write this but (possibly) before you receive it, please check the ocraces.org Baker to Vegas pages for the latest information. Our activities will be weighted much more toward the few days prior to the race and during the race itself this year, since OCRACES is no longer handling the assigning of tracker box slots. The three tasks which will dominate our resources are the preparation and installation of tracker boxes into the vans, the staffing of the Command Post in Pahrump and the recovery of the tracking equipment in Las Vegas at the end of the race.

Scott Byington (KC6MMF) will be once again in charge of our Pahrump operations. He has many good ideas for this years event, including setting up a Winlink mailbox so that location and other requests can be made via internet email for those who are behind fire walls or for some other reason can not view the internet tracking site. This also means that individuals with internet email aware portable devices will be able to request position information in near real time. This not only includes the well know Blackberry and Treo devices, but also many newer cell phones. Please contact Ralph (W6CSP) or Scott for our email address and additional information as the final details of this are developed.

Lastly, due to the very early date of the event this year, there will be no time available to have a final pre-races meeting with the local teams and tech support personnel. It is even more important that all personnel monitor the websites below as well as the ocraces.org B2V pages for additional last minute information. I look forward to seeing many of you out in the desert.

For further information you can check the following websites:

<http://www.bakervegas.com/> main Baker to Vegas Committee website

<http://www.b2v.org/> Baker to Vegas communications website

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aprsb2v/> B2V APRS yahoo group

RACES News from Around the County

HUNTINGTON BEACH

HB RACES will once again support the Huntington Beach Police Department Running Team (B2V Team #28) by providing critical logistical and safety communications. The 22nd Annual Challenge Cup -- a 120-mile, 20-stage, foot, relay race which starts in Baker, California (gateway to Death Valley) and proceeds through the California desert and over the mountains to Las Vegas, Nevada -- will be held March 31 - April 2, 2006. Running teams are restricted to sworn law enforcement personnel. All of the teams are responsible for providing their own logistics and support efforts, including communications. Several changes to the communications plan required the overhaul of the W6GOS APRS tracker box used to track the teams progress on the course. Wayne Yoshida, KH6WZ, Peter Barbour, N6RAS and Steve Graboff, W6GOS completed the rework and report they are now conducting on-the-air testing on 144.390 MHz until race weekend. Look for '028T' with your favorite APRS software or web based tracking site now and on race weekend. HB RACES B2V communications team is managed this year by Margret Cerecedes, KE6OAR.

SEAL BEACH/LOS ALAMITOS

Alan Ginsberg, WA6TOI, Seal Beach Radio Officer, John Unrath, K6JHU, Los Alamitos Radio Officer, and Sgt. Tim Olson, RACES Coordinator appeared on Seal Beach local cable program "Studio Cafe" to discuss RACES. The purpose was to discuss who RACES is, what they can do for the community in a disaster, and to provide a contact for those wishing to join. The program, including the RACES segment, will air on the Seal Beach cable system during the month of March.

HDSCS

HDSCS closed out its 25th year with our North Pole Network at Children's Hospital of Orange County. And as it turned out that capped our most active year ever with 32 events with hospitals. The previous most active year was 1994 with 31 events. HDSCS also announced their new AEC. He is Jim McLaughlin, AB6UF. Jim has been in the group for 15 years. He has been active on all bands as a ham and holds an extra class license. Though retired he still stays current on the "hospital and pharmaceutical business" and occasionally does some consulting. HDSCS has just been contacted by Kindred Hospital-Santa Ana requesting support of that facility. They are the newest Kindred facility in Orange County and HDSCS already supports their sister facilities in the county so it is a natural extension to include them. That brings to 34, the number of hospitals having HDSCS support for any communications disruption or failure.

REBUILDING TOGETHER

As we have done in past years, County of Orange RACES will once again provide logistics communications support for the annual Rebuilding Together event, formerly known as Christmas in April. The national rebuilding day is Saturday, April 29, 2006. As we have done in the past, OCRACES will be seeking assistance from any interested City RACES organization. The event is too large for us alone, and we are seeking communicators for this day-long activity. RACES volunteers must have a 2-Meter/440 handheld radio, and have the ability to drive their personal vehicle between several locations throughout the day. If you are interested, please have your City Coordinator or Radio Officer contact us at OCRACES@ocgov.com and we will provide you with all the details

**"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**

March 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 <i>Monthly Meeting & Weekly Net</i>	7	8	9	10	11 <i>Monthly Breakfast Meeting</i>
12	13 <i>Weekly Net</i>	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 <i>Weekly Net</i>	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 <i>Weekly Net</i>	28				

Upcoming Events:

- **March 6:** OCRACES monthly meeting, Loma Ridge
- **April 1-2:** Baker-toVegas
- **April 3:** OCRACES monthly meeting
- **April 11:** 35th State Senate District Election
- **April 29:** Rebuilding Together Orange County



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
Tony Sanchez, AE6QT
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
E-Mail – 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
E-Mail - OCRACES@ocgov.com

Visit Our Website
www.ocraces.org
It's Where It's @!

Questions or Comments?
Contact the Net Control Editor
OCRACES@ocgov.com



"W6KRW ...
Serving
Orange County"

Meet your County of Orange RACES Members!



Ken Bourne W6HK Scott Byington KC6MMF Harvey Packard KM6BV Joe Selikov KB6EID Ralph Sbragia W6CSP Marten Miller KF6ZLQ Robert Stoffel KD6DAQ



Jack Barth AB6VC Bill Borg KG6PEX Chuck Dolan KG6UJC Ernest Fierheller KG6LXT Nancee Graff N6ZRB Ray Grimes N8RG Bryan Hovde KD7CRA Walter Kroy KC6HAM



Martin LaRocque N6NTH Carol Matthews KF6ERZ John Roberts W6JOR Tony Sanchez AE6QT Steve Sobodos KN6UX Tom Stroud N6FDZ Tom Tracey KC6FIC