As Sunday, October 21, 2007, approached, the National Weather Service was issuing wind advisories and red flag warnings, and TV weathermen were predicting possibly damaging Santa Ana Winds. Sunday morning’s red flag warning stated that gusty northeast winds to 35 mph would continue in the afternoon, and continue at times through Monday. Humidities would drop below 15 percent Sunday afternoon, with lowest daytime humidities of 10 to 15 percent through Tuesday. OCRACES officers began to chat with each other about a possible activation, especially as winds began to increase during the day. At 1755 on Sunday, a fire started in Blackstar Canyon, and was seen from Control One. The Orange County/Operational Area EOC was activated and

OCRACES Chief Radio Officer Ken Bourne, W6HK, received a page from Control One at 1809. Ken immediately called OCSD Emergency Communications Coordinator Marten Miller, KF6ZLQ, and the decision was made to activate RACES at 1819.

RACES provided 24/7 coverage at the EOC until 1800 hours on Sunday, October 28th. A total of 28 volunteers provided continuous monitoring of EOC, RACES, and public-safety radio systems at the EOC, working 48 shifts. Participants included RACES and ACS members from Orange County, Anaheim, Fullerton, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Niguel, Los Alamitos, and Placentia.

The Orange County Fire Authority requested the assistance of RACES volunteers on October 23rd, asking for 24/7

Continued on page 2
staffing at the Incident Command Post in Irvine Regional Park in the eastern part of Orange. A total of 36 County and City RACES and ACS members provided continuous support during 54 shifts at the ICP until November 5th at 2200 hours. Participants came from Orange County, Anaheim, Brea, Costa Mesa, Fullerton, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Niguel, Los Alamitos, La Palma, Mission Viejo, Newport Beach, and Westminster.

Working at either or both the EOC and the OCFA Incident Command Post were the following:

- Greg Allen, K6GMA, Costa Mesa
- Gary Bakirci, KI6DB, Laguna Niguel
- Tom Baldwin, KA6ZPY, Anaheim
- Peter Barbour, N6RAS, Huntington Beach
- Jack Barth, AB6VC, Orange County
- Randy Benicky, N6PRL, Orange County
- Bill Borg, KG6PEX, Orange County
- Ken Bourne, W6HK, Orange County
- Scott Byington, KC6MMF, Orange County
- Jim Carter, WB6HAG, Orange County
- Cari Cole, KF6OSP, Irvine
- Tom Cole, KF6OSO, Irvine
- Frank Columbus, WA2KWR, Laguna Niguel
- Chuck Davis, W6MD, Anaheim
- Chuck Dolan, KG6UJC, Orange County
- Mick Donoff, KG6GRC, Laguna Beach
- Ernest Fierheller, KG6LXT, Orange County
- Lou Frank, KG6FCT, Mission Viejo
- Nancee Graff, N6ZRB, Orange County
- Jim Hansen, KG6ZDP, Huntington Beach

Dick Ingwerson, N6PFY, Westminster
Knute Josifek, K6HIV, Mission Viejo
Bill Kohlenberger, W6ZJE, Fullerton
Walter Kroy, KC6HAM, Orange County
Mike Krueger, N6MIK, Brea
Gary Labb, KM6VC, Huntington Beach
John McCauley, KD6PGC, Placentia
Harvey Packard, KM6BV, Orange County
Bob Pestolesi, KE6GYD, Irvine
Ken Rand, K6KCR, Mission Viejo
John Roberts, W6JOR, Orange County
Jim Robertson, KK6NK, Newport Beach
Michi Rodgers, KD6GVL, Anaheim
Tony Sanchez, AE6QT, Orange County
Ralph Sbragia, W6CSP, Orange County
Joe Selikov, KB6EID, Orange County
Mark Shapiro, K6OGD, Fullerton
Peter Shores, AD6TN, Huntington Beach
Charley Speelman, WA6RZU, Mission Viejo
Lynn Taylor, WB6UUT, Laguna Beach
Larry Tichauer, KE6AKE, La Palma
Joe Tom, KB6JOE, Huntington Beach
Tom Tracey, KC6FIC, Orange County
Gene Thorpe, KB6CMO, Fullerton
John Unrath, K6JHU, Los Alamitos
Sally Unrath, KF6MDI, Los Alamitos
Manny Vizinho, K6IQL, Huntington Beach
Simon Zeller, WB6BMR, Huntington Beach

OCRACES Member Tom Tracey, KC6FIC, checks inventory of Bendix-King portable radios that were distributed to fire fighters at the OCFA Incident Command Post in Irvine Regional Park

OCSD Emergency Communications Coordinator Marten Miller, KF6ZLQ, and OCSD Communications Division Director Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ (background) check e-mail, and OCRACES Radio Officers Harvey Packard, KM6BV, and Joe Selikov, KB6EID, handle traffic on 2-meter repeater in EOC RACES Room during Santiago Fire Incident
RACES Responds to San Diego County

As if the more than two weeks of Santiago Fire activation were not enough, John Hudson, WA6HYQ, Assistant Chief, State OES Communications Technology Division, Southern Region, issued a request on November 7, 2007, for RACES/ACS help at the Harris Fire in the Deerhorn Valley area of San Diego County. The mission was to help residents who lost telephone service to dial out via the State’s OASIS satellite trailers. OCRACES Chief Radio Officer Ken Bourne, W6HK, forwarded the OES request to all City RACES units. Responding for the 12-hour shifts were RACES members from Buena Park (James Payne, WB6WUM), Costa Mesa (Greg Allen, K6GMA), and Huntington Beach (Jim Hansen, KG6ZDP, Cam Harriot, KI6WK, and Bill Prats, K6ACJ). Laguna Beach has also offered to send assistance. The situation could last through the end of November, and additional City and County RACES personnel may be responding.

OCRACES Exhibits at OCFA Open House

OCRACES exhibited its emergency communications response vehicle at the Orange County Fire Authority Open House on Saturday, October 13, 2007, at the Orange County Fire Authority’s Regional Fire Operations and Training Center (RFOTC) in Irvine.

Many families visited our display and learned about amateur radio and what RACES can do during an emergency. OCRACES members at the event included Chief Radio Officer Ken Bourne, W6HK, and Radio Officers Scott Byington, KC6MMF, and Harvey Packard, KM6BV.

Disney Salutes Wildfire Heroes

As a thank-you to those involved with the Southern California wildfire response, The Disneyland Resort is offering a complimentary three-day Park Hopper ticket for admission to Disneyland and Disney’s California Adventure for each individual holding a public-safety agency ID card. The offer also allows that individual to make a one-time purchase of up to five three-day Park Hopper tickets for family members at a rate of $56 each. To acquire the tickets, you must go to the ticket booths at the resort and be prepared to present both an agency ID card and a valid California driver’s license. The tickets must be used the first time on the day they are acquired. Use of the remaining two days on the ticket must be completed within 30 days of the first use. The offer is valid from November 13, 2007, until February 28, 2008. However, the blackout dates of November 22-25, December 8-9, December 25 to January 6, and February 15-17 apply. For more information and details on the offer, go to http://www.disneyland.com/hero.
City/County/State/MOU Units Hold ACS Drill

Members of OCRACES and 17 City RACES and ACS units, plus San Clemente, one of three cities forming the new Tri-Cities RACES unit, plus State OES ACS, the Hospital Disaster Support Communications System (HDSCS), American Red Cross/Orange County, Orange County SKYWARN, and REACT participated in the City/County/MOU ACS drill on Saturday morning, October 6, 2007, from 0900 to 1100. This drill was conducted as an ACS (Auxiliary Communications Service, as defined by State OES) exercise, to allow all MOU participants (HDSCS, Red Cross, and SKYWARN) who do not have an MOU with all City RACES units to communicate with those Cities, which otherwise would not be allowed under the strict regulations of FCC RACES rules.

The scenario for this exercise was severe flooding resulting from a failure of the Prado Dam. SKYWARN began the drill by reading a simulated flood warning. Messages reflected the possible needs public safety might have, such as evacuating citizens, requests for resources, or resources that could be offered, such as care & shelter facilities or police/fire/public-works personnel and equipment. Each City sent messages to County RACES, at least four other Cities, and HDSCS. Cities also received messages from other Cities, the County, and HDSCS, Red Cross, and SKYWARN.

For the first time we used the FEMA ICS 213 message form, which is a simpler form than the previously used RACES message form.

Assistant Radio Officer Jim Carter, WB6HAG, who was in charge of visual communications in the drill, noted that Brea and Irvine participated with SSTV, Martin La Rocque, N6NTH, represented OCRACES with ATV, and Huntington Beach attempted ATV in their helicopter. All SSTV stations had excellent picture quality. To simplify SSTV operations, Jim moved both voice and SSTV picture operations to one frequency. Martin operated from north Orange using a 10-watt-PEP ATV transmitter with a 10-element beam. Once Martin was in location, unobstructed by hills, he sent a P4 to P5 picture. Huntington Beach EOC was receiving a P3 picture from the side of Martin's beam and a P4 to P5 picture when he pointed his antenna towards them. Huntington Beach Fire was seeing Martin's picture in a P2 to P3 quality. Both Huntington Beach stations were using an omni antenna with crystal-controlled ATV receivers.
Tropospheric Ducting Forecast for VHF and UHF
http://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo_wam.html

Thanks to OCRACES Member John Roberts, W6JOR, who forwarded a message from Jim Kirstein posted to a “Technical Forum” about a Web site that provides a six-day forecast of tropospheric ducting. The site was developed by William P. Hepburn, a professional meteorologist in Canada and an avid radio/TV DX enthusiast. This particular URL at http://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo_wam.html is a page for western North America. Kirstein, in his message, states that “ducting has the potential to cause interference to VHF and UHF communications.” We radio amateurs look at ducting in a different way. Rather than causing interference, it occasionally opens up the VHF and UHF bands for unusual propagation to areas that we normally do not hear on 6 meters, 2 meters, 222 MHz, 440 MHz, and even higher frequency bands.

Kirstein points out that “these six day forecasts are in map form with the ability to select the region you are interested in. In addition there are several tutorials on the site that help explain this phenomenon. One is the Hepburn Tropo Index, which was developed by William Hepburn, which displays the degree of tropospheric bending expected to occur over a particular area. This index gives an indication of how much signal bending is taking place overhead, and can help explain why an officer in the field cannot be heard, yet Kansas City is coming in loud and clear. That can be a real help to both techs and engineers in explaining to our customers communications problems.” We hams don’t have to explain such interference to customers. If we hear “Kansas City coming in loud and clear” on 2 meters simplex, for example, it’s not something to complain about (unless we are activated for an emergency), but, rather, as “propagation nuts,” we get excited about the unusual conditions and try to work that station. This Web site will help us predict when such conditions might occur, and to get our antennas and equipment ready to work the “DX” stations.

OCRACES Holiday Dinner Meeting: Dec. 3rd

Members of County of Orange RACES and their families will gather at Marie Callender’s Restaurant, 307 E. Katella Avenue, in Orange, on Monday, December 3, 2007, at 6:30 PM, for the annual OCRACES Holiday Dinner. The Orange County Sheriff’s Department, Communications Division, will take this opportunity to recognize the many hours provided by OCRACES members during 2007 for activations and drills, and for working on several projects as part of their service to the Department.

OCSD/Communications also invites OCRACES members to the Division’s Holiday Luncheon on Tuesday, December 11th, at 11:30 AM, at 840 N. Eckhoff Street, in Orange.
Hospital Disaster Support Communications System (HDSCS)

At 9 AM on Sunday, October 21, 2007, HDSCS was paged by the Orange County EMS Communications Center. A power failure had occurred at Chapman Medical Center in Orange and there were intermittent problems with the generator. External telephone communications had completely failed and internal phones were intermittent. An HDSCS net was activated and Ken Simpson, W6KOS, immediately went to the hospital, arriving in about 25 minutes. Following soon after were Dale Petes, KI6ANS, Clay Stearns, KE6TZR, and Dave West, KI6EPI. To provide internal communications, they deployed to the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit, a medical-surgical unit, and a sub-acute care unit. April Moell, WA6OPS, and Tom Gaccione, WB2LRH, made calls to line up additional operators to relieve the first responders if needed. Telephone technicians arrived to fix the phones at about 10:30 AM and the lines were working again about 40 minutes after that. HDSCS operators remained on the units until 11:45 AM to make sure that the system was stable before securing operations. Cheryl Simpson, KD6MWZ, was the primary net control and outside base station during this event.

Seal Beach/Los Alamitos RACES

The last Seal Beach/Los Alamitos RACES meeting was held on November 14, 2007, at Leisure World, as part of a drill involving RACES members and the Leisure World Radio Club’s emergency radio group. RACES members used their regular 70-cm repeater and also Leisure World’s 2-meter simplex frequency. Leisure World’s net control, W6US, gave RACES members assignments to travel to one of the six Leisure World club houses. At each club house the RACES operator was given an earthquake damage assessment for a “mutual” (housing group) related to that club house. RACES operators transmitted that assessment to the Leisure World net control and RACES net control.

Seal Beach/Los Alamitos RACES (as well as several other City RACES units and OCRACES) participated earlier in the day in the Golden Guardian drill, dealing with various affects from simulated terrorist attacks.

Newport Beach RACES

The RACES Coordinator for Newport Beach RACES is now Police Sergeant Lloyd Whisenant.

City of Orange Amateur Radio (COAR)

Ken Konechy, W6HHC, a member of City of Orange Amateur Radio (the City’s RACES unit), and secretary of the Orange County Amateur Radio Club, wrote a very nice article on the September 15th and 16th Volunteer Mutual Aid Drill (VMAD), published in the October 2007 issue of RF, the club’s newsletter. The newsletter is posted on the club’s Web site at http://www.w6ze.org.

Laguna Beach RACES (LBECT)

Welcome back to Laguna Beach Emergency Communications Team (LBECT) Chief Radio Officer John Kountz, KE6GFF, who spent a month in Afghanistan operating as T6EE, mostly around 14.200 MHz. He returned home on November 17th.
November 2007

Upcoming Events:

- **Nov 5:** OCRACES Meeting, 840 N. Eckhoff St.
- **Nov 14:** Golden Guardian Exercise
- **Nov 17:** RACES Academy
- **Dec 3:** OCRACES Holiday Dinner
- **Dec 4:** NWS Winter Weather Workshop
- **Dec 11:** OCSD/Comm’s Holiday Luncheon
- **Jan 7:** OCRACES Meeting, 840 N. Eckhoff St.

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

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.

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Bill Borg  KG6PEX
Chuck Dolan  KG6UJC
Nancee Graff  N6ZRB
Ray Grimes  N5RG

Walter Kroy  KC5HAM
Martin La Rocque  N6NTH
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