

**REACT International
Officers**

Dick Cooper....President
Ed Greany...Executive
Vice-President
Lee W. Besing...Secretary
Norman Kaplan...Treasurer
Charles A. Thompson,
General Counsel

Board of Directors

L. O. "Larry" Fry Chairman,
Region 5
Robert Kaster, Vice-
chairman, Region 7
Fred Lanshe....Region 1
Don Manlove....Region 2
John Knott.....Region 3
Paul Jackson....Region 4
Frank Jennings...Region 6
Eric Hutchins...Region 8
Kenny Jagdeo Singh...
.....Region 9
Dick Cooper, *ex officio*

**Publication Review
Committee**

Stuart M. DeLuca,
Chairman & Editor
Eric Hutchins
R. K. "Bob" Leef

Advertising Manager

Ron McCracken
advertising@reactintl.org

Editorial Address:

The REACTer
P.O. Box 180922
Austin, TX 78718
reacter@reactintl.org

Circulation Address:

5210 Auth Rd., Ste. 403
Suitland, MD 20746
react@reactintl.org

REACT International

Dora Wilbanks, Ofc. Mgr.
5210 Auth Rd., Ste. 403
Suitland, MD 20746
voice: 301-316-2900
fax: 301-316-3903



the REACTer

Volume 38, No. 4

July-August, 2004

| | |
|----|--|
| 2 | From the President.....Dick Cooper |
| 3 | From the Executive Vice-President.....Ed Greany |
| 4 | Petition to the FCC.....William M. Riley |
| 5 | An Explosive Situation!.....R. K. "Bob" Leef |
| 6 | How To Be a Follower.....Stuart M. DeLuca |
| 8 | GMRS/FRS: Radio "Training Wheels".....Kurt Barnhart |
| 9 | Internet Radio Linking.....Keith Hosman |
| 10 | REACT Responds to Weather Disasters |
| 12 | REACTivities: Team & Council News |
| 14 | One Hundred PerCenters; New Teams |
| 15 | Silent Mics |
| 16 | Unsquelled: Hiding the Light.....Stuart M. DeLuca |

On the Cover:

Volunteer Gwen Brown and a participant in the Georgia Association for Community Living Walkathon. REACT Lake Simcoe gave helium-filled balloons to participants and volunteers for safety. (See page 13) (Photo: Anne Joyce)

REACT International Board of Directors will meet August 6-7 in Dallas, Texas. Complete report in Sept-Oct REACTer!

The REACTer(ISSN 1055-9167) is the official publication of REACT International, Inc., a nonprofit public service corporation. © 2004 RI. All rights reserved.

Mailed at Periodicals Rate at Suitland, MD, and other mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to REACT, 5210 Auth Rd., Suite 403, Suitland, MD 20746-4330.

The REACTer is published bimonthly (six issues per year); the subscription price is included in members' dues. (See *About Your Subscription* on the last page of this issue.) Subscription rate for nonmembers is \$7.50 per year (U.S.).

REACT Teams or Councils may reproduce articles in their publications if proper credit is given.

Articles and photo submissions are welcome, but cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage. We are not responsible for unsolicited materials. Please see our **Publication Guidelines** at www.reactintl.org for more information.

For information regarding advertising, please contact the Advertising Manager at the e-mail address or the Suitland office address shown at left.

The REACTer is available on-line, in full color, at www.reactintl.org.



From the President

by Dick Cooper

In the May-June issue of *the REACTer* Ed Greany's article outlined the most important areas that need to be addressed in order to make *REACT* grow and become a better organization. I hope that everyone has read that article very well and understands how important these areas are to *REACT*.

I would also like to see members respond to that article by becoming involved in committees and other areas of *REACT* International, especially public relations, membership and ways and means (fundraising).

If your expertise is in another area, contact Ed and I'm sure that he can point you in the right direction. Remember that American independence (July 4th) was achieved through the extra efforts of volunteers who believed in what they were doing, and *REACT* growth and progress can be achieved through this same extra effort. Volunteer to help *REACT*; this is your organization.

Renewal time is just around the corner and this is a good time to remind everyone to recruit new members into your Team. In case you may have forgotten, below you will find a list of some of the benefits of *REACT* membership:

* Receive *The REACTer* magazine

* Authorized to wear *REACT* apparel

* Authorized to use *REACT* I.D. materials

* Discounts on car rentals, hotels, etc.

* Training materials and information on various subjects of interest to *REACTers*

* Insurance coverage (Individual General Liability)

* Regional, national, and international activities

* Participate with several major organizations through cooperative agreements

* Member of the largest organization of its kind in the world

* Recognition as a dependable, community based organization

REACT membership is a package deal. You cannot remove any one benefit and say that without that benefit *REACT* is not worth belonging to. If you do, then you are missing the Big Picture of *REACT* membership. In order to make my point here, just remember why you joined *REACT* in the first place. Was it because you liked to help people, or you like to communicate, or you like to help with community events? All of the important reasons to join *REACT* and remain as a member are still in place.

If some of the benefits changed, then take proper steps to adjust the situation if necessary so your Team can function at its fullest potential. If anyone is wondering, this paragraph concerns

the change in insurance coverage. Your RI officers continue to work on improving the situation. Thank you to all Teams and members who understand the situation and have reacted accordingly.

New Membership Brochure

available now from REACT International!



Not Just Another Radio Club...



REACT International, Inc.

This new full-color, tri-fold pamphlet tells the *REACT* story - who we are, what we do, why it's a great volunteer opportunity!

100 @ \$10

REACT Int'l
5210 Auth Rd., Ste. 403
Suitland, MD 20746

From the Executive Vice-President

by Ed Greany

This year has already given *REACT* many challenges to test us. We were hit with the cancellation of our liability insurance, then we were recently subjected to some unusual serious weather disasters across the country, and now there are serious threats of terrorism right here on our own soil.

*REACT*ers have high stamina and the will to volunteer when the need arises. We have seen this occur for over forty years now and we are still going strong, determined to succeed with our goals and purpose, using whatever radio band achieves the best results in our locale.

Disaster preparedness should not be taken lightly. All of us need to be prepared for whatever we may encounter: to first tend to our immediate family, then to our neighbors, and finally to the general public. There are many resources for the necessary training to be prepared. *REACT* provides much of the training available.

A good example is the *REACT* Emergency Communications Course available to all *REACT* members. This comprehensive self-study program is designed to give you the necessary communication tools to serve your community in time of disaster. If you haven't completed the course I highly recommend it. It is not necessary to do it all at once. There are enough chapters that you can do one chapter each day or even one each week if your time is scarce. In no time you will

be done and can receive a Certificate of Completion to proudly frame on your wall.

Disaster preparedness should not be taken lightly.

FEMA and the National Fire Academy also have some excellent courses available to everyone. They are listed on their respective websites or you can simply write to them for a list of courses. Finally, your local American Red Cross is an excellent resource for disaster courses. Most of them are free of charge and you are also welcome to be a volunteer for them as a good gesture for receiving the free training. We never have enough paid disaster workers and it is only through

volunteers that we see ourselves through tough times.

Look over your radio equipment. Prepare a "Go Bag" in case you are called out on short notice. Check your batteries. Are they ready to give you reliable service for at least four hours or more? Or do they only last a few minutes because the radio sits constantly in the charger? Or worse yet, they don't work at all?

Finally, I encourage you to become an amateur radio operator (ham) if you are not one already. If you are, then upgrade to a higher class for additional recognition and operating privileges. Teach other members what you know and practice skills together. We must all be vigilant with a heightened awareness of our surroundings and be prepared for whatever disasters may come our way.

SCANNER USERS • COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS

BUY POLICE CALL 2004 AND GET A CD-ROM AT NO EXTRA COST!

CD-ROM 2004 (Version 5.0) includes all volumes Completely revised! Current through July, 2003 20,000 codes and signals!

FCC and Federal Frequency Allocations, 26-941 Mhz Illustrated Listeners Guide Book Trunk talkgroup IDs!

Got a Scanner? Get Police Call!

AT YOUR SCANNER DEALER AND ALL RADIO SHACK STORES

More people have bought *POLICE CALL* than all other VHF-UHF Frequency guides combined!

A Petition to the FCC:

(Editor's Note: Several electric utility companies have proposed a new service called Broadband over Power Lines, or BPL, that involves transmitting broadband Internet service over electric utility wires to customers' homes. REACT International strongly opposes this concept because of concerns that BPL will generate substantial RF interference to emergency radio signals, mostly in the Amateur bands. RI's FCC Liaison, William M. Riley of Prince George's County (Md.) REACT, has sent the following petition to the FCC on behalf of REACT International.)

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of)
Inquiry Regarding Carrier Current Systems,) ET Docket No. 03-104
Including Broadband over Power Line Systems)

Reply Comments

William M. Riley, of 12215 Malta Lane, Bowie, MD 20715-1811, submits these comments in his official capacity as FCC Liaison on behalf of REACT International Inc, Suite 403, 5210 Auth Road, Suitland, MD 20746-4330. REACT, The Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams, is an organization of volunteers who use the General Mobile Radio Service, Amateur Radio, CB, FRS, and other personal radio services for emergency and public service communications.

REACT concurs with the comments already submitted by the American Radio Relay League in this matter. While REACT does not have the extensive technical and laboratory resources of the ARRL, we have reviewed their submission and we agree that use of Broadband over Power Lines causes unacceptable interference to all HF and low-VHF radio services. The experience of our members in areas where BPL is in use on a limited basis also supports this position.

In addition, we would point out a contrast between BPL and cable television, both of which use frequencies allocated to other radio services. Cable television is a "closed system." The coaxial cable does not radiate under normal circumstances. When amateur radio operators report interference from a cable TV system, the cable companies have been responsive and cooperative, because they know such a "leak" indicates a serious problem with some cable connections, often as a result of theft of service. Power lines used for BPL, on the other hand, will radiate all the time. Our complaints of interference from a BPL system will fall on deaf ears because "the system is operating as permitted by the FCC."

Therefore, REACT International urges the FCC not to authorize any increased use of Broadband over Power Lines in the United States.

Respectfully submitted,

William M. Riley
August 9, 2003

an **EXPLOSIVE** situation!

by R. K. "Bob" Leef

All of us probably have seen the sign in construction areas: CAUTION! BLASTING AHEAD! NO RADIO TRANSMISSION! Have you ever wondered whether one mode of two-way radio transmitting is more apt to trigger explosions than another? Would it be HF, VHF, UHF, 800 MHz., AM, FM, etc., etc.? What about the relationship of power and distance?

Maybe you have also wondered in recent years whether terrorists can detonate explosives by means of radio frequencies. And, in very recent times, how about cellular telephones or WiFi from laptops? We should also wonder about the twelve million or so FRS radios sold every year.

Actually, I have not seen one of those signs in quite some time. Perhaps this technology has been outdated by some other means of setting off explosives?

One authority is the Institute of Makers of Explosives in Washington, DC. I contacted Lon Santis, Manager of Technical Services, with my questions.

Santis told me, "We have a standard on the subject of RF hazards in relation to standard electric detonators

used in the US." A copy of the standards can be purchased from IME at <<http://www.ime.org/store/slps2.asp>> .

Santis continued, "From that you will see that RF can be a threat to any electro-explosive device. Generally, the frequency, power, orientation of the antenna, and distance are the most important

There is no way to determine the sensitivity of an electronic detonator...

variables. Again, generally, lower frequencies, higher powers, and closer distances increase the threat. Antenna orientation can cause pickup to be 0% to 100%." IME's standards include recommendations for safe distances from blasting devices. He added, "There is always a direct contact threat, so IME recommends five feet from the weakest (2 watt or less) handheld radios. For one watt or less cell phones, we recommend eight feet."

Unfortunately, there is no way to determine the sensitivity of an electronic detonator, especially for an unknown

device such as a weapon of mass destruction. Commercial blasting devices do adhere to certain standards but they vary according to the type of device.

Santis concludes, "for the time being, there must be a balance struck between the threat of premature initiation from RF and the threat of loss of communications or other impacts from banning RF sources. Just as RF can present hazards, so can overreaction to that threat. For example, one must consider how emergency response would be affected if radio communications were banned over a wide area."

This last sentence is thought-provoking for me. Just a month ago, three Saddleback Valley REACT members presented to teachers at a local school a short information program about types of two-way radios they could use.

During our time there I asked the assistant principal what their procedures were in the event of a bomb threat. One of the things she mentioned was that they had been told to stay off the radio. Does your school/business/public building/agency/etc. have a plan to communicate effectively in this scenario?



How To Be a

FOLLOWER

by Stuart M. DeLuca

Remember when you played “Follow the Leader”? Whatever the “leader” did, you had to imitate; wherever the “leader” went, you had to follow – or drop out of the game. The game ended when everyone but the “leader” had dropped out.

Like most kids’ games, “Follow the Leader” has more than a casual relationship to real (adult) life. Most people understand that good leadership is essential to the success of any group effort, and dozens of books have been written on the qualities of good leadership. Strangely enough, almost nothing has been written about the qualities of good *followership*.

From my own experience in *REACT* and many other organizations, I’ve come to the conclusion that it is every bit as important, and sometimes much more difficult, to be a good follower than a good leader. This article is an attempt to describe some of the ways you can be a better follower.

The “working parts” of

REACT are the Teams, and that term was chosen wisely. There are no “chapters” or other local units in *REACT* – only Teams. A Team is a group of people who contribute their various skills and abilities, in a coordinated manner, to achieve a common goal. The primary function of a Team’s leader is to provide for coordination: to see that each part of the Team’s task is carried out in the proper way, at the proper time, and to the proper result.

The function of the rest of the Team – the followers – is to do their part to the best of their ability, so that they contribute to the Team’s success. Specifically, here are some of the things good followers do – and don’t do:

Volunteer – and Mean It!

You’re not a member of the Team if you don’t participate, and Teams can’t be successful if most of the members are just “spectators.” When the Team decides, as a group, to undertake an activity, decide what part of the

activity you can do – and offer your services. Don’t wait to be asked; that just adds one more chore for the leaders to perform.

When you do volunteer, consider it a promise. Even if your part doesn’t seem critical, the rest of the Team is counting on you to be there, to do what you said you would do. Just as a chain always breaks at the weakest link, a Team fails when the least important member neglects to show up, or can’t do the job he or she agreed to do.

Don’t Use the Excuse, “I’m Just a Volunteer”!

All *REACT* members are volunteers; you’re no different from the rest. But you made a promise to do your part, and your promise should be just as binding as if you were being paid. A broken promise is no different from a lie, and no Team can function if its members are unreliable.

Sometimes a promise is made in good faith, but circumstances change or something hap-

pens that prevents you from keeping your promise. When that happens, it is essential to let the leader know as soon as possible, so that some adjustment can be made.

Ask Questions Before a Decision Is Made

When the Team is considering a proposed activity or course of action, that's the time to ask questions or raise concerns. If you don't understand some aspect of the proposal, ask for a clearer explanation. If you see a possible problem that would prevent the action from being successful, speak up! The time to address questions and possible problems is *before* the decision is made!

Don't Nit-pick

Before you ask a question or raise a possible problem, while the Team is considering a proposed activity, stop and ask yourself, "Does it matter?" Will the answer to your question change the way you will vote on the proposal – or the way others might vote? Will the problem you're concerned about make any difference in the outcome of the Team's actions? If the answer is, "No," don't waste everyone's time on questions or possible problems that make no difference.

Support the Team's Decisions

Once the Team has decided, by formal vote or otherwise, to carry out a proposed activity or a course of action, *every member* is committed to its success. You may think it's a bad idea or that it won't succeed, but your loyalty to the Team demands that you put just as much effort into making the plan succeed as if it was your idea in the first place. If

the Team decides to do something that you simply can't support, at least keep your opinion to yourself (once the decision has been made); don't continue to express doubts or opposition.

Respect the Leader's Authority

When a Team elects an officer, it is conferring on that person the authority necessary to carry out his or her duties. Your loyalty to the Team requires that you respect that authority, whether or not you like or agree with the officer. Behind-the-back criticism and other disrespectful behavior sabotages the Team's morale and effectiveness.

Throw the Bum Out!

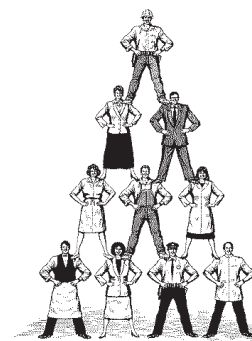
Sometimes a Team elects the wrong person to office, and the leader soon proves to be incompetent or worse. Depending on how the Team's bylaws are worded, replacing a bad leader may be relatively simple.

If the bylaws say, for example, "The officer will serve a term of one year *or* until a successor is duly elected and takes office," removing the officer is fairly easy. The key word is *or*. If the bylaws say something like, "...one year *and* until a successor..." or if the bylaws simply state a fixed term in office, removing the officer is much more difficult, and it's probably best just to wait until the next election.

But if the bylaws have that crucial *or*, it implies that the Team may elect a new officer at any time. The procedure is simple: At any regular Team meeting, any member may "move to rescind the previous election of (officer's name)." The motion must be seconded, and it requires a two-thirds

vote of those present and voting *or* a majority of the Team's total membership. If the motion passes, the office is immediately declared vacant and the Team can elect someone to fill the vacancy.

There's more to being a good follower than I've covered in this brief article, but I hope these guidelines will serve as a starting point. If you remember that you're a member of a *TEAM* and your reason for being there is to help the Team succeed, that's the best way to be a good follower!



Midland

LEGACY



- *45 Watts
- *32 Channels
- *CTCSS & DCS
- *Weather Channels
- *2 Year Warranty

\$289

www.rkleef.com

Using GMRS and FRS as Radio "Training Wheels"

by Kurt Baruhart, Palomar REACT

With the growth in popularity of the FRS and GMRS radio services, many REACT Teams today use the 462 and 467 MHz spectrum as their primary radio communications method. While Amateur radio does have some advantages for local emergencies, regional disasters, and long distance communications, GMRS and FRS are ideal two-way radio training grounds for adults and children alike.

FRS radios with an output of 500mw or less may be operated by anyone of any age without a license on the proper channels (designated as channels 1 through 14 on most FRS and GMRS combo radios). When supervised by an adult, children as young as five years of age can use FRS to start learning about the correct use of two-way radios. This kind of early training may very well spark interest in a child to advance to more sophisticated forms of radio communications.

Parents and grandparents (or REACT Teams) might enjoy creating their own personalized "training classes" to teach kids and young adults how to use radios properly and discourage them from transmitting on the wrong channels, which is a problem in many cities. Some parents might even want to prepare a simple test that their children must pass before they are permitted to operate a radio on their own. This could

help build knowledge and reduce the misuse of GMRS frequencies.

One way to create a simple test would be to modify a few of the easier questions from the FCC's Radio Amateur technician license exam, which can be found at <<http://www.qsl.net/w9mks/t2000p.txt>> .

You could even write a few of your own questions on safety, operating hours, and other special rules unique to your family or community.

After a child in the nine- to twelve-year age range has demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge and responsibility, a parent may decide to allow him or her to use the family's GMRS license, under proper supervision. Part 95 GMRS rules permit a minor to use a parent's or older sibling's GMRS license to operate at up to 50 watts on the appropriate GMRS frequencies, and to use repeaters with proper permission. This is one difference between GMRS and Amateur radio, where a parent cannot allow a child to use the parent's Amateur license when the parent is not physically present. As long as licensing privileges are not misused, GMRS is an ideal way to become familiar with radio theory, operating etiquette, and proper radio procedures.

Technically, GMRS is very similar to the 440 MHz (70cm) Amateur band and acceptable uses are similar but not iden-

tical. Users have more freedom to talk about business on GMRS but cannot link repeaters and cannot broadcast a CQ, or transmit CW, SSB, or Amateur television. Only FM voice modulation with a type-accepted transceiver is permitted on GMRS.

Repeaters, mobile rigs and PL tones work nearly the same way on the UHF Amateur band and GMRS, with minor differences. Signal propagation is identical, power output of HTs is about the same, HT programming is similar, the physical characteristics of coax lines and external antennas (both verticals and yagis) are nearly identical (within a few centimeters), antenna theory is the same, external power supplies and battery management are identical.

Operating a GMRS radio helps people develop their radio technique and build a level of confidence that will serve them well in Amateur radio. Reading and understanding FCC Part 95 rules for GMRS (which are simpler) is good preparation to study and understand Part 97 rules for Amateur radio.

An adult or child who starts out knowing nothing about radio communications and who learns about GMRS radios and repeaters will be better prepared to earn an Amateur FCC license after using GMRS for a few months with friends, family members, and REACT Teammates.

IRLP-Internet Radio Linking Project

bringing radio and Internet technologies together

by Keith Hosman, KC8TCQ
Henry County (Ohio) *REACT*

With the technology available to us today, particularly radios and the Internet, a great new tool for communications is available: IRLP - Internet Radio Linking Project.

IRLP allows amateurs to communicate to other parts of the country, or even the world, using a handheld, mobile, or base radio. For example, I travel quite often, and if I want to contact some of my amateur friends at home, I can bring up a local IRLP repeater or simplex station, enter the codes to connect to the node back home, and have instant contact. Through the use of reflectors multiple nodes can be connected at once.

Several public safety and emergency service organizations use IRLP. The American Red Cross has a weekly nationwide net for disaster response issues. SKYWARN also has a nationwide IRLP Net. So why can't *REACT*? Well, we can, I have received permission from the good people who own and host the Western Reflector in Las Vegas, Nevada.

I will quote from the e-mail I received from Jack Cook, N8RRL:

"Both Kent and I would like to invite *REACT* to use the reflector for a net. We would like to see the reflector used for coordination and training of
July-August, 2004

EMCOMM units. A *REACT* net would be another great use for the IRLP. Channel number 7 of the Western reflector has been reserved for this type of use. It is accessed by connecting to node 9257 and is available 24/7. The only thing we ask at this point is to keep me in the loop as you promote your net, so that we know your plans so that we don't set up another net at the same day and time."

[IRLP] offers Teams a way to coordinate efforts and share information...

This net has great opportunities for *REACT*. It offers Teams a way to coordinate efforts and share information of interest to the *REACT* community, and gives *REACT*ers a chance to know each other better than just an invisible voiceless name in an e-mail or postal mail. We could also do on-the-air training on radio procedures, message handling, and Net Control procedures.

Anyone interested in participating in the final planning of the IRLP should feel free to join the *REACT* IRLP Discussion Group that has been established on Yahoo.com; go to <http://

groups.yahoo.com/group/react_irlp_net/ to subscribe to the group. Meanwhile, you're also welcome to join the net itself. The net will take place on the second and fourth Saturday evenings each month, at 0100 UTC, or 8PM EST. It will take place on Channel 7 of the 925 Reflector in Las Vegas, Nevada, so to connect use node ID 9257. If you have any questions or problems, you can contact me by e-mail at <logdshr@bnnorth.net>.



Midland
75-440

- *16 GMRS & 7 FRS Channels
- *440-470 MHz
- *Repeater capable
- *CTCSS/DCS

\$139

www.rkleef.com
(949)770-9501
Software to program 76 more channels, just \$49

REACT Responds to

Torrential Rains, Tornadoes, and Hailstorms Have Pounded Parts of the

Cedar-loo (Iowa) REACT

Our area of the state has had over seven inches of rain in the last four days. We are expecting major rises above flood level on the Shellrock, West Fork of the Cedar, and Cedar River.

Also the Iowa River in Central Iowa is showing major rises. Last night there were numerous tornadoes and most of the state was under a tornado warning and flash flood warnings. Marshalltown, Iowa, was pretty well flooded mostly by heavy rain. I heard this morning that nearly forty thousand acres of land are flooded. Boy, am I glad that I live on high ground!

Craig Hoepfner
Cedar-loo REACT

Louisville (Ky.) Metro-REACT

When a series of tornadoes and severe thunderstorms struck Indiana and Kentucky over the Memorial Day week-



Sue Currie drives the Red Cross canteen to the site of tornado-damaged power lines in Jefferson County, Ky.

end, Louisville METRO-REACT members responded by supporting the Red Cross disaster relief effort.

On Saturday, REACTers James Currie and Brian Williams were dispatched to Merengo, Indiana, to assist in the damage assessment after a tornado damaged or destroyed over eighty percent of the buildings in the city.

Early Monday morning, with their own electric power still out, Tom, Sue, and Kim Currie were the damage assessment team for three mobile home parks in southwest Jefferson County following two sets of severe thunderstorms that had spawned several tor-

nadoes and downbursts. After the damage assessment found several trailers destroyed and one large mobile home park entirely without power due to numerous downed power lines, Tom, Sue, and Kim were back on the scene manning the Red Cross canteen providing drinks and snacks for the chainsaw crews who were trying to clear the downed trees so the utility company could start work to restore power. That evening they were back again along with James with sandwiches to feed the numerous fire department volunteers who were assisting in the removal of hundreds of downed trees.

Weather Disasters

U.S. This Spring. Here Are Reports from Some *REACT* Teams

It really wasn't unusual to have almost the entire Louisville METRO-*REACT* Team out on Red Cross assignments in southwest Jefferson County. Louisville METRO-*REACT* Team has a long history of a close working relationship with the American Red Cross. Tom, the Team President is also Communications Officer for the local Red Cross Service Center. James, the Team Vice-President, is Damage Assessment Chairman for the service center; and Sue, the Team Secretary, is Coordinator of Volunteers for the service center. Among them, the Curries total over seventy years as both *REACT*ers and Red Cross disaster volunteers.

Tom Currie
Louisville METRO-*REACT*

Great Lakes (Ohio) *REACT*

On Friday, May 21, severe thunderstorms ravaged Northeast Ohio. The first wave passed through downtown Cleveland, Ohio, at about 4:00 PM.

With winds in excess of seventy miles per hour and the storm surging in across Lake Erie at sixty mph, this one picked up so much moisture from the lake that the sky turned green just before the heavy downpour at a rate of four inches per hour. The local radar indicated a peak of over eight hundred lightning strikes per *minute*!

Chagrin Valley *REACT* responded all available units to

Auburn Township, Ohio, to assist the Fire Department that was overwhelmed with downed trees and power lines. Chagrin Valley *REACT* Lieutenant Ed Thyret called Great Lakes *REACT* to assist in securing street closures. The first units were on scene at about 4:30 PM and remained in a state of readiness until the last severe thunderstorm warning expired at 2:00 AM.

The chief of the Auburn Township Fire Department equipped the *REACT* Team members with portable radios from their own department so that direct communications could be maintained for the safety of the volunteers and the community.

Members of both Teams maintained contact with each other using Great Lakes *REACT*'s GMRS repeater frequency and Chagrin Valley's UHF repeater frequency.

Once again, these two neighboring teams came together to serve the community in a seamless fashion and demonstrated that combining our individual strengths can really make a difference.

Rufus Kilpatrick
Great Lakes *REACT*



REACTivities -- Team & Council News

Henry County (Ohio) REACT

This year was one for the record book, but not entirely in a good way. Friday evening, May 28, we set up for our Safety Break just like we usually do, except that Rich Kline, our president, was not there. He was still in the hospital recovering from emergency open heart surgery.

First shift was 8 PM to midnight. We typically work four-hour shifts with two people at the site. John, an affiliate member, didn't have anyone to work with him, and since I had to come back at midnight anyway, I stayed. Before long, everything started to go downhill. A large part of the county was without power for four hours, so we had no hot coffee, no lights, no radios.

Saturday was pretty much normal, but Sunday afternoon I went out early because SKYWARN had been activated, so I was running the SKYWARN net from the Safety Break site. The weather got really bad; the wind changed so that it was coming straight out of the north, and it tried to roll over the camper trailer with me in it. It damaged the awning, which didn't do much for the appearance of our set-up. We shut it down for a few hours until the weather improved, but we ended up shutting down completely as the weather heading our way was much too dangerous to put our volunteers at risk.

-Keith Hosman

Great Lakes (Ohio) REACT

On Sunday, April 25, 2004, Cleveland hosted the 2004 Rite Aid Cleveland Marathon. Great Lakes REACT was pleased to have joined with our partners in public service communications, The Woodchuck Amateur Radio Club, to provide course safety communications for this world-class event.

With the assistance of Medina County REACT, Tuscarawas-Carroll REACT, and Chagrin Valley REACT, we were able to saturate a portion of the course that, due to the terrain, could not be reliably covered by the amateur radio repeaters in the area. By using GMRS on simplex, communications on all points of this scenic valley were provided so that if any of the participants or volunteer staff needed any information passed, a REACT member was there to relay to a REACT amateur radio operator who then passed the traffic to net control.

Over 6000 runners, walkers and wheelchair competitors

participated in the Marathon and 10K. The race started off well enough, with the wheelchair competitors starting five minutes before the runners and walkers. From our positions covering mile markers 17 thru 20, we were ready when the wheelchairs came through barely an hour after they started. That's fast! As we monitored the water stops, traffic, the competitors and their supporters, rain came in with a vengeance. Undaunted, the athletes and volunteers continued, even with the looming threat of thunderstorms on the horizon. After the event, one of the runners told me that he was on pace to complete the marathon below his goal of 3 hours, 10 minutes. When the heavy rain came, he was slowed for the last ten miles of the 26.2-mile event, but still finishing with a personal best time of 3 hours, 13 minutes. I suppose it's hard to run in wet shoes.

These three active REACT Teams demonstrated their mutual dedication to public service communications by combining personnel and resources.

-Rufus Kilpatrick

Heavy rain didn't deter marathon and 10K runners, but made for some very soggy water stops. Four REACT Teams combined forces to provide safety communications along the course.



The REACTer

REACT Lake Simcoe (Ont.)

REACT Lake Simcoe (Ont.) ended REACT Month with a bang-up balloon event. No, not the kind you fly about in. These were ordinary rubber balloons, but did they make the job a whole lot easier for our Team.

Georgina Association for Community Living was holding its third walkathon to raise funds for programs to assist the mentally challenged folk it supports. Each participant received a yellow, helium-filled balloon tethered to a string. You slipped it on your wrist and the balloon floated along above as you walked the route.

What a safety feature the balloons were. They made it easy for REACTers along the route and

Even the dog was "decorated" with a bright yellow balloon, making walkathon participants and volunteers easy to spot. (Photo: Anne Joyce)



other walkathon officials to spot walkers at a distance. They alerted motorists to the walkers. They also drew a lot of attention to the event itself as it progressed.

REACTers even got into the act by mounting clusters of balloons (to allow for breakage) on their vehicles. We hadn't done that before. It delighted the walkers, making it easy for them to hail a REACTer if they needed help. It also helped motorists to spot the

REACT vehicles easily and to understand why they were moving at slow speeds.

Safety was a particular concern for this event. The balloons did the job for us in fine style. Teams may want to share this idea with walk organizers in their communities. It is inexpensive. It gives great publicity. It bolsters safety from a number of angles. Give it a try if you get the chance

South Point (Conn.) REACT

South Point REACT had its first holiday highway safety break during Easter weekend, April 9-11. With the help of Tobacco Valley REACT and Pioneer Valley REACT, we provided donuts and coffee to the public at Connecticut State Police Barracks Troop E in Montville, Conn. Troop E is located on IH 395 Northbound.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) provided the team with literature to give out. South Point REACT and Eastern Connecticut Chapter of MADD have developed a cooperative agreement to work together on educating the public on the importance of safe driving. We also handed out literature about REACT and proper use of CB.

July-August, 2004

Cedarloo (Iowa) REACT

Members of Cedarloo REACT 4748 and the Cedar Falls Emergency CB Club provided communications support and Victory Van support for the local March of Dimes Walk America on April 24, 2004. Since the walk goes through both Waterloo and Cedar Falls, Iowa, both groups are actively involved.

Communications were provided over the local GMRS repeater owned by Cedarloo REACT. Part of our responsibility that day was to keep the walkers out of the way of the runners from the YMCA fun run which covered parts of the same route and at the same time trying to keep the runners and walkers out of the way of moving vehicles on the streets.

Prince George's Co. (Md) REACT

The City of Bowie held its Memorial Day parade on Saturday, May 29, stepping off about twenty minutes after noon. Five of our members turned out, starting about 10 AM, and took up positions along the parade route. We relayed reports of a staff member locked out of her car, a parked car along the parade route, and a disabled antique car during the parade. Other than that, all went well. It was a clear day and we were well represented.

This freed the local police to man the major street crossings that both activities utilized. Approximately 250 people showed up for this year's Walk America.

New Teams!

A big **REACT** welcome to:

South Point **REACT**, Team 6090 (CT)
Palomar **REACT**, Team 6091 (CA)
Bartholomew County **REACT**, Team 6092
Permian Basin **REACT**, Team 6093 (TX)



100 PerCenters!

The following Teams have renewed at least the same number of members as last year.

| | |
|---|--|
| 6078 - Middletown Valley (MD) | 6087 - Canton (PA) |
| 6079 - Middle Tennessee (TN) | 4823 - Berry/Cynthiana (KY) |
| 6081 - Louisa County (IA) | C705 - Front Royal (VA) |
| 6082 - Southern Regional (PA) | 2833 - Cascade (MD) |
| 6083 - Sullivan County (NH) | 3366 - Rainier REACT Radio Watch (WA) |
| 6084 - Dragon Star Patrol (ND) | C282 - Wayne County (OH) |
| 6085 - Tay Valley, UK (Scotland) | C069 - Comupac (CA) |
| 6086 - Tri-State Emergency Commun'ns (NJ) | |

Congratulations to All!

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

An every other month magazine devoted to the entertainment and education of those interested in Scanners, CB radios, and other electronic means of communications.

As a subscriber to **National Communications**, you will be able to :

- Access over 4 million frequencies for your scanner
- Toll free "help line" for your programming questions
- Opportunity for FREE classified advertising
- Learn new and interesting ways to use your scanner, CB and FRS radios
- Keep up with the "latest and greatest" happenings within the industry
- 40 colorful pages in each issue

To subscribe to **National Communications**, call toll free 1-800-423-1331, log onto our web site at www.nat-com.org or mail to: PO Box 291918 Kettering, Oh 45429
A full year's subscription (6 issues) is only \$21.



Every issue is packed with articles, interviews and stories of how to get more out of your scanning, monitoring, and CB radios. There are product reviews and product announcements of interest to those of us who enjoy the hobby of using the radio waves. And of course, advertisements for making your equipment even better!

We accept:



For a free preview of **National Communications** log onto www.nat-com.org



SILENT MIC

Please join the *REACT* teams of Southern California in honoring the memory of Frank Burt of El Monte, California, San Gabriel Valley Area *REACT* Unit # 6 (formerly Industry Hills *REACT* #6).

Frank, the Team secretary for San Gabriel *REACT* in Los Angeles County and Sergeant-at-Arms for the Southern California *REACT* Council, passed away on May 28 in a tragic and unbelievable manner. He worked in security at Disneyland in Anaheim in Orange County, often billed as the "Happiest Place on Earth." On his way home after a late shift, Frank was involved in a fatal traffic accident, ironically on one of the very same urban motorways that he had helped make safer with his extraordinary support over the years for SoCal *REACT* and its unique Traffic Watch monitoring program.

"Frank was an unusual and rare volunteer with tons of energy and kindness," said Ed Greany, president of Crest *REACT* in Riverside County east of Los Angeles and Executive Vice President of *REACT* International. "His desire to learn and understand was always there and he would pass on his knowledge to all that he met. Frank was the driving force for the newly-formed San Gabriel *REACT* Team. He wouldn't be satisfied with less than perfection."

Santiago *REACT* president Bob Leef in neighboring Orange County observed, "It was amazing how much time Frank devoted to (regional *REACT* events in Southern California and Nevada). He was doing this in addition to many other public service activities, working a heavy schedule with terrible hours and heading a family. I used to wonder if he ever slept."

A memorial service for Frank Burt was held June 4 in Whittier, California, attended by a number of *REACT* officers and members. The El Monte police department has established a memorial fund for the Burt family. For information on how to make a contribution, contact Bryan Astrachan, the San Gabriel *REACT* communications officer, Scorpio884@cs.com.

Other Silent Mics

Ester Amauster, *REACT* of Henry County, Ohio

Luther Durham, *REACT* of Henry County, Ohio

David Lawrence, Middle Tennessee *REACT*

Robert "Bob" Johnson, Bay Area
Emergency Radio *REACT*, Calif.

Nelson S. Gerling, Jr., Cascade *REACT*, Md.

Unquelched

by **Stuart M. DeLuca,**
Editor

Hiding the Light

Does anybody know who you are? If you tell someone in your community, "I'm a member of *REACT*," do they smile and nod, or do they just get a blank look and say, "Do what?"

Unfortunately, I would have to say the latter. When we're out in public, working an event in uniform, we often have people come up to thank us for our help -- followed by the inevitable, "By the way, what is *REACT*, anyway?"

Now, granted, these days the general public is so overwhelmed with "information" from dozens of sources, the average person's only defense is to ignore most of it. How many people in your community know the name of your state's Governor? Or both of your US Senators? How many people can find Iraq on a map?

But the sad fact is that public ignorance about *REACT* is mostly our own fault. We tend to be so busy communicating amongst ourselves that we do very little to communicate with the rest of the world.

Every year, when your Team renews its membership for the coming year, the renewal package includes a form for Team officers to report on the Team's activities in the past year: number of hours monitored, number of calls taken, number of meetings held, training classes conducted, community events worked, etc., etc. Fewer than ten percent of the Teams bother to complete the form and return it to RI.

Now, maybe ninety percent of *REACT* Teams never do anything, and therefore have nothing to report. But I doubt that. I suspect that most Teams don't return the form because they consider it a nosy intrusion on their business.

The purpose of the report is to provide RI with factual information that could be used for publicity, membership promotion, and possibly even grant proposals that could provide the resources for expanded programs and benefits. But RI can't do much with information from only one-tenth of its Teams.

How many Teams even have a public information officer? How many Teams have sent out at least one news release, describing the Team's activities, in the past year?

If medals were awarded for modesty, we'd have a chestful. But is it modesty or simply laziness? Granted, we're all volunteers, and we devote a huge number of hours to the volunteer activity that we most enjoy; that's why we joined *REACT* in the first place. If nobody knows about the good deeds we do, no matter.

Yet it *does* matter. Our success depends in part on public support, on recruiting new members, on making contact with event sponsors. Hiding our light under a bushel basket does nothing to accomplish those goals. At the very least, please see that your Team's annual report is completed and returned this year!

About Your Subscription

All Regular, Junior, and Affiliate members in the U.S. and Canada automatically receive a subscription to *The REACTer*; the subscription price is included in the annual RI dues.

If for any reason you do not wish to receive *The REACTer*, let us know. Send a note or e-mail to RI headquarters. However, your dues will not be reduced.

All Life Members also automatically receive a subscription to *The REACTer* but may discontinue their subscription if they wish.

Members outside of the U.S. and Canada may subscribe to *The REACTer* but the subscription fee (U.S.\$6) is not included in their dues. To subscribe, send your name, full address, and payment to RI headquarters.

Nonmembers may subscribe for \$7.50 per year.

Members may order an extra subscription for a family member at a different address, a friend, a local library, or anyone else, at the same rate as members' subscriptions: \$4 per year in the U.S., \$5 in Canada, or \$6 anywhere else.

REACT International, Inc.
5210 Auth Rd., Ste. 403
Suitland, MD 20746