



The REACTer

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From the President

by Charles A. "Chuck" Thompson

--30--

By the time you read this, I will be the "Past President" of *REACT* International, Inc. I notified the Board of Directors in February, 2003, that my election to a third one-year term would also be my last, and one of the duties of the Board at the 2004 February Board meeting would be to select a new President, this time for the newly authorized two-year term.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your President for three years (and as Vice President for two and a half years before that). I leave knowing that we have accomplished much in those five and a half years, and knowing also that much remains to be done.

Since February, 1998, when two Field Directors abruptly resigned and Jack Murrell and I were appointed to the Board, there has been a complete overhaul of how *REACT* International is governed. RI has had the benefit of a number of outstanding *REACT*ers as Directors and officers, including Bob Stone, Lee Besing, Jack Murrell, and Fred Lanshe that first year as Field Directors in the old organization.

In 1999, we began operating under the revised Bylaws, and additional Directors have included Dick Cooper, Ron Faulkner, Larry Fry, George Holmes, Eric Hutchins, Paul Jackson, Kenny Jagdeo Singh, Frank Jennings, Bob Kaster, John Knott, Bob Leef, and Jesse Mauk. The past and present officers include Lee Besing, Dick Cooper, Harry Hawkins, Norman Kaplan, Fred Lanshe, Bob Leef, Jack Murrell, and Bob Stone. We've been fortunate this past year to have Norm Kaplan, since his retirement from the Federal government, volunteer hundreds of hours working in our Suitland office.

All of these folks have contributed to the successes we have had, and most did it at their own expense, saving *REACT* International tens of thousands of dollars. *To each of them, I extend my thanks and appreciation for all they have done for REACT, and especially those who gave me such great support these past three years.*

I would be remiss not to acknowledge all the others, especially committee chairmen and their members, who in varying degrees, have played important parts in *REACT*'s activities. I am especially appreciative of the efforts of Stuart DeLuca, Tom Currie, and Johnny Stowers, not only for their personal contributions but also for their usually frank commentary on our proposals and ideas.

In his 1970 book "Up the Organization," former Avis president Robert Townsend said that after five years, if an organization's president hasn't resigned, fire him. He said that after five years, all the person's good ideas had been used up, but if not, fire him for that! Townsend was right. My primary contribution to *REACT*'s recovery from the dark days of 1998 has been in corporate organization, administrative improvement, and such. We've tried to change the thinking at the top and have had some success. That's what I'm best at doing. What we need now is someone to sell the concept to all those prospective *REACT*ers out there.

For almost five years now, the membership of *REACT* has remained fairly stable, and that's been a great accomplishment, considering the many years of steady decline in the number of Teams and individual members. *But we must grow!* We have a stable, well-functioning platform. It's time for a new leadership to start an upward trend of new Teams, new members. I'm confident that our Board will choose a great new President to lead us in the coming years.

In personal contacts by e-mail and telephone and at conventions, I've experienced great support from virtually everyone. Thank you all for your support and confidence.

REACT has the potential for a great future. I wish our new President the best of success, and ask all of you to give him the same understanding and support you gave me.

Good-bye.

--30--



From the Chairman of the Board

by Dick Cooper

Sending E-mails Isn't Enough!

We had some cold weather in the Northeast in the first part of the year and there has been messed-up weather in many other parts of the country too. All of this doesn't seem to have dampened the enthusiasm on the REACT-L e-mail list during the same period. I can't remember every topic that was discussed on the List, but two of the big ones regarded public relations and the future of *REACT*.

There were a lot of good public relations ideas, such as where and how to obtain various public relations information, encouraging Teams and Councils to develop their own PR literature and information, and many other good ideas. I especially liked the PR Top 10 (title slightly paraphrased) List. If anyone needs a copy of that list, please go to the 'L' list and ask for it. I'll bet that if you ask for the PR Top 10 List, you'll get it e-mailed to you.

For those of you who don't have e-mail access, maybe the author of the PR Top 10 can be persuaded to publish it in an upcoming issue of *the REACTer*.

I was very interested in the various responses in the PR discussion also, especially the person who stated that *REACT* members shouldn't look to *REACT* International to create all of the PR materials because history has shown that only a few of the

thousands of *REACT* members use the materials available from RI. In addition, locally created PR material is generally more effective. There are decals, brochures, displays, flags, signs and other items in the RI inventory just waiting to be purchased by Teams.

The other item from the 'L' List was the discussion about the future of *REACT*. There was obviously a lot of discussion on this topic as I received 55 e-mails in a relatively short period of time. Someone made the comment in one of the e-mails, "it's about time that this discussion came up."

I admit that I didn't read every word of every e-mail, but I read enough to get the meaning of everybody's comments. Some of the discussion sounded like a RI Board of Directors meeting while discussing a very important topic.

I found it very interesting to note that most of the e-mails that contained the "Subject" line "Future *REACT*" had to do with public relations. *Isn't That Interesting?* You see, without public relations *REACT* International and all of its Teams will not grow and the public that we serve will not know about us and what we do.

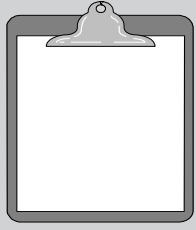
The Five-Year Plan submitted to the RI Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting in February outlined three areas of growth necessary for the contin-

ued existence of *REACT*: Membership, Promotion, and Finance. There is no priority or ranking of importance within these three areas because they are all important and must be further developed simultaneously to grow *REACT* International.

Some of the discussions on the 'L' List show that there are many members who feel the same way that I do about these subjects. Once again I will ask some of those dedicated *REACT* members to please step forward and take an active part in turning your thoughts into reality. The RI BOD and officers can only do so much work. Much of the remaining work must come from committees, so volunteer for a committee today. Contact the *REACT* International office and tell them your field of interest.

Remember - *REACT* is also a verb, and a verb is an action word, so: Members, please *REACT*!

Another way to get involved in RI is through the election of directors. The directors for regions 2, 5 and 8 are up for re-election this year. Nominations are due soon (check this *REACTer* for exact date; see page 14) so make your nominations now. Nomination forms can be printed from the RI web site or obtained from the RI office. Become involved!



Report from Headquarters

by Norman Kaplan,
Treasurer, *REACT* International

Team Reports Show a Busy Year

As of February 3, 2004, 186 of 279 Teams have renewed and their membership cards have been sent along with a list of the items in the *REACT* store; a price and shipping list; the *REACT* International Disaster Plan; and two copies of the Monitoring Report.

The two-page report was the one that I expected to be returned, with comments on the four-page report to be filed in future years. I expected that Teams had not collected the information needed for the four-page report. However, several Teams have filed the longer report. I have received the two- and four-page reports from C057, C102, C322, C324, C633, C692, 3202, 4096, 4258, 4747, 6030, 6039, 6082 and 6086. From those reports, the following statistics were gathered:

- CB monitoring 105,352 hours,
- GMRS 71,534.75 hours,
- Amateur Radio 5,050 hours
- Other (FRS, MURS, Marine Band, Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.) 13,020 hours.

REACT Teams spent:

- 5,345 hours at Events
- 170 hours in Disaster Activities
- 3,890 hours at Group Activities
- 1,242 hours in Meetings.

During 2003, *REACT*ers handled:

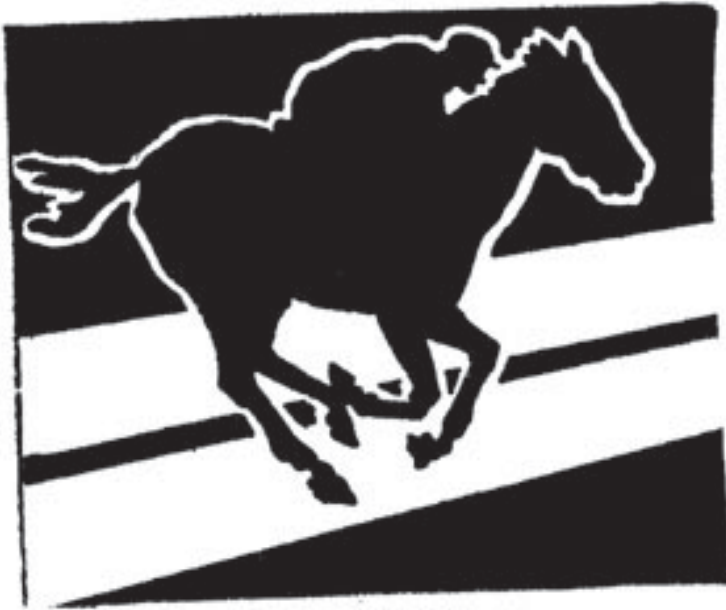
- 151 property damage accidents
- 104 personal injury accidents
- 87 fatal injury accidents
- 65 reckless driver reports
- 58 stalled vehicles
- 83 road hazards
- 38 traffic jams
- 6 traffic control malfunctions
- 317 information requests
- 56 car fires
- 12 crime reports
- 101 severe weather reports
- 31 flooding reports

- 14 medical emergencies
- 7 fires
- 25 missing persons
- 2 vandalism reports
- 168 personal calls
- 65 other calls.

These statistics, along with other information, will be put into *REACT* International's annual report. I hope that more Teams will send back their monitoring report so that we can compile a complete report of *REACT*'s 2003 activities.

From comments on a couple of e-mail lists, there appears to be an exaggerated view of what *REACT* International, Inc. can and should be doing. International, its Directors and State Councils, are supporters for our action group, which is the Team. International has set up its Disaster Plan to support those activities that each Team has the ability and the inclination to do in a disaster. Obviously, International with one person in the office and volunteer staff to help her on occasion will not be sending out personnel to support a Team in a disaster. We don't have the resources, personnel, or equipment. We also don't have the local contacts and knowledge.

Each Team should have its own written plan for response. The plan should be filed with your State Council and International so other levels know what you are expecting. The 3,890 hours of group activities and 5,345 hours of events reported by Teams are hidden training hours. The net activities, triage of calls, focus on important activity, working together, ability to respond to locations are all part of training for an emergency or disaster. ECOMM-I training available through the Web site and from International on paper is another way to train for disasters and emergencies. Developing contacts with other local Teams and through the State Council for mutual aid is another way to prepare for local disasters.



VOAD TO MEET IN KENTUCKY

BY TOM CURRIE,
LOUISVILLE METRO (KY.) *REACT*

We're off and winning together!" That's the theme for the Twelfth Annual National VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) Conference, to be held in Louisville, Ky., May 18-21. The theme is appropriate because when disaster strikes, all the resources of the community must come together to provide help quickly, efficiently, and compassionately.

The Conference will be held at the Executive Inn in Louisville, a one-day's drive from many major population areas; the Executive Inn is located very near the airport. Louisville, of course, is the home of the fable Kentucky Derby. It is also the home of steamboat racing, boxing champion Muhammad Ali – and of the late restaurant mogul Col. Harlan Sanders!

Efforts will be made not only to provide information exchange, but to encourage networking and cooperation among all the community resources: government, private business, and voluntary agencies. At the time of

this writing, the program had not been announced, but a number of workshops on all aspects of disaster response will be offered.

The Conference is co-hosted by National VOAD, a professional association for charitable volunteer based disaster agencies for over 30 years in 52 states and territories with 39 national members. The conference is hosted by a different state each year and focuses on the contributions of voluntary agencies active in disaster preparedness, planning, response and recovery.

Information about registration, sponsorship opportunities and exhibitor availabilities is available at the NVOAD Web site, < www.nvoad.org >. You will want to be with us at the "starting gate" when "we're off and winning together" as we respond in times of disaster.

REACT International is a member of National VOAD, and many *REACT* Councils and Teams are members at the state and local levels. The Conference provides an opportunity to meet with

disaster response experts from all parts of the country, and to share planning and coordination ideas with the people who will be on the scene at any major disaster.

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REACT Teams Help Rally

by Ed Greany,



Two weeks before Christmas, a group of volunteer radio operators and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) converged upon a local casino in Laughlin, Nev., for the annual Ramada Express Off-Road Rally held on the Hualapai Indian Reservation inside the Grand Canyon.

Coordinated and led by members of CREST REACT, the event featured an international road rally in some of the most beautiful countryside ever seen and rarely seen by the "white man." This is America's richest, toughest rally, and occurs in breath-taking mountain and forest stage roads along the majestic Grand Canyon.

The primary functions of the radio operators were to ensure safety of the course for the drivers with roadblocks and to track

each car as it passed our checkpoints along the course. These cars reach speeds of 100 mph+ at times and really show the expertise of the driver, co-driver (navigator), and their vehicle. The volunteer EMTs and a trauma doctor were ready in case of any injuries.

We encountered two days of racing on dirt roads, sometimes in the rain or snow, on ice or mud, and even during sunny periods. Over the two days, racing occurred on twelve different courses, each demanding its own respect and character. The first day, one co-driver exited his car just before the start of a race and fell on the ice resulting in a compound fracture of his leg and requiring a helicopter airlift to the hospital over 60 miles away.

The following day, a terrible accident occurred with a



Ed Greany checks off a car as it flies past his checkpoint.

(Photo: J. Fernandez)

Japanese couple competing for second place. Their car careened off the roadway while going some 140+ mph and tumbled end over end until coming to rest way off the road. They had serious injuries and were airlifted to a Las Vegas hospital via two helicopters.

The driver only spoke Japanese but his co-driver spouse spoke a little English so they went to the same hospital in order that the wife could translate. This incident occurred after the first car had just completed the course. The accident cancelled all racing the rest of the day. The driver and wife co-driver are recovering but the car is completely totaled. It is reported the driver had a badly broken arm while the wife had a severely broken wrist. Both sustained other injuries that were less severe.

The bright, shiny car at left...looked like this after leaving the road at 140 mph. Driver and co-driver, a Japanese couple, sustained serious but not life-threatening injuries. (Photos: Michael Greany)



Make Grand Canyon Safer

CREST REACT

Approximately 55 cars competed for prizes and money. This is the only rally that gives cash to the winners. Most received several hundreds of dollars and a few received one to three thousand dollars for various winning positions.

On the third day, we assisted with a SuperStage competition across the street in a dirt field from the hotel right in Laughlin. In the SuperStage, the rally cars compete on an irregular-shaped track for fastest times. Jerry Schnock (CREST 47) and his brother Bill competed for the first time in this SuperStage competition this year driving their Camaro. Jerry also acts as our "Final Sweep" ensuring nobody is left out on the course after racing is done. He also assists with extracting disabled racecars from the course.

During the competition, two vehicles rolled over and another caught fire. We immediately put out the fire and no injuries were sustained. All the vehicles will survive. One vehicle rolled over on a final turn landing upright again on the wheels. The driver restarted the engine and finished in first place having lost only

three seconds in the meantime. He took first place overall and went home with thousands of dollars, which will come in handy to repair his nice car with.

This year, after one of the races was completed, I ventured down to the river at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Wow, what an experience that was. The reservation sells permits to visit that sight but it is some tricky driving down that road and cell phones don't work and radios don't either due to the tall canyon walls. In fact, there is nothing on that road for about 30 miles until you get to the river. Then, there is a gazebo and barbeque pit to picnic; that's it. You are really on your own in going there but it's worth it.

EMTs and REACT members came from various teams and states including Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, California, and Nevada. REACT Teams represented were CREST, San Gabriel Valley, Seacoast, Rio Grande, Riverside County, and COMUPAC. The volunteer coordinators were Michael Greany, KE6RDT (CREST 210) and Dean Chambers, KG6YS (CREST 59).

Among the radio systems used were GMRS, 2-meter, UHF

business band, and amateur HF from the race site back to the hotel. A total of six repeaters were utilized - three GMRS, two business band and one amateur. This countryside is some of the most challenging for radio communications in the world.

The event is often shown on television. The next scheduled showing is a one-hour program in late February on the Outdoor Life Network.

The Website is <www.RALLYUSA.com> for those interested. This rally is an FIA International rally event listed by the Automobile Competition Committee of the U.S. and is sanctioned by the U.S. Auto Club and the National Auto Sport Association.

If you would like to participate in 2004, *do not* sign up on the RallyUSA.com website or you will be assigned other volunteer duties besides radio or EMT. Simply e-mail us at <info@CrestCom.org> or call us at (909) 279-9358 and leave your name, address, phone number, and email address if you have one.

Volunteer coordinator Michael Greany receives the reward all REACT members expect...
(Photo: Juan Fernandez)



Recording Your Communications

Five good reasons and three good ways to document your radio calls

**by William M. Riley,
Prince Georges County (Md.) REACT**

Most public safety communications centers record their communications for quality control and backup documentation. My own experience is mostly with Coast Guard operations centers, where telephone and radio calls were recorded in order to document search and rescue calls. *REACT* members should consider recording their radio communications while monitoring for emergency calls.

Recording your radio communications serves several purposes. First, if there's ever a question about what information was given to you by a caller and what you did with it, you can replay the tape to prove what really happened. Second, if you missed part of what the caller said, and communications have been lost, you can rewind and replay the tape to fill in the blanks. Third, you can review tapes, perhaps as a team, to critique your performance. Fourth, you can put together a collage of active moments from the recordings to demonstrate what *REACT* monitors do, for playback in the background at an information booth, or for promotional videos. Finally, you can use the tapes to document mali-

cious interference.

Whatever devices you use to make your recordings should be able to record both sides of the radio conversation and at least your side of any telephone conversations. Recording both sides of a telephone conversation is optional, depending on what state you live in and what you have to do to avoid violating wiretap laws. Your recording should give you the capability to decipher the time at which communications occurred.

The traditional system used in Coast Guard operations centers during my career was a massive bank of slow-speed, 10-track reel-to-reel tape recorders, with one track dedicated to each radio channel and telephone line. Tapes were changed each watch and were kept for a month. After a month, tapes were recycled. If a critical incident occurred during the watch, the tapes were pulled from the rotation, labeled, and set aside as evidence for any future investigation.

The same principle is followed in our county communications center, and most others I have toured, although the technology is changing. Some communications centers now use tape con-

trollers or digital recording devices that record only active communications, not "dead air," and time-stamp the recordings of each exchange.

The simplest way to record your communications is by the use of an inexpensive cassette tape recorder. Most of these have a built-in microphone and automatic level recording, so simply placing the recorder on the same desk or table with your radios will be sufficient to pick up everything heard through the radio, plus your voice in the vicinity whether you are talking on the radio or making a telephone call.

If you use 60-minute tapes, you need only flip the tape every half hour. Most tape recorders have an auto-stop feature which will turn the recorder off with an audible click at the end of the tape, to remind you to turn it over. If you want to be overly cautious, you could have two recorders running with staggered start times, so that you won't miss any part of a critical conversation in progress when the tape runs out. If an incident occurs during the time covered by the tape, label it with the date and time period, and save it for future reference. Otherwise, the tapes can



This is really all you need to record calls involving multiple radios; the recorder's built-in mic will pick up everything you say and hear, except the other side of telephone conversations. (Photo by the author.)

simply be flipped over every half hour and recycled. These simple tape recorders can often be picked up cheap at garage sales. Look for one with a real power cord, to avoid the hassle of a "wall wart" power adapter.

For longer periods, a VCR can be used to record audio. Simply connect to the audio input of the VCR and you can record anywhere from 2 to 8 hours on a single tape, depending on the tape and the VCR options. My current employer uses this technique to record vessel radio traffic. The disadvantage is that connecting a radio speaker jack to the VCR input will not record anything else. You'll have to experiment with ways to mix audio inputs, or figure out how to connect a microphone. There are manufacturers promoting "black boxes" for ships using the same technology but adding tracks for data such as radar screen image, GPS position, compass heading, etc. < www. March-April, 2004

racorder.com > Of course, this proprietary voyage data can only be retrieved by compatible equipment from the same manufacturer. The simple VCR recording can be played back through any television set. With the advent of DVDs, many VCRs are available at giveaway prices, both new and used.

Since I retired, I understand the Coast Guard has started replacing those massive reel-to-reel tape recorders with digital recordings stored on CDs. You can use this technique yourself if you have a computer with a sound card, capable of recording through a microphone. If you're using the computer for other purposes at the same time, multitasking may use up too much memory and make the sound recording distorted.

A reconditioned spare computer dedicated to the purpose may be the answer. If there's enough hard drive space, simply store the sound files on the hard

drive temporarily, copy only the active ones to a CD-R, and periodically delete files containing only "dead air." This may be the most expensive option at the moment, but could get cheaper as time goes on and used computers with sound and CD-R capability become available.

The Coast Guard's new "Rescue 21" system will give the watch-stander the ability to replay the last few minutes of conversation to listen for missed details, without rewinding a tape and missing the chance to record new transmissions.

More options will become available as time goes on. Recordable DVDs may replace CDs. Other digital recording methods will appear. Remember those big reel-to-reel tape recorders I described? The main reason they went away was the lack of replacement parts.

New Membership Brochure available now from REACT International!



Not Just Another Radio Club...



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**

MURS: *What is it?* *Who needs it?*

by Matt Anderson,
Southeast Louisiana *REACT*



Most low-power VHF radios, such as this TEKK handheld, can operate in the MURS service. If they are certified for Part 90, they do not need to be re-certified for use under Part 95.

In June 2000, the FCC created a new radio service, the Multi-Use Radio Service (MURS). The FCC allocated five VHF frequencies to MURS for general public use that had previously been licensed only for low-power industrial and business use (Part 90). With the new rules, these frequencies were relocated to Part 95, the Personal Radio Service, and the general public was authorized to use it for communications related to personal or business activities with no licensing re-

quired.

The purpose of the new radio service was to provide a short-distance, voice or data service. Soon after the new radio service became available, many of the manufacturers realized that the general public was using frequencies that had previously been authorized only for their business customers. Over 6,000 licensed stations were sharing the 154.600 frequency with the MURS service. Several of these parties petitioned the FCC for a change to this new service.

In May 2002, the FCC considered some rule changes to MURS. Motorola, Radio Shack and the Industrial Telecommunications Association, Inc. (ITA) did not agree with the Commission's decision to include the general public within MURS. They believed that the general public's use of these frequencies would interfere with the industrial and business users.

The Commission reminded these manufacturers that despite their objections to MURS they had chosen to sell radios with these frequencies to the general

public (through mass merchandising, mail order and the Internet). The Commission cited the low licensing rate prevalent among users of radios on these channels as an indication the business-only licensing restriction was not being followed. Based on the circumstances presented, the Commission concluded that the public interest was best served by allowing both personal and business use. The FCC did consider some of their technical concerns and adopted some restrictions that had not been included in the original rules posted in 2000.

The MURS radio service can offer an affordable solution for *REACT* communications. Radios are currently available from several manufacturers; prices start as low as \$100 apiece. More information regarding MURS can be found on various websites, such as <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/personal/murs/>> or <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MURS-OPEN>> These sites offer a wealth of information on this radio service.

California Teams Picked for Fire Duty

The Central California REACT Council (CCRC) today announced the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CDF) has agreed to use REACT during periods of high fire danger and all deployments involving their Volunteers In (fire) Prevention (VIP) Program.

The Fresno-Kings Unit, headquartered in Sanger, will begin deploying REACT members when the necessary paperwork has been submitted and all training requirements have been completed. The CDF has agreed to allow REACT to use frequencies from the General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS), a departure from their usual preference of using amateur radio operators.

"We originally submitted

our proposal to CDF last October," explained Kurt Ervin, CCRC Chair. "We focused on the benefits of using REACT in the San Joaquin Valley, our existing GMRS repeater network, and how GMRS can be used instead of amateur radio. After reviewing the proposal, they accepted it without any changes, including the use of GMRS. Now it's up to us to show the CDF what we can do."

According to Ervin, REACT members wanting to participate in CDF deployments should submit their applications quickly so they can complete CDF training requirements quickly.

"We are already planning to deploy over Independence Day week-end, so we've got a lot to

do before that time. After meeting all CDF requirements, we are responsible for submitting a deployment plan to CDF for their review and acceptance. That doesn't leave us much time."

The CCRC will be the primary liaison between the CDF and individual REACT Teams and members, including reviewing all applications, making deployment recommendations and staffing the Emergency Communications Center and the Mobile Command Vehicle during deployments when communications assistance is requested by Fresno-Kings CDF.

"This is an incredible opportunity for REACT in central California," said Ervin. "And hopefully it's a stepping stone for greater opportunities."

More About Murs:

There are several manufacturers that currently produce radios authorized for the MURS service. All MURS radios must meet the following technical requirements:

Frequencies	Authorized Bandwidth	Max Power
151.820 MHz	11.25 KHz	2 watts
151.880 MHz	11.25 KHz	2 watts
151.940 MHz	11.25 KHz	2 watts
154.570 MHz	20.0 KHz	2 watts
154.600 MHz	20.0 KHz	2 watts

*A MURS station is not required to transmit a station identification announcement. You can choose your own unit ID number, but not fabricate call signs.

*The five channels are available on a shared basis and are authorized at the following locations:

Within the United States, Territories of the United States, or aboard any vessel of the United

States (with the permission of the captain), while the vessel is traveling either domestically or in international waters.

*A MURS station may transmit any emission type - voice or data signals.

*MURS frequencies may be used for remote control functions; however MURS transmitters may not be operated in the continuous

carrier transmit mode.

*All MURS users must take reasonable precautions to avoid causing harmful interference. This includes monitoring the transmitting frequency for communications in progress and such other measures as may be necessary to minimize the potential for causing interference.

*MURS stations are prohibited from operating as a repeater station or as a signal booster. (This includes simplex/store-and-forward repeaters.)

*MURS stations are prohibited from interconnection with the public switched network. (No phone patches are permitted.)

*The highest point of any MURS antenna must be no more than 60 feet above the ground or 20 feet above the highest point of the structure on which it is mounted.

REACTivities Team, Council, & Region News

Penobscot (Me.) REACT

Last Fall, former REACT Council President Jim Koritsky received a note from RI asking him to contact Don Tarbet. Jim followed up and learned that Don had formed an ARRL/ARES group made up of young adults and teens who are visually impaired.

Don thought that adding GMRS and FRS capabilities would give his group more ways to serve the community. The result was the formation of Penobscot REACT, the first new Team formed in Maine since 1992, with eight members including Jim as President.

-Jim Koritsky

Dallas Co. (Tex.) REACT

For several years Dallas County REACT has been the coordinating entity for all shuttle buses at the Dallas White Rock Marathon. In the morning, we pick up runners at their hotels and drop them off at the starting line. Throughout the day, the buses transport relay runners to and from their relay points, pick up runners along the course who cannot finish the race, and shuttle runners back to their hotels in the afternoon. To each bus we assign a team member who maintains radio contact with our Command Post. In the event that a bus route must be changed or additional buses are needed at



a relay point, our Command Post radios the instructions out to our team members.

By the time the sun was up, our Command Post was in full operation and we already had several busloads of race participants at the starting line. By the end of the day, several thousand runners had started – and the majority had managed to cross the finish line.

As the photo shows, DCR gets some very visible recognition for our efforts!

Colleton Co. (N.C.) REACT



Remember this young lady? She's Cassidy Megan McCoy, granddaughter of Chief Bill and Major Linda Kofron of Colleton Co. REACT; her parents, Scott and Ashley, are also members of the Team. Cassidy was the "cover girl" on *The REACTer* for Jan-Feb, 2000.

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Flagler Co. (Fla.) Assist REACT

Flagler County Assist REACT volunteers provided assistance to the Department of Emergency Services during the annual Flagler County Home Show and Service Fair.

Volunteers provided assistance in setting up the new Special Operations Unit One operated by Flagler County Emergency Services. Members of the Team have also had specialized Landing Zone training and helped secure the LZ for the county FireFlight helicopter that was brought in for the event.

REACT members spent the day handing out fliers about disaster preparedness and other Emergency Services items. Two

members competed to see who could get the most people signed up for an upcoming Skywarn class for the public.

REACT members also set up demonstration amateur radio and GMRS communications as well as handed out promotional material for the REACT organization.

-Bob Pickering

Seacoast (Calif.) REACT

Seacoast REACT is participating in a trial program to include GMRS radio operators into the Southwest California Skywarn program. Regional Coordinator Steve Smith, WB6TWL, recently joined Seacoast REACT and obtained his GMRS license.

On February 2, a large winter storm heading for San Diego County prompted a 'real-time' test of the new system. While Lee Thomas, KF6POI, operated the Sky Command monitoring station at the National Weather Service office in Rancho Bernardo, Calif., our own Kurt Barnhart, unit 41, operated the REACT Skywarn net on the Palomar Mountain GMRS repeater. While the storm proved not to be as strong as was initially feared, the test proved that REACTer's and Amateur Radio operators can work together in a common goal.

Luckily, no mudslides were caused in the burn areas. All spotters involved were congratulated for efficiency and timeliness of reports by Coordinating Meteorologist Ed Clark.

-Eric Hutchins

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Welcome, NEW TEAMS!

*The following Teams have joined
during 2003 and renewed for
2004*

6077 - Saddleback Valley, CA

6078 - Middletown Valley,
MD

6079 - Middle Tennessee, TN

6080 - Muscatine County, IA

6081 - Louisa County, IA

6082 - Southern Regional, PA

6083 - Sullivan County, NH

6084 - Dragon Star Patrol, ND

6085 - Tay Valley REACT
UK, Scotland

6086 - Tri-State Emergency
Comm., NJ

6087 - Canton REACT, PA

6088 - Penobscot REACT, ME

6089 - Salt Lake REACT, UT

Calendar

March 13 Commonwealth Day (Canada)

April 2 Deadline for submissions for

May-June REACTer

April 20 Nominations Due for Regional Director
Elections (Regions 2, 5, and 8)

May 5 Cinco de Mayo (Mexico)

May 22 Victoria Day (Canada)

May 31 Memorial Day (U.S.)

June 4 Deadline for submissions for
July-August REACTer

Silent Mics

Note: Each year, Team renewals include the names of members who have died during the past year. The following list is based on the renewals; some have been acknowledged in Silent Mics previously.

Roy Allen, Oklahoma
County REACT, OK

James Hope, Circle City
REACT, IN

Vern G. Leets, Dixie
REACT, FL

Mervin C. Lee, Bay Area
Emergency Radio
REACT, CA

Shirley L. Richardson,
Fayette County
REACT, WV

Fred Walborn, Champaign
County REACT, OH

Alex Boehm, San Angelo
REACT, TX

Don M. Dean, High Desert
REACT, CA

Don Evans, High Desert
REACT, CA

Terry Haima, Fond du Lac
County REACT,

WILeroy David, Punxsu-
tawney Radio Emer-
gency REACT, PA

Ken McFarland, Mount St.
Helen's REACT, WA

E. E. Benjamin, Mount St.
Helen's REACT, WA

Patricia J. Clark, Mount St.
Helen's REACT, WA

Wilfred Thomas, Sun
Coast REACT, FL

Joan Shrigley, West
Suburbs REACT, IL

Clarence C. Seery,
Unicorn REACT, NY

100% Renewals

will be listed in the next issue of *The REACTer*.

Will *your* Team be among them?



Chuck

Many people in other parts of the civilized world (and even people in Oklahoma, for that matter) tend to think that all Texans are alike. Not so!

For example, Charles A. "Chuck" Thompson and me. We're nothing alike.

We *are* alike in one respect: We're both Texans-by-choice, having had the misfortune of being born elsewhere, but we both moved to Texas as soon as we were able.

Chuck is a stubborn, reactionary, pitiless Republican from Dallas, a city whose motto is, "Don't do that!"

Whereas, I am a sensitive, intellectual, compassionate, progressive Democrat from Austin, where the unofficial motto is, "Keep Austin weird!"

Chuck is an ex-lawyer. I am an ex-actor. As everyone knows, these are two occupations known for the sweet humility of their practitioners.

Naturally, there have been times when Chuck and I found ourselves to have mutually contrary opinions, which we each considered ourselves duty-bound to express. Vigorously.

When Chuck gets mad, he yells. He threatens the direst consequences for those who oppose him.

I hardly ever yell. The an-

grier I am, the quieter I become, as I patiently endeavor to explain to others the errors of their way.

Thus, when Chuck became a Director and officer of *REACT* International six years ago, I had some misgivings. At that time, *REACT* was coming apart at the seams. There were basically two opinions about what to do: Chuck's and everybody else's.

Fortunately, Chuck prevailed. With the help of several others (you know who you are!), he managed to stitch the organization back together, tighter and stronger than ever.

So far, his stitchery is holding. Membership – both individuals and Teams – has not grown spectacularly, but neither has it continued its decline. The foundations are secure; we have the basis for rebuilding *REACT* to the kind of organization we all want.

I doubt that many people realize how much of himself Chuck Thompson has put into *REACT* in these past six years. But I suspect he prefers to keep it that way. I do know this: No one cares more, or more effectively, about *REACT*'s success than he does.

As I write this, Chuck has said that someone else will be elected President later this month. If anyone deserves credit for keeping *REACT* intact, it is Charles A. Thompson. Thanks, Chuck – from one Texan to another.

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.

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March, 2004

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