

# ORANGE NEWSLETTER

November 2007



The Juiciest Section



## **FIRES – ORANGE SECTIONS:**

Since Friday October 19, 2007, LAX, Orange, and San Diego sections have found us under attack by fires. The worst hit and loss of homes and lives has been in the San Diego County. To all our friends who are amateurs and their families in all the fires our prayers are with you.

**San Bernardino County Fire EOC** Our DEC in San Bernardino County, Jeff Richardson W6JJR who works with the ARES teams associated with the San Bernardino County Fire EOC reports:

The County ECS/ARES provided radio operators at both the county's EOC and command post at Rim of The World High School and Snow Valley. We handled routine traffic, providing the EOC with the Incident Action Report daily that was put together at Snow Valley and several other jobs. We don't just work the radios. We worked the Slide Fire, Grass Valley Fire and the Cajon Fire all at the same time. We also provided the fire department with video and still photos that were taken daily from each



fire to help show damages done. We not only provide communication, but also information gathering for the fire department. We manned both the EOC and the command posts 24 hours a day for 12 straight days. Most people worked 8 hour shifts; some like myself worked 12 -14 hour shifts. During the fires we were also able to get several of our new ARES members trained in EOC, Command Post operations, and several were able to be cross trained covering other areas of emergency

operations. The ARES members were able to learn to work with other key governmental agencies that were at the EOC, such as Public Works, So Cal Edison, Animal Control, CHP, County Sheriff, FEMA, State OES, and Red Cross to name a few.

All ARES members will also complete the ICS courses of IS-100, 200 and 700 by the end of next month making them NIMS compliant for both State and Federal guidelines.

The ECS group is also nearly 100% finished with this training. They will also be required to take the bush training S190 & S130 if they are required to get closer to the fires.

**SATERN** Per Tony Stephens KE6JZF, SATERN San Bernardino/Riverside and also the SATERN Bakersfield canteen provided canteens for the homeless and to the agencies fighting the fires and law enforcement. SATERN volunteers put in 88 hours. The Red Cross provided the shelters, clothing and bedding. Amateur Volunteers gave their time as communicators, and also provided other support needed to assist the evacuees and agencies.

**Riverside County Fire EOC RACES** According to sources the Riverside County RACES, approximately 12 volunteers assisted at various shelters

**RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS OC:** Amateur Radio volunteers supported the Red Cross in Orange County as communicators, and also assisted the health and welfare to the evacuees and management to ensure uninterrupted care for all. Gordon West WB6NOA is one of the many volunteers to assist the Red Cross Amateur Radio team efforts. Gordon reports that he spent 14 days of daily shifts and provided staffing of the shelter, EOC, and staffing from the field and working communications for the Orange County Chapter.

### **CREST REACT**

Several REACT teams are reported to be helping. The High Desert REACT Team of Hesperia and Victorville is helping with the San Bernardino County Red Cross Chapter. The Los Angeles County REACT Team helped with the fires in Los Angeles while the CREST Communications REACT Team assisted with the fires in Orange County (near Disneyland).

The activity of CREST involved several members who are residents of the Silverado Canyon community and refused a mandatory evacuation order in order to communicate updated information from inside the canyon to other CREST members outside at the Command Center. They are also watering and feeding animals unable to be evacuated and are helping fire personnel identify the names of property owners who's homes burned. This is a difficult task for fire personnel since when a homesite burns to the ground there is no address visible for the site making ownership identification difficult.



CREST is utilizing it's GMRS repeater system for communications. One repeater is actually inside the canyon while another is above the canyon for longer distance. For a period of time, the Orange County Chapter of the Red Cross used the CREST GMRS repeater system when their primary system went down. This arrangement is by a prior MOU with the chapter. The Red Cross has a grandfathered GMRS license

which allows this resource. Ironically, almost to the very hour that the Red Cross requested the use over the radio, the president of CREST and a representative of the Red

Cross were to sit down to update their MOU document. That meeting was obviously postponed.

At least one CREST member lost his home to the fire and there are may be additional CREST members who either received fire damage or a total loss to their homes. The fires are still uncontrolled at this writing and details have not been confirmed yet.

I was able to interview Anthony Mack, a resident of Silverado Canyon and a CREST member Unit 99, by cellphone. He reports of possibly saving homes in Wildcat Canyon when the fire line jumped a fire break and fire personnel were unavailable. He picked up a piece of PVC debris and beat flames 24" high making a barrier and stopping the fire advancement. Coincidentally, Anthony is also a former firefighter.

In another situation he and another CREST member working as a team were putting out spot fires and scooped up a dog and two kittens who were doomed to certain death. While these actions are far beyond that of the normal activities of REACT, they are to be commended and considered heros in the eyes of the canyon residents and shows the determination and dedication of the CREST members at large.



73

Ed Greany, KB6DOL, KAD6554  
President, CREST COMMUNICATIONS, INC.  
Executive VP, REACT International, Inc.

### [HDSCS](#)

**Santiago Canyon fire** and HDSCS was involved: Here is an email provided by Joel Moell K0OV:

From: Homingin@aol.com  
>Date: 2007/10/25 Thu AM 10:48:54 CDT  
>To: n6aa@arrl.org, wu6d@arrl.org, n6ric@arrl.net  
>Subject: HDSCS news -- Santiago wildfire

>As posted to the Orange County Hospital Disaster Support Communications System Web site on 10/23/07:

>

>HDSCS continues on high alert as the Santiago Wildfire rages in eastern Orange County. The arson-caused blaze, which began at about 6 PM on Sunday, October 21, has consumed over 18,000 acres. The point of origin was approximately two miles from the hilltop Orange County Emergency Operations Center (OC-EOC), which houses the ReddiNet Central Point.

>

>At 6:30 PM, at the request of the OC Emergency Medical Services Program Manager, HDSCS activated a two-meter net and sent Jon Schaffer W6UFS to the OC-EOC. This was to insure that backup communications would be available for the Central Point, even if roads became

impassible. Shortly thereafter, Allen Bullock KD6LCL was deployed to the OC Health Care Agency's Strategic Operations Center. W6UFS was later relieved by Bruce Chappell KE6TSM, who remained at OC-EOC until 6 AM Monday. During that time, HDSCS monitored the status of all nearby hospitals, including Chapman Medical Center, Tustin Hospital, Irvine Regional Medical Center, Western Medical Center of Santa Ana and Saddleback Hospital of Laguna Hills.

>

>With the immediate threat to the OC-EOC relieved and no hospitals requiring on-site support, HDSCS moved on Monday morning to a high-alert status with constant but informal net presence, as well as checks on potentially affected hospitals as appropriate. Members are also using this net to keep Coordinators apprised of their availability for immediate deployment if conditions change. Net Control stations have included April Moell WA6OPS, Joe Moell K0OV, Jackie Schaffer WA6AKP, Cheryl Simpson KD6MWZ, Ken Simpson W6KOS, Clay Stearns KE6TZR, Dave West KI6EPI and Woody Woodward KJ6LE.

>

>-----

>

>Joe Moell K0OV

>Assistant Coordinator, HDSCS

>[www.hdscs.org](http://www.hdscs.org)

**Keller Peak Repeater** - On Tuesday nights we usually listed to the Search and Rescue net which starts at 8pm and goes until no one has anything further to say. This net offers an abundance of information on of course SAR, but also keeping up your emergency equipment, batteries, alternate power, GO Bags, etc.

While listening in on Tuesday Oct 23, 2007, the repeater was on emergency back up with batteries. The repeater had its emergency tone on and broadcasted that it was on emergency power ever so often. The frequency was allowed to stay open, but a reminder that it was being used for emergency information traffic and to keep all communications to a minimum.

**Net Control:** On Tuesday Mike KG6SWL was the net control operator, by the way, he had been working long hours with the sheriffs department in regards to the San Bernardino Mountain Fires. He started by saying that this would be an abbreviated SAR net and that roll call would not be called. His concern tonight was the health and welfare of the Amateurs who are or could be affected by the fires in the mountains.

I found out that a lot of the hams who were on this night have important roles in our communities assisting from firefighters, sheriffs, Red Cross, and SATERN and all were on standby or were active and taking a break before going back up the hill, while some lived in the mountains and were preparing themselves and families. Even Skywarn was available to give us a little information about what the wind was going to do over the next 24 hours and the humidity changes.

**Why is the Repeater on Emergency Power?** We listened as we found out why the repeater was on emergency power, because the electric company turned off power due to prevention of snapping wires and cause of new fires. That was a big problem in 2003.

**GO BAGS:** We also got a lesson in what to put in your GO Bags for family, besides some clothes, pictures, medicine, insurance information on your home. Snap of pictures

of your house and inside, make an inventory list of belongings (all of this should be done prior to any disaster).

**Flying sparks:** A gentleman called in from the Wrightwood area regarding how far sparks from a fire can go and would they catch fire when they landed. A response came back from a firefighter stating that sparks can fly from ¼ to ½ miles under normal conditions, with winds the rules change and sparks could fly up to 5 miles and still cause a new hot spot.

**What do you do with your animals?** If you are not part of the fire area, but it is smoky and ashes are coming down, put your animals in the garage or in your home. Animals are more sensitive to respiratory problems than a healthy human. Other suggestion was to go somewhere with your animals where the air quality is better. If you are in the fire line, and told to evacuate, there are two shelters that were taking large animals, Victorville Fairgrounds and Orange Show Fairgrounds. Make sure that your animals have some kind of identification, bring their shot records and a picture. This will make it easier for the animal shelter personnel to identify your animal for you if you should get separated from them.

**Humans in Smoky areas:** If you are not in the fire area, but experience smoke and ash, wet a bandana and a mask and wear this for comfort while out side. Best is to stay indoors or go somewhere away from the poor air quality.

If you are in the fire area – DO NOT wet the bandana or mask, this will cause it to heat up and cause burns to your neck or forehead and the mask when you breathe will send heat down your throat and cause damage.

**Storage of Gasoline:** This was brought up if you needed gas in your car, but the car is low on fuel and may not get you all the way out of an effected area. Use old gas in your storage for the vehicles and then purchase new gases. Suggestion was to use an additive (stabilizers) that extends the life and keeps it stable.

Thank you Mike and all that participated in the net, with good information. I know that I will continue to monitor this repeater for great informational nets.

**[ORANGE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION DATABASE](http://www.orange-arrrl.org)** – We are still having a great success with sign-ups on the emergency communications database. It is nice to see that there are volunteers ready to serve in a time of need. Visit [www.orange-arrrl.org](http://www.orange-arrrl.org) to sign up on the database if you are truly interested in being a volunteer. You can also contact our Section Emergency Coordinator, Ric Maxfield N6RIC at [n6ric@arrrl.net](mailto:n6ric@arrrl.net) and he can provide you with information on where to go to join up with an ARES group depending on the area that you live in and your abilities to become a volunteer communicator. Remember volunteers do not always communicate. Amateurs are to be versatile depending on the need of the incident and the agency served.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO A WELL DESERVED HAM:



ANNE E WRIGHT N6BOP – Has been an Amateur Radio Operator since 1963. She is an Icon all over the Inland Empire. She has many interests like her computer club, but talking on the radio with all her friends and assisting in anyway possible in emergencies is her best hobby. Anne is usually found on the Keller Peak Repeater chatting with friends and making new ones, but she also has a special net on at 11pm every night, “The Red Eye Net”.

The reason for the congratulations: Anne was awarded at the annual Keller Peak Repeater picnic a “Life Time Recognition” plaque for all she has done for Amateur Radio. At the picnic, Oct 20, she got to meet people she has only talked to on the air and of course those she has known personally.

You are a “Great Lady”

**HERE IS SOMETHING OF INTEREST:** John Quinn is looking for information regarding a ham station near Oak Flats.

I am seeking information on an abandoned building located in the Cleveland National Forest that may have been an amateur radio station in years past.

It is located close to the junction of Skyline Drive and Black Star Canyon in an area known as Oak Flat. I have not had any success in my search and hope some one in your group may recall the station.

Ken Croker, author of Santa Ana Mountains Trails Guide confirmed that it was an amateur station around the time he wrote the book in 1976 but doesn't know the group who used it.

If you visit

<http://tinyurl.com/yv2nfy> part way down me make reference to the building with several photos.

I would appreciate any help you can give or perhaps head me in another direction that may lead to information.

Thank you,  
John Quinn

**John J Quinn**

**President**

**Corona Model Railroad Society**

<http://www.cmrsclub.org>

[jjqgenesis@yahoo.com](mailto:jjqgenesis@yahoo.com)

73

Carl Gardenias WU6D

Orange Section Manager

[wu6d@arrl.org](mailto:wu6d@arrl.org)

[www.orange-arrl.org](http://www.orange-arrl.org)