



Published by The Orange County (NC) Radio Amateurs (ARRL affiliate club) on December 2005
Our Repeaters: W4UNC on 145.230MHz (PL 107.2Hz), 442.150MHz, and 443.475MHz (both PL 131.8Hz). Orange County ARES Net meets Saturdays at 0930L on the 442.150MHz Repeater.

The OCRA Newsletter



IN MEMORY OF NICK

Photo shows ARRL publications being presented to the Orange County Public Library in memory of Nick Waters. Seated (left to right): Brenda Stephens, Director, Orange County Public Library; Elizabeth Pielak KI4GUT. Standing (left to right): Major Kent McKenzie, Deputy Director of Medical Services, Orange County Emergency Management; Steve Jackson KZ1X, Dietolf ("Dee") Ramm KU4GC; Gary Pielak AI4GT; Gerry Cassara KD4YJV; and Stanley ("Skip") Fisher N6LUZ, President, Orange County Radio Amateurs. Photo credit: K3VSA

FIELD DAY 2005 A SUCCESS FOR OCRA

The weekend of June 25th-26th provided us with virtually ideal weather for the 2005 edition of Field Day, the annual tradition of setting up and operating an Amateur Radio station under emergency conditions, and OCRA was rewarded with an excellent turnout of volunteers. Nine band captains, including one for the GOTA ("Get On The Air") station and two co-captains for 40/15 Meter CW, and off-the-grid power allowed us to enter W4EZ, our ARES callsign, as a category 7AB. A problem obtaining our usual location outside of the Orange County Board of Education building allowed us to enjoy operating from a new location south of Hillsborough a bit west of Highway 86, just a long stone's throw away from the Orange County EOC. We understand that the large field we were using will be a county recreational area some time in the future, but for this year at least, it was a novelty to be doing Field Day from an honest-to-goodness field instead of a mere backyard.

Many tall trees at the beginning of the woods surrounding the open field gave us high attachment points for the various HF antennas, and an assortment of devices were used to loft them up into position. Several hams relied upon the now traditional bow and golf ball tipped arrow, but we believe that Steve Jackson, KZ1X, took the cake with his ingenious pneumatic tennis [continued Page 2] gh-tech engineering! The crowd of hams helping Chris Pope, KG4CFX, erect the

OCRA DonatES BOOKS

If you didn't get a chance to see the "News of Orange County" for June 1st, you really should try to get hold of a copy. Because the Orange County Radio Amateurs are right there on page three! The paper had a great article about our donation of ARRL Amateur Radio publications to the Orange County Public Library, each book containing a dedication to the late Nick Waters, our friend, who was the Director of Orange County Emergency Management. They also ran a photograph which is virtually a duplicate of the one you see here.

In addition to remembrances of Nick and the work he did for us and for Orange County, Amateur Radio itself received some good press. Thanks to well timed comments by Gary Pielak, AI4GT, and others, the newspaper article managed to say that ham radio gets the messages through when the other forms of communication are down, and they even suggested going to the ARRL's website for further information.

We dutifully forwarded a copy of the newspaper article and photograph to ARRL Headquarters, so look for a mention of it in a future QST Magazine "Media Hits" column.

Brenda Stephens, the library's director, was more than enthusiastic about the volume of publications we donated, and the delicious coffee and homemade cookies provided by Elizabeth Pielak, KI4GUT, didn't hurt our standing with the director and staff, either. We understand that the Orange County's own internal publication will also run a story about this occasion.

Participating in the presentation, in addition to AI4GT and KI4GUT, were Steve Jackson, KZ1X; Dietolf Ramm, KU4GC; Gerry Cassara, KD4YJV; Skip Fisher, N6LUZ; and Woody Woodward, K3VSA. Major Kent McKenzie, Deputy Director of Medical Services, represented the Orange EOC.



HEADS UP!

The VHF/UHF mast goes up! Photo shows the busy OCRA antenna erection crew. Ten hams are at work in a jumble of bodies here, and we can identify about eight of them. Left to right: Dave Snyder, W4SAR; not identified; Karen Snyder, KD4YJZ; not identified; Milt Forsyth, W4MDF; Jim Jingoian, KG4NEL; Steve Jackson, KZ1X; Gerry Cassara, KD4YJV; Chris Pope, KG4CFX; and (we believe) Barry Baker.

[FIELD DAY, cont'd from Page 1] ball cannon, a real piece of high-tech engineering! The crowd of hams helping Chris Pope, KG4CFX, erect the VHF/UHF antenna array at the highest peak on the field reminded at least one onlooker of the famous World War II photograph of the US Marines raising the stars and stripes on Iwo Jima. In both instances, the masts got raised with some travail.

The sunspot cycle being what it was this year, much of the round-the-clock activity was directed at the lower bands. Woody, K3VSA, spelled Dave, W4SAR, at the 75 Meter SSB station in the wee hours of the morning, Woody's first time working HF. He was pleasantly amazed to see how far just five small Watts of power would go!

We recall that it was Julius Caesar who said that an army travels on its stomach, and an army of Amateur Radio operators doing Field Day is hardly exempt from that observation. In our case, we were blessed this year, as in years past, with the culinary expertise of Dee Ramm, KU4GC, who kept us supplied with the calories we needed to maintain our communications skills. Thanks, Dee. We couldn't have done it without you!

After the last QSOs were completed, the radios packed away, the lead-acid batteries dragged laboriously off the field, the antennas taken down, etc., the task of tallying up the final points began. Then, many months later when the smoke finally cleared, the ARRL posted the scores. And once again, OCRA was the big dog in its category. Our score of 6,560 points (717 QSOs) in category 7AB beat our closest competitor, which was N2RE, the David Sarnoff Amateur Radio Club of Southern NH, taking second place with 5,335 points (449 QSOs). Interestingly, they fielded 56 operators to our 33, thanks to all of the operators (especially the first-timers) who participated and made Field Day to remember!

WE SALUTE OUR BAND CAPTAIN

Isaac Blach KF4VHD - "GOTA" to find a
 Gerry Cassara KD4YJV- 20M phone the "News of
 Ted Hodges KE4NBB - 20M phone



Once again, we were pleased
 story about us published in
 Orange County." complete

HERE WE HAVE THE USUAL SUSPECTS gathered for the Saturday morning “grease-fest” ritual at Hillsborough’s Bojangles on Churton Street, just south of the Eno River bridge into town. **WHY ARE THEY ALL SO BUMMED OUT???** BECAUSE **THEY WERE HOPING YOU’D SHOW UP, AND YOU DIDN’T!** You’re obviously unaware that all the world’s problems, Amateur Radio related and otherwise, are cleared up each Saturday, or else you’d surely be in attendance, too. Seriously though, we DO have a good time over coffee and tea and biscuits, checking in to the ARES Net and just hanging out with one another. It’s a rare Saturday when we don’t have at least two tables pulled together to accommodate all those who show up. There’s always room for you, too, so why not plan to join us there soon? The early birds usually begin arriving around 0915L or thereabouts. Now, where else could you get your quotas of companionship and cholesterol both in the same place? In this group, we have (clockwise from center foreground: Gerry Cassara, KD4YJV; Karen Snyder, KD4YJZ; Dave Snyder, W4SAR; David Belt, NA4VY; Dewey Thompson WA4AHR; Gary Pielak, AI4GT; Justin Heinecke, KD4CPM; Lenore Ramm, KF4PAB; Dee Ramm, KU4GC; Dan Eddleman, KR4UB; and Peter Pielak, KI4GWB. Photo Credit: K3VSA

Don’t forget, we also have our official OCRA club meetings on the second Monday evening of each month. Club officers and our board of directors have dinner beforehand at The Village Diner, located in Hillsborough on West King Street, but all members are invited to attend. We commandeer the back banquet room and begin arriving some time around six in the evening. The club meeting proper begins at 7:30 PM at the Orange County EOC Building (also called the 9-1-1 Center), located on New Hope Church Road, just east of where it



intersects NC Highway 86.

AND ALSO... OCRA made a major investment in new hardware in 2005 with the kilo dollar purchase of a new Kenwood repeater to replace the aging, maintenance-prone machine on 443.475MHz. Thanks to Dan, KR4UB; Steve, KZ1X, and their helpers, this new radio has now been installed, and we are enjoying greater coverage with much improved reliability. The club was involved in many community service events and projects this year, including assistance with the Carrboro Community radio station and the state of the art station at the Frank Porter Graham School. Our members participated in various walk-a-thons, road races, and ARES nets and tests.

FOR 2005, The Orange County Radio Amateurs officers are:

Stanley (“Skip”) Fisher, N6LUZ, President
Dave Snyder W4SAR, Vice President
Dan Eddleman, KR4UB, Treasurer

This edition of the OCRA Newsletter was written and produced by K3VSA (PIO)