

ORANGE COUNTY RADIO AMATEURS

February 2007 Newsletter

Updates from the February 12th OCRA (NC) meeting , Laurie N1YXU, OCRA Secretary, reporting:

The following folks attended the meeting, held at Sunrise Church:

Karen (KD4YJZ), Robert (N4ZAK), Dan (KR4UB), Dee (KU4GC), Dewey (WA4AHR), John (KI4QXO), Ken (KR4FM), Bruce (N1LN), Mac (WQ8U), Gerald (KI4MXP), Larry (KC1I), Joe (K4SAR), Tommy (AI4MW), Milt (W4MDF), Gerry (KD4YJV), Steve (KZ1X), Gary (AI4GT), Meg (KI4LLL), Dave (W4SAR), and Laurie (N1YXU)

Here is a summary of the topics discussed at the meeting:

o Renewed or new ARRL memberships can directly benefit OCRA – how? If an ARRL member renews his/her ARRL membership through OCRA, \$2 of the annual dues will remain with OCRA. If a person joins ARRL (or has had his/her membership lapse for two years), \$15 of the annual dues will remain with OCRA. If you did not pick up a form at the February meeting, be sure to pick one up at the March meeting. This is a great way to support our local club while continuing to support the ARRL. And, by the way, if you are an ARRL member, you don't need to wait until your membership is up for renewal to process your renewal. OCRA will be filing the necessary paperwork with the ARRL on a quarterly basis to take advantage of this program.

o A “paperwork-only” VE session will be held at the March OCRA meeting. This will be a great opportunity for folks who have still-valid Element 3 (General) and/or Element 4 (Amateur Extra) CSCE forms to upgrade without having to pass the now deleted Element 1 (Morse Code). Please note that no written exams will be given at this VE session. The fee will still be \$14, since the ARRL VEC has to perform the same work regardless.

o There are upcoming local (and not-so-far) hamfests. Get your calendars ready to mark the dates:

March 10 and 11: North Carolina Section Convention -(Charlotte Hamfest and Computerfair). Use the following URL to find more details:

<http://www.w4bfb.org/hamfest>

April 1: North Carolina State Convention (35th Annual RARSFest) - Check out the following URL for more information: <http://www.rars.org/hamfest>. OCRA will have a table at the hamfest. There will be a need to "man"/"woman" the OCRA table. More

information to be shared at the March meeting.

The DURHAMfest is scheduled for May 26. Note that the location changes to the Little River Community Complex, 8305 N Roxboro Road, Bahama NC. For more information, see the following URL:

<http://www.dfma.org/index.php/content/view/31/2/>

o The first Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training has been completed in Orange County. Dee (KU4GC) and Laurie (N1YXU) were members of the inaugural class and gave an update to OCRA members at the February meeting. CERT is designed to help individuals, their families, and neighbors be prepared in the event of an emergency. The training focuses on doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people without becoming a victim in the process. There are upcoming training sessions that are scheduled. If you are interested in enrolling in a session or gaining more information about the CERT program, please go to the following URL:

<http://www.co.orange.nc.us/health/CERTProgram.asp>. Remember to sign up using the "OCRA CERT" team name.

o It isn't too early to start planning for Field Day 2007! A potential new site is being considered for OCRA Field Day. It is the Little River Regional Park. A few OCRA members will be surveying the park to determine if the layout would be conducive for Field Day operations. Some advantages of the park include restrooms and shelters. Some of the issues to work through include setting up overnight since the park does close at specific hours each day. More information will be shared at upcoming meetings. The alternative location will be the traditional Field Day site.

o Net control operators for the Saturday morning ARES net:

Feb 17 - Jerry KD4YJV

Feb 24 - Skip N6LUZ

March 3 - Steve KZ1X

March 10 - Dave W4SAR

o 50/50 Raffle has been resurrected!!! And...the winner was Dan, KR4UB, our treasurer. How appropriate!! Thank you, Dan, for generously donating back to the club all but \$1 from your winnings! There will be a 50/50 raffle at the March meeting.

Some upcoming club activities to consider:

As the new club secretary, I will be putting together a summary of the monthly meeting and posting the summary to the reflector. I would like to expand the update into a true newsletter. But, in order to make that happen, your help is needed. If you would be interested in writing an article (technical tips, ham radio activities of club members, public service events, hamfests, or anything else that comes to mind), please let me know. I will be soliciting volunteers at the next meeting. Trust me - I'm persistent! A newsletter will be

a terrific way to communicate the activities of our club and to promote interest in local amateur radio.

At the January meeting, Woody (K3VSA) asked if the club would be interested in working with the Adopt-A-Platoon. There was positive response from the club members who were present. We need a person or two to volunteer to be the coordinators for this effort. For more information, please go to the following URL: <http://adoptaplatoon.org/new/> Bruce (N1LN) and I have been involved with this program through our radio club in Houston. I strongly encourage you to consider leading this effort for OCRA. We will discuss this project at the March meeting.

Beginning in March, we will have a monthly paper contest at the meeting. This is a fun quiz, with a small prize, that will promote our general knowledge of Amateur Radio, local events, or just plain fun subjects. Be sure to join the meeting for the first contest.

Our March meeting at Sunrise Church, 1315 New Hope Trace, Chapel Hill, is on Monday, March 12th beginning at 7:30 PM. Members of the OCRA Board (and other interested individuals) meet at about 6:00 PM at the Village Diner, 600 West King Street in Hillsborough, for a business meeting and dinner. And don't forget to join us on Saturday mornings beginning around 9:30 AM at the Hillsborough Bojangles, 330 South Churton Street, for the weekly "greasefest" get-together. Come get your cholesterol quota!

Our weekly Orange County ARES net meets on Saturdays at 9:30 AM on the W4UNC 442.150MHz repeater (PL tone of 131.8Hz). All licensed Amateur Radio operators are invited to check in.

Well, folks, that's about all for now. I would really appreciate your feedback and suggestions.

OCRA is an ARRL-affiliated Special Services Club

Dave Snyder W4SAR, President
Woody Woodward K3VSA, Vice-President
Dan Eddleman KR4UB, Treasurer
Laurie Meier N1YXU, Secretary