

Orange County Radio Amateurs (OCRA) Newsletter **August 2007**

From the Editor

The enthusiasm from Field Day continues! For those of you who did not attend the OCRA July meeting or have not kept up with the information posted to the reflector, you may not be aware of the tremendous results from Field Day. This month's President's QRM article provides the details. Congratulations to all participants.

As has become a monthly tradition, there is quite a diverse group of articles in this edition of the OCRA newsletter. We can all be proud of the contributions that club members are making to our organization and our community. Continuous contribution is a primary theme of amateur radio

Many thanks go to everyone who has contributed an article for this month's newsletter. I truly enjoy receiving emails that include topics for the newsletter. Without the continued contributions, the newsletter would not be possible. There is that continuous contribution theme again!

Sit back, relax, and take some time to read through your club's newsletter. And, remember -- Get radio active!

Best regards,
Laurie - N1YXU
lbmeier@bellsouth.net

Summary of the July 9th Meeting

- One of the primary topics of the meeting was a debrief of the OCRA Field Day results. The detailed results are included in this newsletter. Many club members commented that this year's Field Day event was the most enjoyable ever! It was very obvious that there are quite a few folks who are already looking forward to next year's activities.
- Many thanks to MK Ramm (W4MKR) and Dee Ramm (KU4GC) for their wonderful job in keeping everyone well fed and well hydrated at the Field Day event! [Dee - You are quite a chef at the grill!]
- Mac (WQ8U) informed the group of the upcoming DFMA meeting. The program was to be centered around ARES. Hopefully, we will hear an update at the August OCRA meeting. Perhaps, this program could be considered for an upcoming OCRA meeting.
- Skip (K6LUZ) provided an update resulting from the recent emergency drill. A new EOC facility is being designed and will include a fully equipped communications room. If you are interested in reviewing the document which describes the communication station's needs, be sure to talk with Skip.
- Woody (K3VSA) is waiting for a response from the soldier we will support through the Adopt a Platoon program. A letter has been sent to the soldier asking him for information on his needs and his family's needs. You'll recall that his wife lives in North Carolina and is expecting their first child at the end of the year.
- Congratulations to Karen (KD4YJZ) for winning the monthly OCRA paper contest! The theme historical events that happened in the calendar month of July.
- Volunteers to act as net control for the weekly Orange County ARES net ensured coverage through Saturday, August 11. If you have not yet volunteered to be net control, please seriously consider doing so. The script is available on the OCRA website. If you volunteer, you will receive true "on the air" practice for running a net.

The August OCRA meeting will be held on Monday, August 13, at the Sunrise Church beginning at 7:30 pm.

The weekly Orange County ARES net meets on Saturdays at 9:30 am local on the W4UNC repeater [442.150MHz with a PL tone of 131.8Hz]. All licensed amateur radio operators are invited and encouraged to check in.

President's QRM

by Dave Snyder, W4SAR

The final results for our Field Day Operation were submitted to the ARRL on July 20. The final score was 8,025 points, our highest total ever, and a tribute to everyone's hard work as the propagation on the higher HF bands was "challenging". The breakdown is as follows:

QSO Totals:

CW:	Digital:	Phone:	GOTA:	
40m 204	80m 12	80m 173	(80m phone) 62	
20m <u>100</u>	40m 59	40m 118		
Total: 304	20m <u>27</u>	20m 67		
	Total: 98	15m 27		
		10m 4		
		6m <u>12</u>		
		Total: 463		
		(includes GOTA)		

Total QSO points as determined by:
(2 points for each CW QSO + 2 points for each digital QSO + 1 point for each phone QSO)
X (5 the multiplier for running QRP)

QSO Point Total: 6,335 points

Bonus Points:

100% emergency power:	800	Site visit by elected official:	100
Media Publicity:	100	Site visit by served agency official:	100
Set-up in Public Space:	100	Youth Participation:	
Information booth:	100	Youth operators: (8)	100
W1AW Field Day Message:	100	Youth participants: (11)	
Natural Power QSO's:	100	GOTA bonus	40
		Web submission of results:	50

Bonus Point Total: 1,690 points

Point Totals:

QSO Point Total: 6,335 points
Bonus Point Total: 1,690 points
Grand Total: 8,025 points

One change to the rules this year, which I did not notice until all was done, is that the VHF/UHF bonus of 100 points no longer exists.

I did want to single out for special thanks Chris Pope, KG4CFX, for his hard work in bringing support from the Orange County Office of Emergency Management to our operation. Not only did he work out bringing over the Unified Command Bus, but he also had an inflatable hut with cooling showers set up, an ambulance on site, and a string of EOC personnel to help with set up. This not only provided a great infrastructure for us to work with, but it also provided a greatly increased margin of safety. Most importantly, it demonstrated to all visitors, including Congressman Price, that this was indeed a county-sanctioned public safety exercise. It did much to emphasize to the public that it was not just fun and games.

Well done to all of you! It proved not just to be the most enjoyable field Day we've had but also the most productive. I'm already looking forward to next year.

OCRA Activities and Information

Next VE Session (Dave Snyder, W4SAR)

Orange County Public Library 300 W. Tryon St Hillsborough
on Saturday, August 11th at 10:00am. Exam fee is \$14 either cash or a check made out to "ARRL VEC".

IOTA Operation (Dave Snyder, W4SAR)

W4SAR will be on vacation from August 11 to 25 on Chincoteague Island, VA. He will operate sporadically on 6m SSB, on 20m SSB, and 20m PSK31. Chincoteague Island is registered on the Islands On The Air (IOTA) website. For you island chasers, the designation is IOTA NA-083, the Virginia Island Group. The county is Accomack, VA, and the grid designation is FM27jn. Dave will check e-mail occasionally at w4sar@aol.com for any attempted scheds. Be advised he is more likely to be on the radio on rainy days!

OCRA Logo Coffee Cups (Woody Woodward, K3VSA)

We only needed fifteen orders to obtain the discount price on the OCRA logo coffee cups, and we have about thirty requests so far. It was agreed at the July meeting to charge \$13 per cup which includes shipping to one central location for the entire order. If you've reserved a cup and have not yet paid for it, or if you'd like one and have not reserved one, please be able to pay the \$13 per cup at the August meeting. We'll place an order then for all the paid-up requests. These cups are really beautiful, and many people are ordering several of them.

Our Rich Ham Radio Heritage (Number 3 of a series)

By Woody Woodward, K3VSA

2007 saw another milestone come and go, and this one was a "fifty" rather than a "hundred". It occurred on January 2nd, and it was the fiftieth anniversary of the CONELRAD monitoring requirement for hams. For those of you too young to really remember the mindset of the cold war, CONELRAD stood for CONtrol of ELectromagnetic RADiation. The idea was that enemy bombers might use broadcast stations as homing beacons to guide them to US cities. A means was provided whereby broadcasters would be alerted of an imminent attack, and they would cease transmitting. You'll recall that every Pearl Harbor movie has the approaching Japanese navy guys chortling with delight listening to Hawaiian guitar music from the AM broadcast station in Honolulu some days before that fateful Sunday morning of December 7th, 1941. While hearing the music may have been reassuring to the attack forces, I'm sure their navy's navigation prowess was such that plotting a "fix" on the radio station was hardly needed..

Anyway, you, the BCL ("broadcast listener"), would notice that all your broadcast stations had left the air after having issued a CONELRAD warning, and this, along with the shriek of the air raid sirens, would tell you that the "big one" was

about to happen. How would you then keep informed? You'd remember "six-forty" and "twelve-forty". These were the two frequencies, 640kHz and 1240kHz (yes, yes, I know they called them kilocycles then), that would be used for emergency broadcast transmitters that would provide Civil Defense information to the populace. Radio receivers of the period even had little triangle-within-a-circle CD icons right on the slide rule dials to remind you where you should tune to pick up these transmissions. Of course, by then, the calibration of the average "All-American Five Tube" AM broadcast receiver left a lot to be desired, but that's another story. I don't remember when CONELRAD became history, but present-day radios no longer carry such markings and have not carried them for years and years and years. Perhaps it went the way of all such nuclear war civilian defense tactics, like "duck and cover".

Now, I know that at this point, you're thinking, "I thought this was supposed to be about AMATEUR RADIO." Well, we've just got to that, so thank you so much for your patience! On January 2nd, the requirements went into effect that hams would need to monitor their local broadcast station and go QRT when a CONELRAD alert happened. The 1956 issue of The Radio Amateur's Handbook had a schematic for a one-tube converter you could use to tune in your local AM broadcaster. The converter's output coupled into your communications receiver so you could monitor your AM station while you were going for your WAS or DXCC.

Heathkit even marketed a CONELRAD monitor kit you could buy and build, but I never saw one other than as a photo in a catalog. Actually, I was not aware of any ham who strictly followed the regs and monitored for CONELRAD. I stand to be corrected on this, so if your own experience was different from mine, I'd like to hear about it, but I don't believe my observation on this is unique. I think the concept of being nuked was just to horrific to contemplate, so people just kind of ignored it and hoped it would go away. And it did (so far).

How to Make Those QSOs - Best Practices in Operating Procedures

By Bruce Meier, NILN (aka NC4KW)

Several months ago, I was asked to put a meeting program and presentation together focused on making CW QSOs. As I was putting the presentation together, the CW only topic quickly expanded to CW and SSB. So, all you non-CW types don't stop reading yet. The presentation has been done for some time, but rather than use up club meeting time, I thought another method of sharing would be to include a series of articles in the OCRA Newsletter.

Here are the topics:

1. Getting started - General QSO etiquette
2. Casual QSOs
3. Working DX and DXpeditions
4. Contesting

For many of you, much of the information in these articles may be quite obvious – sorry. However, due to the change in licensing regulations, several club members have upgraded to General Class and are now able to move to HF for the first time. If all your operating has been on 2 mtr FM repeaters you will find HF much different and, hopefully, enjoyable. Additionally, as you decide to start looking for that wallpaper, that all our shacks should have, good operating habits will make your journey more productive. By wallpaper, I am referring to the various ARRL and CQ certificates, such as; WAS – worked all states, WAC – worked all continents, DXCC – DX Century Club, WAZ – worked all zones, and perhaps the ultimate in ARRL awards, HONOR ROLL. The Honor Roll is awarded to amateurs with a worked and confirmed count within the top 10 of overall DX entities. Currently there are 337 entities. So, you would need 328 to qualify.

Next month the first in a series of articles will arrive. Until then – hope to talk to you on the repeater and perhaps HF.

OCRA Goes Broadway

By Woody Woodward, K3VSA

The club achieved a little PR goodwill and a bit of press coverage when we helped the Orange County Department of Recreation and Parks with their production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "South Pacific", which concluded a four performance run on Sunday, July 22nd. Not only was OCRA member Lisa Woodward, KG4PFB, in the play, but we got tasked with providing vintage equipment to use as props for the radio room scenes. I volunteered to help the Orange Community Players with mock-ups of military communications gear and sent something out on the NCOCRA reflector asking for help. I received several replies to my query.

First, Dan Eddleman, KR4UB, who at one time was an actual US Navy communications officer, went to the trouble to find and send photographs of the radio gear that a Navy station would have used in the South Pacific of WWII. I hatched a plan to create cardboard replicas of some of these and started downloading meter faces and switch knobs from the internet. I could spray paint the cardboard and paste on the switches and knobs and from thirty feet away, it might be believable.

Then "Mac," WQ8U, got back to me with an offer to loan us an actual war surplus transmitter and receiver. I decided this would be better than my attempting to do all the spray painting and gluing. Mac, unbeknownst to me at the time, is a boat anchor collector. His shack is a time capsule of ham radio from the late forties and early fifties, and he probably has somewhere between fifty and a hundred period radios. He loaned me some copies of "Electric Radio" magazine, the periodical for those interested in collecting and restoring tube type equipment, and Mac's name was found inside several of them. So, he is not without notoriety in this area.

Mac loaned us a BC-348 receiver and BC-375 transmitter. The receiver is not large or heavy at all (for a military radio), and the transmitter had the power supply removed. So, it was not too bad. Even so, the stage crew ended up only using the receiver, as it was too difficult to quickly move the transmitter on and off the stage. This still worked, because the play as staged by Orange County only had the naval station listening to someone and not actually transmitting to him.

What was more of a concern to me was the US Army Signal Corp origin of the gear. I was afraid that somebody would make a point of our using Army instead of Navy radios, but I found my concern was needless. The actor who portrayed "Marine Lt. Cable" wore a uniform shirt that had corporal's stripes on it. As Lisa said, "Honey, it's community theater."

The staging was a little disappointing too, because the audience only got to see the back of the receiver. But OCRA made some friends, and we got what we asked for, which was Mac and our club getting a thank-you in the program brochure. We saw some county administration folks we've worked with before, and they got to see yet another side of Amateur Radio volunteerism. The "Chapel Hill Herald" wrote a few lines about us too, when they did a large article on the production. Several club members attended performances of the play as well. Mac forwarded our press release to "Electric Radio", and I believe they're planning to publish something about it. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to rearrange the set for my photography and get a shot showing the business end of that receiver. All in all, it was a good event for us, and the play went well, too.

Photo below: "Capt. Brackett" (Roy Schmidt) and "Nurse Nellie Forbush" (Stacey Curelop) anxiously observe "Radio Operator Bob McCaffrey" (Ryan Hecht) as he attempts to receive word on the fate of "Marine Lt. Cable" and "Emile de Becque" using BC-348 supplied courtesy of John "Mac" MacAulay WQ8U. From the Orange County (NC) Department of Recreation and Parks production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "South Pacific". (Credit photo: K3VSA)

-

OCRA Officers

Dave Snyder, W4SAR - President

Woody Woodward, K3VSA - Vice President

Dan Eddleman, KR4UB - Treasurer

Laurie Meier, N1YXU - Secretary