# Orange County Radio Amateurs (OCRA) Newsletter
# November 2007

## From the Editor

My sincere apologies that it has taken far too long for me to get the newsletter posted this month. My only excuse is being very busy both at work and at home. And, just think -- the holidays are just about here! That means that life will get even more crazy ☺

Take some time to read through the newsletter. And, remember only your contributions to the newsletter ensure that it is published every month.

Get radio active!

**Best regards,**
**Laurie - N1YXU**
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## Summary of the October 8th Meeting

1. Dan provided an update on the amplifier for the repeater. Great progress has been made. We look forward to an update at the November club meeting.
2. The NC SET took place on November 3. You will read an update later in the newsletter, and I'm sure we will get more information at the club meeting.
3. Many thanks to Chris, K4CPS, who donated a very attractive OCRA baseball hat as the prize for the paper contest winner. And, congratulations go to Woody Woodward, K3VSA, for winning the paper contest!
4. Steve, K1ZX, provided a "show and tell" update on his mobile antenna experimentation. He has promised a series of articles in the upcoming newsletters to ensure we all have documentation on the outcome.

The April OCRA meeting will be held on Monday, November 12, 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.

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## President's QRM
**by Dave Snyder, W4SAR**

We're now winding down from the summer and heading into fall. The hurricane season will soon be behind us. This year we really could have used some tropical rain! HF propagation for the 40 and 80 meter bands should start improving. A lot less of the summer static pops and crashes will be there to interfere with weak DX. Those of us with outdoor antennas will need to get them “winterized”, replacing lines and resealing joints before the hard freezes arrive. The club will start planning on our Holiday dinner in December, and by then we'll know how we placed in the rankings for Field Day this year.

I am absolutely pleased with how unified our club is. The meetings and projects have all been a joy to work with. We have a diverse and talented membership, many of whom are still with us from the formative years of this organization. Even more important, our newest members likewise are a talented, diverse group united in goals as well. So this club will be healthy and active for years to come.

Presiding over this club has not been an onerous task. Anytime a problem has cropped up, many members have stepped up quickly to apply their knowledge and abilities to reach a solution. As someone who has held leadership positions in many other organizations, I can't tell you how rare it is to have an organization with such proactive solvers and not complainers.

I have probably served as President of this organization for more years than any other one person; however, all good things must come to an end. I will finish my term at the December meeting this year, and someone else will step up to run things as of January. Of course, I will remain an active club member and look forward to taking part in our 2008 Field Day operation. I have made many friends in this club, and of course those friendships will endure, and I look forward to making new ones.

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## Update from the 2007 North Carolina Simulated Emergency Test

**by Woody Woodard, K3VSA**

Eighteen Amateur Radio operators checking into the Saturday morning Orange County ARES Net on November 3rd also participated in the 2007 North Carolina Simulated Emergency Test, or "SET," which tests the ability of the ham radio community to respond to emergency situations.

This year's SET simulated a loss of commercial AC electrical power. All eighteen hams who participated from the Orange County ARES Net were operating on backup power and would therefore have been able to effectively provide emergency communications if this had been an actual emergency. In addition, the 442.150MHz repeater that was used to provide wide area communications coverage also would have operated on backup power if the commercial AC supply had actually been down.

Stanley ("Skip") Fisher N6LUZ, Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Emergency Coordinator for Orange County, provided liason communications via shortwave radio with North Carolina's Statewide Emergency Operations Center, located in Raleigh.

Other counties from across the state also participated in the test, which is conducted annually. No one knows what sort of simulated emergency scenario will be concocted until the test actually begins, all the better to keep North Carolina's Amateur Radio community prepared for any eventuality.

Ham radio operators are continually called to provide emergency communications support in the event of disasters, and many of them are members of organizations such as the Amateur Radio Emergency Service. They use their own equipment and communications skills perfected through regular practice in tests like these SETs.

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## IARU Approves Band Allocation by Transmitter Bandwidth

**Contributed by Mac WQ8U**

The International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) is a group of representatives from countries in each geographic region. We are in Region 2 and our representative is the ARRL. The IARU does not have the power to require their recommendations be followed; however, their recommendation can be proposed to the FCC and, if accepted, would

become the law for US amateurs.

The IARU proposed band allocation would be based on transmitter bandwidth with digital and CW being less than 500 Hz, SSB less than 2.7 KHz, and AM less than 6 KHz. This opens a number of unanswered questions about the way an average ham without access to high quality laboratory equipment could make this measurement to be sure their station is in compliance. Probably older SSB rigs would not meet the requirement. The more significant issue is this makes room for newer digital modes at the expense of existing modes.

The initial band plan table released allowed AM in only two small segments of 75 meters and above 10 meters. After significant "chatter" on the various reflectors and numerous e-mails and letters to the ARRL and IARU, a revised version of the band plan table appeared with AM windows on 75, 40 and 20 meters.

This IARU band plan is similar to the plan proposed to the ARRL which was vigorously attacked by the rank-and-file of the ham radio community and eventually withdrawn by the ARRL – with the comment that the proposal would be reconsidered. Apparently their reconsideration consisted of advocating the plan through the IARU. The ARRL is the US representative and Dave Sumner, the ARRL CEO, is the Secretary to the IARU.

This is something we all need to watch and let our representatives at the ARRL (even if you are not a member, they represent you at the IARU) know how you feel about the proposed changes. Details are available at
http://www.iaru-r2.org/wp-content/uploads/region-2-mf-hf-bandplan-e.pdf

If you have trouble with this URL just start with the
WWW.iaru-r2.org and work your way down.

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## OCRA Officers

Dave Snyder, W4SAR - President
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Laurie Meier, N1YXU - Secretary