



ORANGE COUNTY RADIO AMATEURS
(an ARRL Special Services Club)
Orange County, North Carolina



Orange County Radio Amateurs (OCRA) Newsletter
February 2009

From the Editor

It is my privilege of having been selected to be your club Secretary for 2009. Laurie Meier has done a tremendous job with this news letter over the past two year; taking the club secretary baton from her is somewhat daunting. It is my plan to continue on the excellent work she has done with this news letter.

I will be looking forward for the body of OCRA (that means you) in providing interesting snippets of Amateur experiences to be incorporated in the newsletter. It is the purpose of this newsletter to exhort, inspire and inform club members of others efforts, learning and successes. To that affect my thanks to Woody for taking good notes at the January meeting; meeting which unfortunately I had to miss due to conveyance malfunction.

Until next month.....

Adriano – KI4OTN
KI4OTN@ncocra.org

REMINDER: Location for the Monthly OCRA Meeting is: Orange Co EOC, 510 Meadowland Dr. in Hillsborough.

Direction to meeting site:

From Chapel Hill:

1. Take Martin Luther King ("Historic Airport Road") north toward Hillsborough.
2. MLK becomes Highway 86 (north towards Hillsborough)
3. Turn right onto Highway 70 Business at Hillsborough at the "T" intersection
4. Pass Meadowland Drive at the Triangle Sportsplex entrance to Meadowland office park
5. Turn right onto the second Meadowland Drive (Meadowland Drive is a loop), approximately six tenths of a mile from the intersection of Highway 86 and Highway 70 Business
6. Turn left into second driveway at 510 Meadowland (see radio tower), which is the location of Orange EOC

From Durham:

1. Take Interstate 85 South toward Hillsborough.
2. Exit Interstate 85 at Highway 70.
3. Bear to the left and take Highway 70 Business at Wayside Baptist Church
4. Turn left onto Meadowland Drive
5. Turn left into second driveway at 510

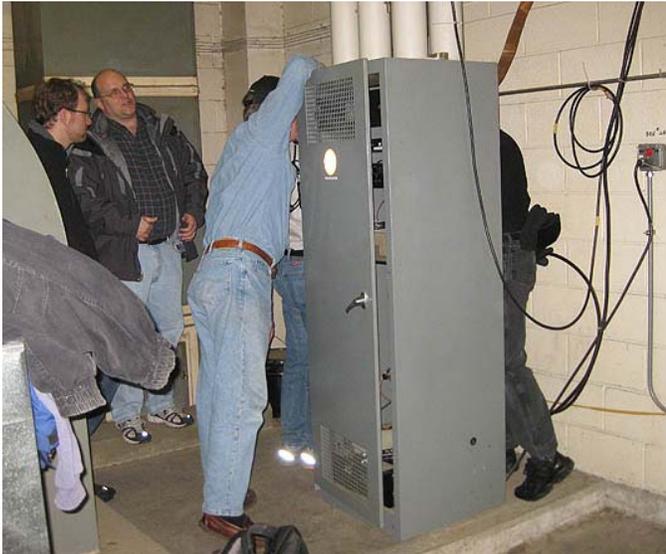


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Passed due items (From the editors desk ;))

Here are some pictures from the New Year's Day outing to spiff-up our 443,475 MHz repeater. For those new to the club or who may not know where the 443,475 MHz repeater is located; It is on top of the Mary Ellen Jones building on the UNC campus in Chapel Hill.



From Left to right John (W4PAH), Patrick (KJ4EWX), Dan (KR4UB), Steve (KZ1X), and Adriano (KI4OTN). What cannot be seen is the IRLP link box behind the cabinet. Our IRLP link is very close to being operational.



From left to right Adriano (KI4OTN), Patrick (KJ4EWX), Steve (KZ1X) and Dan (KR4UB). While looking at wiring diagram connecting the IRLP to the repeater controller.



Our very own Chris Lawless (KG4HNC) on the roof enjoying a gorgeous January 1st morning looking toward his home in Hillsborough. In the background is the Durham skyline.



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We begin a new feature “QSL Card of the Month”

In this new section we will showcase QSL card sent to our members. The one (two sided) featured this month has been provided by Chris Lawless (KG4HNC)



Photos: Steve Snoddy, Dana Garrett,
Chris Jones
Design: David Spoelstra, N9KT



W9IMS Marion County, EM69
www.w9ims.org

Confirming QSOs with KG4HNC				
M - D - Y	UTC	MHz	Mode	RST
May. 25. 08	1845	7.244	SSB	59

Confirmed By: *Jim KGR4* LX3UO print

The President’s QRM

Let's extend a warm welcome to Perry North (KJ4IYJ) and family, who all recently joined the club. Perry is interested in Civil Air Patrol activities and will probably get involved in the search and rescue aspect of public service work. He visited us several months ago and passed his exam at a recent OCRA test session. Welcome to the North family!

Speaking of OCRA exams, congratulations go out to Jim Jingoian (KG4NEL), who breezed through Element 4 last Saturday and now stands at the summit of Amateur Radio with an Extra ticket. Way to go, Jim!

Some clubs are known for their hamfests. Our club is known for our test sessions, now monthly. People come from far and wide to test with us, and we're glad to be able to be of service. As a matter of fact, when I was at FrostFest in Richmond, VA, week before last, I ran into a guy who got his ticket at one of our test sessions. He remembered me as one of the VEs. The RARS club had a table at FrostFest, as did the KnightLites. Ham radio is great for allowing you to see people you know when you're away from home.

Another thing OCRA is known for is our Field Day. You may recall that I was deputized last month to formally invite the Durham FM Association, DFMA, our neighboring Amateur Radio club, to participate with us in Field Day 2009. As OCRA President, I wrote a letter to DFMA's President, Dee Ramm (KU4GC), extending the invitation, and I delivered it to the February DFMA meeting.



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No official reply from DFMA has come back as of yet, and I believe their board members will discuss the invitation and submit a proposal to their membership. There's talk about having OCRA's Dave Snyder (W4SAR), our Field Day Captain, speak at an upcoming DFMA meeting to outline how he envisions FD2009 to be done. I'm optimistic that we'll have some sort of combined Field Day effort this year, and I hope it will be the beginning of an ongoing relationship between our clubs. I was not a charter member of OCRA, but as president, I do have custody of some historical documents, which show, among other things, how DFMA assisted OCRA when OCRA was first established. DFMA graciously provided us with the use of their repeaters for our nets before we had repeaters of our own. They also gifted us with money to help us get started. In short, we have a debt of gratitude to DFMA and its members that we should not forget.

While I'm on the subject of "not forgetting," the Silent Keys page on the OCRA website, which was talked about and approved at the last meeting, is now a reality. Just go to the link:

<http://www.ncocra.org/silentkeys.html>

The page includes an online form you can complete and submit that will allow you to have a silent key of your own acquaintance added to the page. Since the page has been put up, several people have contacted me to get a departed, significant ham added, and I am only too glad to do this. (Elsewhere in this month's newsletter you'll find some notes about my own saga to rediscover the callsign of my old elmer and add it to the page.)

We have our first annual "Silent Key Net" scheduled tentatively for Saturday, March 21 at 1030L (10:30AM). Please note that this date may be changed depending upon my work schedule.

Thanks to Bill (KI4RAN) and his mother, Kitty, for their attempt to show the Courage Handi-Hams DVD at the February meeting. This was an encore presentation from the previous DFMA meeting. We managed to see perhaps half of it, and then a "Microsoft moment" happened and froze the computer. All attempts to bring it back to life failed, but the first part was interesting. Coming up: Our March membership meeting will hopefully feature another encore presentation from DFMA, the very instructive demonstration of non-coherent communication using visible light. This event will be conducted by members of the KnightLites QRP Club. They're homebrewing transmitters that use the Luxeon LEDs and receivers that use photodiodes.

Until next time, keep on hamming!

vy 73 de Woody K3VSA



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OUR RICH HAM RADIO HERITAGE

(Number 12 of a series)

by Woody Woodward K3VSA

It's always been a point of great embarrassment to me that I didn't remember my elmer's callsign. Considering the number of hours, years really, that I hung around Jim Fleming's shack, it should have been permanently etched on my memory, but it wasn't.

Over the past several years, I was thinking about my options for resolving this problem. I especially sought out old editions of the Callbook at hamfests but never found one old enough to list him. He died shortly before I enlisted in the Air Force back in 1966.

Google searches of his name failed to turn up any relevant information. The new online database of QST magazines didn't produce a hit on his name from their "Silent Keys" column, either. An online search on "Callbook" did give a site where somebody offered to look up a listing, so I sent the information I had: Name: James P. Fleming; Location: Baltimore, MD, Time Period: Somewhere around 1962 - 1964. I waited patiently. After a couple of days, I received a reply: "Sorry, but the early editions of the Callbook were only listed by callsigns, meaning I'd have to go through the entire listing of 3 Area in order to find him." I offered to send him a prepaid envelope and mail his Callbook back to him if he'd loan it to me so I could do the manual search. Didn't get a reply back on that!

Just on the long shot that somebody on the OCRA reflector might have a period Callbook, I posted a message. Help turned out to be much closer than I'd imagined. The very next day, our own Bruce Meier (N1LN) came back to say that he had two Callbooks from that time frame, one listing himself when he first got his ticket, and another when he upgraded. Bruce kindly offered to loan me either Callbook, and after a few days, I went by his house and picked up the Fall 1964 edition. "Well," I said, "I do know Jim had a W3 callsign, so at least I won't have to look through the K3s." Bruce had some bad news concerning that. He explained that the listings were sorted in each call area by callsign suffix rather than prefix, so I'd have to wade through both Ws and Ks.

I arrived home that night and began the search. First page, no James Fleming. Well, no surprise there. Second, third and fourth pages, no Flemings at all! Hey, isn't "Fleming" a rather common name? Am I just too tired to concentrate and am I missing things? Through the "A"s, "B"s, "C"s, etc., and only one listing for a Fleming found, and of course not the Fleming I'm looking for. Through the "E"s, "F"s and "G"s. Starting to realize that I'm losing my concentration and having to go back and recheck some columns. Not looking good, here! Still only that one Fleming. I've got to be overlooking some! On through the "H"s and into the "J"s. Page 131. Page 132. Top of page 132. Wait! Here's a Fleming: James P. Fleming, 5521 Hutton Ave, Baltimore 7 MD. Hey, that's the address, I remember it now. That's him! Callsign is W3JCU. I'm ecstatic! I call Bruce at 9:45 and tell him I've found him. Thanks so much, Bruce! Years of wondering are finally over. The mystery is solved. I can rest now. Maybe Jim can rest now, too.

A check on the ARRL's website as an afterthought: no current listing for W3JCU. Nobody has my old elmer's callsign. Is that sad? Well, it would have been good if a grandson or granddaughter had gotten his or her ticket and petitioned for Jim's old callsign. But, other than that, no, it's not sad. In a way, it would be almost sacrilegious for anybody outside the family to have the callsign of such a wonderful, kind old man as James P. Fleming, my elmer.



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Community involvement by our members

Our very own Dave Snyder (W4SAR) at an enactment in Hillsborough.



Group of visitors to the enactment.



Our own Dave Snyder (W4SAR) below the bumper of the red truck in the background.



Close-up of Dave discussing war tactical plans. Plans which we all know did not work too well ;).

Uhm! He dresses up pretty good even if in the wrong ;) colors.



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Lastly but not leastly



OCRA members (and some day to be members) doing what we do best on Saturday morning STUFFING our faces. From left to right: Rick (KI4GND), Allie (not old enough), Bryan (KI4YSZ), Dee (KU4GC), Andy (W4KIL) and our president Woody (K3VSA). Many others joined in the fun shortly after this picture was taken.