



REACT International, Inc

The REACTer

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The REACTer

Official Publication of REACT International, Inc.

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FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

Dawn Drury, KJ4OFT
Editor



Spring is here and with that comes warmer weather and hopefully more Team activities. Please remember to send to me any event your Team sponsors, assisted with or any other news worthy events that your members may have done!

I have created the email address of silent-mics@thereacter.com for silent mic submissions. If a silent mic was not published or perhaps we were not notified of, I will always print them. Our silent mics should be given the honor to be memorialized.

Thank you for all the wonderful submissions. Keep them coming!

Till the next issue,
Dawn

Submission Guidelines for *The REACTer*

Email submissions are preferred. Please try to keep your submissions under 800 words or less. Email submissions can be sent to editor@TheREACTer.com.

Photo submissions are welcome and encouraged with all articles. Your ideas are always welcome but we would prefer complete stories. Decisions as to when and whether to publish your idea or story remain at the sole discretion of REACT International, Inc.

Paper submissions can be sent to:

Dawn Drury, Editor
REACT International, Inc.
12114 Boydton Plank Road, Suite C
Dinwiddie, VA 23841



FROM THE DESK OF THE OFFICE MANAGER

Brenda Cutchin
Office Manager



Hello from Spring time in Virginia. By now most all Team's have submitted their renewal packages. If you have not seen anything from the office please contact us either by email

RI.HQ@REACTIntl.org or by phone (301) 316-2900. This will allow office staff time to go into

the system with you personally to find out your Teams status.

REACT Councils out there for those of you that have renewed thank you very much. Any councils not registered at this time are considered inactive. The more current we can get our records here at

headquarters the more rapidly office staff can get new requests to you and the Directors for your Regions.

If you have any questions or concern with your renewal, please contact the office Monday-Thursday 9AM-4PM (summer hours) at (301) 316-2900 or via email at RI.HQ@REACTIntl.org.

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OKLAHOMA WILDFIRES

By Keith Sossamon

On April 6, 2011, wildfires broke out in Northeast Oklahoma County. The fire started around 1300 and spread rapidly, due to the strong South winds. Members of Central Oklahoma *REACT* were monitoring the situation and were put on alert by President Chris Toner to be ready to respond to the incident. Once firefighters got a hand on the fire, the winds switched direction and re-kindled some of the fires. At around 1515, matters were getting worse and many residents were urged to evacuate. The *REACT* members were then activated by our chain of command to respond and assist as needed.

Central Oklahoma *REACT* member Keith Sossamon was first on the scene at around 1630. He contacted an Arcadia, Oklahoma police officer and informed him that our Team was responding. Upon the arrival of other *REACT* members to the scene, the Team was put on stand-by, waiting for their assignments. A frantic motorist pulled up and notified a police officer that her relative was stranded in his house with no transportation to leave. *REACT* member Keith Sossamon obtained the address and, with the help from an Oklahoma City Police Officer, found the house. The driveway was long and surrounded by fire. Both Sossamon and the officer pulled up the long driveway and Sossamon went to the door to get the resident. The resident got into the patrol car as flames were surrounding his home. Both Sossamon and the officer left the house as fire continued to burn around the house and the driveway.

During this time, other *REACT* members arrived on the scene. *REACT* members Mike Weiss, David Spaulding, Mike Furrer, Daak Love, Chris Toner and Jeff Hitchcock, were all assisting with traffic and crowd control, while Keith Sossamon, Tanner Owen and Terri Owen continued to assist in evacuations. At one point, Tanner and Sossamon assisted Oklahoma County Sheriff Deputies and Oklahoma City Police, in trying to get a resident to leave his property, but he refused. Eventually, the man did evacuate to safety. Members Sossamon and Love also assisted a homeowner in loading horses in a horse trailer when the fire got very close to their pasture. Fortunately, firefighters did an outstanding job and saved their home. Another resident had left his house and was walking along the fire line, attempting to escape the fire. Both Sossamon and member Terri Owen assisted in picking him up and getting him to safety. Also during this time, members David Spaulding and Terri Owen, with the assistance of a PD officer, prevented two residents from walking through the evacuated fire danger area and gave another resident a ride to their vehicle at a neighbor's house outside of the area.

At around 2130, much of the fire was out, although, there were still areas that were burning. President Chris Toner decided that things had calmed down quite a bit and the traffic had slowed in the area, so he went ahead and de-activated the Team and held a debriefing. Even though the Team was de-activated, *REACT* members Mike Weiss, Tanner Owen and Jeff Hitchcock volunteered to stay and continued assisting with traffic control. Weiss and Owen were released from the scene at 0130 April 7, 2011 and Hitchcock was released at approximately 0430 on April 7, 2011.

There were many agencies involved in this disaster. Central Oklahoma *REACT* worked with Oklahoma Highway Patrol, Oklahoma City Police Department, Oklahoma County Sherriff Department, Arcadia Police, Spencer Police, The American Red Cross, and many, many fire departments from other surrounding communities. It was a unified effort by all agencies, working together respectfully.

Please see page 5 for Photos relating to the story



REACT Involvement

We Provide

Communications support for
community activities

Communications support for
agencies and organizations

Marathons
Fairs
Halloween Patrols
Walkathons
Parades
Cart Races
Bike Races
Chili Cook-Off
Tractor Races
Hot Air Balloons
Triathlons
Drag Races
Air Shows
Motorboat Races
Road Rallies
Radio Classes
Fireworks Displays
Safety Breaks
Canoe Races
Radios for Mexico
Animal Evacuation
Traffic Reports
Amber Alerts
Neighborhood Watch
National Celebrations
Easter Seal Run / Walk
Special Populations Programs
Vehicle Assistance
Search and Rescue



American Red Cross
Salvation Army
Missing Person Searches
March of Dimes
Emergency Operations Centers
News Media
Fire Watch
Special Olympics
Toys for Tots
Local Government Agencies
State and Federal Agencies
Sky Warn and NWS/NOAA
Accident Reports
Flood Watch
CERT
School Districts
Parks Departments
Disaster Emergency Drills
Ministry of Transportation
National SOS
Simulated Emergency Test (SET)
U.S. Coast Guard
Hurricane Watch
Emergency Rescue Unit Fdtn.
Cancer Society
Audubon Society
American Diabetes Association
National Multiple Sclerosis Society

The REACT (Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams) Mission

We will provide public service communications to individuals, organizations and government agencies to save lives, prevent injuries and give assistance wherever and whenever needed.

We will strive to establish a monitoring network of trained volunteer citizen based communicators using any and all available means to deliver the message.



From the Desk of the Region 8 Director

By John Capodanno
Region 8 Director



I would like to take a moment to introduce myself to the membership from the other regions that do not know me. My name is John Capodanno and I was recently appointed to fill the remainder of the term for Director of Region 8. I was saddened by the recent loss of Director Conlee but am prepared to jump right into the task of being Director of Region 8.

Future Projects and ‘Promises’: Presently Region 8 Director for REACT INTL. March 2011. Intentions for remainder of the term, my goal is to maintain a stable REACT INTL.

I intend to continue to provide leadership to a fundamentally sound organization. Continue to head Los Angeles County REACT (6130) and it’s board members, and continue to provide services to LA County communities in times of disasters and emergencies.

Los Angeles County REACT formed in 2007 currently President of the chapter, full executive board, with operating budget. The group attends and serves any and all LA County events, such as: American Heroes Air show, Santa Clarita Emergency Expo, Glendale Emergency Expo, Valley Traffic, Montrose Christmas Parade, Glendale car show, Hollywood Christmas Parade, Palisades home football games, any and all disaster relief assistance. Recently participated in the search for Mitrice Richardson in Malibu Canyon, participated in the Station, Sayer, Malibu, Santa Clarita, fire lines. Radio Operator for Katrina Disaster, Received multiple commendations for services rendered by the Mayor of Los Angeles, and Congressman Berman 28th District.

Currently a Repeater owner located high above Los Angeles, Verdugo Peak (462.700). Located within the repeater group, a fully operating digital format type II trunking system P25. Multiple customer base includes, transit companies, grocery chains, security companies, and Business improvement districts. Owner of AIR 1 Communications currently operating.

Other works and accomplishments; West Hollywood Halloween Carnival (creator and director), Procured grant money for Aids Project LA and subsidiary, Angel’s project, Children of the Night, Casa Del Sol, Tuesday’s child, AFA. Participated in the CENTER, an establishment for the sole purpose of helping runaway children with medical, psychological, and emotional

traumas. Current ICS certification and CERT member. movies.

Fully vested in the Motion Picture industry (retired) some acting (Black Beauty 1967 circa) drove “Kit” the ‘Night Rider’ car in the TV program. Multiple bit parts in numerous TV shows and movies.

One of two sons, born to Italian parents, residing in Glendale for most of my life.

Early education Benjamin Franklin Elementary, followed by Eleanor J. Toll Jr. High., ending with Herbert Hoover High in Glendale. Formal education starting at Valley community college followed by USC school of Communication. Multiple certifications with Motorola, Valcom, NEC. Introduced new medium ‘Pocket Talk’, beta tester for ‘Flex’ system.

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From the Desk of the President

By John Knott, N4JTK
President



Hello to all. Just arrived back home from attending the Winter Board Meeting in Lima Ohio. I want to take this opportunity to thank Region 4 Director Ed Kerby and Allen County REACT C322 for their hard work in making the Board feel welcomed and comfortable while in Ohio. Many thanks to the Team members who made sure that Board members and guest were picked up and returned to the airport in a timely manner. I'm sure that was not an easy task. Again many thanks and a job well done!

Here are a few exciting things from the Winter Board Meeting. More information will be in this issue of the REACTer, future issue's of the REACTer, and the Radio Gram newsletter.

REACT's 50 year anniversary Convention site has been selected.

- REACT's 50 year anniversary logo was selected.
- Switch to an all electronic version of the REACTer .
- Radio Grams between the REACTer.
- New Region 8 Director
- New Officers

The Board voted to approve the bid from Las Vegas REACT 4096 to host the 2012 REACT International Convention in Las Vegas. More information will be coming forward. As soon as the dates are finalized we will pass the information on to you. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the convention, Las Vegas has promised a great convention.

The Board also selected the 50 year logo. This logo will be used by the Convention committee and the Board to promote our 50th Anniversary. Be sure to help support this effort.

The Board voted to make this issue the last printed mailed issue of the REACTer sent to the membership. All future issue's will be electronic. There is an opt in clip out in this issue that you can clip out, fill it out, and mail it back to the office to opt back in to receiving a printed copy. Now is a good time to be sure that each of your members has an email address on file at the office.

In between issue's of the REACTer, the Radio Gram will be sent out as needed with information from the office. The Radio Gram is very much like the old Team Topics that were sent out in the past.

Please welcome John Capadonno to the Board. John was elected by the Board to serve as the Regional Director for Region 8. In January Region 8 Director Warren Conlee suddenly passed away after suffering a massive stroke. Warren was just recently elected as the Director for Region 8 in the summer of 2010. He was elected for a 3 year term. John will serve for the remainder of Warren's term that will expire in 2013. If you live in Region 8, drop John a note at j.capodanno@reactintl.org.

We are looking for some Committee members and Committee chairs. Please go to the website and see if there is a committee you would like to assist on or chair. Please email me if you are interested in Chairing or being a member of a Committee.





From the Desk of the Region 8 Director
Continues from Page 7

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Mission Statement for REACT INTL.:

As the newly appointed Region 8 Director for INTL., I would like to see *REACT* moving forward in the spirit of cooperation, diversity, and leadership. The overall presentation and image of *REACT* must change with the times, in order to recruit new and invigorating individuals into our organization.

REACT must continue to provide leadership in the forum of emergency communications, not just here in the states, but around the world. As an established communications response Team, we must be accountable to our communities that we serve. In these uncertain times, *REACT* will remain a stable and reliable unit, not if, but when that disaster or emergency arises, and we are called upon to support and engage our charters.

I am available anytime to discuss your, the memberships concerns and make sure that your voice is heard at the Board of Directors.

John Capodanno
Director Region 8
J.Capodanno@REACTIntl.org
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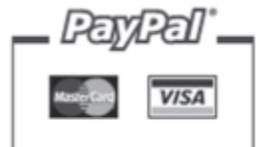
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- Flexible antenna & Owner Manual
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- DC pack for vehicle
- FREE Programming CABLE and FREE Programming SOFTWARE



Call or email Ed Greany (760) 868-8113 or CREST25@Verizon.net
VISA, M/C, PayPal Accepted



Statement of Candidate for Director Region 3 Roy D Drury



I am writing today to introduce myself and to request your Team's support in my candidacy for the Region 3 Directorship of *REACT* International, Inc. I also want to take this opportunity to thank all the Team's in Region 3 for taking time to participate in this important process in *REACT*. *REACT* is about you the members, without you, there would not be a *REACT*. My name is Roy Drury and I am candidate for Region 3 Director of *REACT* International, Inc. I started my *REACT* career in 1983 serving with Madison County *REACT* and Livingston *REACT* in Upstate NY. Currently I am with Tampa Bay *REACT* in Florida where I have served as Vice President and President. I have served in many capacities over the years at the local and council level, including Coordinator, Vice President and President of local Teams, and President of the Upstate NY *REACT* Council back in the 90's. For the last two years I have been serving

REACT International as Chairman of the Infrastructure and Technology Committee and as a member of the Strategic Operations Committee.

I have been a resident of Florida and Region 3 since 2004 when I moved here due to work requirements. I currently am married and have 2 children, 19 and 17 years of age, and work as a IT Consultant. I am a General Class Amateur License holder (K4DCT) and have been an amateur since 1992. I also hold a GMRS License (WQIC826) and am active in the local Emergency Management and CERT Communities. I am currently trained as a Florida First Responder, CPR Instructor, CERT Instructor, ARRL VE, and ARRL Field Instructor.

I bring to you the members of Region 3, representation on the Board with a passion for communications and emergency management. I would like to work on your behalf to make *REACT* grow and prosper. This is not an easy task as it is a lot of work, but it is a task that is worth doing. I would like to honor *REACT*'s roots in Citizen Band Radio and try to help to take *REACT* into its next 50 years, by promoting all forms of communications and to help guide the Teams to make themselves more of a valuable commodity than they already are. While monitoring is where we have been, we must strive to be more proactive in contacting our served agencies and working in conjunction with them to find a niche for *REACT* so that we can grow and prosper in the future.

REACT should be focusing on its membership and member Teams. Our membership numbers as well as chartered Teams has been rising in the last couple of years from a historic low, much due to the hard work and diligence of a few individuals, including myself and the hard work and dedication of my committee. I would promote and encourage our membership to actively participate in the governance of *REACT*; something that I feel has been too long discouraged by certain individuals. I feel that the Board of Directors cannot and must not operate in a vacuum and must listen to the concerns of its members and its Teams. I also support the view of working more efficiently and effectively rather than harder and at a greater cost. *REACT* must decrease its operating costs and work towards better efficiency and effectiveness.

I humbly ask for your support by casting your vote for myself for Region 3 Director of *REACT* International, Inc.

Sincerely,
Roy D Drury, WQIC826/K4DCT
Tampa Bay *REACT*, Inc.
rdrury@tampabayREACT.org
<http://www.tampabayREACT.org>



Statement of Candidate for Director Region 6 Thomas Jenkins

I do feel that being with *REACT* and working with various non-profit organizations over the last 15 years that has given me a vast knowledge along with being President of the Pacific Northwest *REACT* Council for 6 years and President of the Valley Wide *REACT* Team for 12 years has greatly influenced my decision to place my nomination in for Director of Region 6. My goal if accepted would be to promote and support all Teams and their activities within the Region 6 area, along with trying to increase the membership by me conferring with the active members and getting their views on what they need and want from the Office of *REACT* International and the Board of Member. Along with promoting Community Service and working with other organizations that use communications to promote harmony and greatly increase the knowledge of various groups about *REACT* and its capabilities within the community.



Links of Interest to *REACT*ers

REACT International Public Web Site

www.REACTintl.org

The REACTer Web Site

www.TheREACTer.com

REACT International Members Site

www.MyREACT.info

REACT International Blog

blog.REACTintl.org

REACT International Web Store

www.REACTShop.com

REACT International Update Form

www.MyREACT.info

FCC ULS System

wireless.fcc.gov/us/index.htm?job=home

American Radio Relay League

www.arrl.org

EchoLink

www.echolink.org

GMRS Outlet

www.gmroutlet.com

GMRS Repeater Database

www.mygmrs.com

QRZ Callsign Database

www.qrz.com



Statement of Candidate for Director Region 9 Ron McCracken



I have been approached by several Region 9 Teams to seek this position since none of them has a candidate available at this time. I have agreed so the Director can be elected by Region 9 Teams. I appreciate the confidence expressed and, if elected, will endeavor to represent Region 9 Teams to the best of my ability.

REACT must adapt to the rapidly changing technology available to all. We must find new ways to fulfill our volunteer safety communications role in the communities worldwide. I will encourage development or expansion of fresh avenues to meet the challenge.

REACT must also work more closely with its national partners to achieve more for all concerned. We have MOU's with several organizations and must work with them to derive maximum benefit for all

from those MOU's.

Working with other *REACT* Directors, I believe we can make significant progress toward these and other goals that will move *REACT* forward.



Statement of Candidate for Director Region 9 Kenny Jagdeosingh, Incumbent



Should I be re-elected I will continue to discharge my responsibilities as defined in the By-Laws of *REACT* International Inc.

I am concerned, as all *REACT*ers should be, with the number of Teams which are not renewing, some of which are still functioning. An effort will be made towards encouraging all dropped off Teams to getting back into the folds of *REACT*. Canada is a primary target for this effort: I will be soliciting assistance from any former or present *REACT* source in Canada towards promoting significant increased involvement in *REACT*. The Council in Canada needs to be reorganized. I can see ads, in the print media, through the Council, especially our existence in this Region. Matter of fact, this could apply to all Regions. This effort will also apply to any part of Region 9 which has or has had a *REACT* presence.

About a year ago I had approached an active member in Canada towards the promotion of a Mini Canadian Convention. Nothing developed, but this is still actively being considered by me and will be pursued if re-elected.

The intention is to join my fellow directors in the promotion of longevity and favorable progression of *REACT* International Inc.

Very recent developments in the management of *REACT* may serve as an incentive to dormant/inactive members to rally around the organization and in the process, encourage additional membership, a very desirable situation at this time of our existence.

Most of my adult life has been spent in the positions requiring highly developed skills in relating with the public. As a Public Servant in the service of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago 21 of my 28 years of service were in the supervisory positions with responsibility for staff of all different mentalities. On retirement, I formed and operated an automotive business which is highly labor intensive. I am still in business with company, now a family concern.

My in-service training included public relations, agr. economics, law of land, land surveying, road and bridge construction and maintenance, maintenance of water-ways soil identification and classification.

In the field of automatic transmission rebuilding I have won accolades in the US and Canada, at Automatic Transmissions Conventions, for accepted modifications on automatic transmissions. This is the business in which I have been involved since 1980.

I certainly consider myself adequately qualified to continue to serve as Regional Director, Region 9.



Silent Mics

Dallas County REACT announces with deep regret the death of long-time Member Janeth Zebedee Coates, Jr. (DCR 23). He died at home at about 9 p.m., Tuesday, 8 March 2011.

Jan (DCR Unit 23), born 21 December 1947 in Roscoe, Nolan County, Texas, was 63 years old. He is survived by his wife Margarette Coates (DCR 24), two daughters (Paula Spencer and Martha Shaw) and four grandchildren (Scott and Nicholas Spencer, and Tracie and Jonathan Shaw).

Retired from the US Army after 23 plus years of service, Sergeant First Class (E7) Coates served in the Active Army from 5 February 1968 to 4 February 1970, and more than 21 in the Army Reserve. In Vietnam, he served in the Army's Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) program, which later became part of the 75th Ranger Regiment (Merrill's Marauders). In the Army Reserve, he was a member of a Special Forces (Green Beret) unit.

Jan joined Dallas County REACT on 18 May 1992. He served the Team at many activities and events, and was a Director for many years. A licensed amateur radio operator (N5TID), he was also licensed in the General Mobile Radio Service (KAF2061).

Jan graduated from Grand Prairie High School, located in western Dallas County, on 31 May 1966. He and Margaret were married 21 December 1967, just a few weeks before his entry into active Army service.

Visitation was Sunday, 13 March 2011, from 5-7 p.m. at Moore Funeral Home in Arlington. Services were held on Tuesday, 15 March 2011, at 12 noon, at Bowles Baptist Church, Rinehart and NE 31st Street, in Grand Prairie. Commitment services with full military honors followed at 2 p.m. at Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. The Cemetery is located at 2000 Mountain Creek Parkway, on the eastern side of Mountain Creek Lake. .

Silent Mics from Mark Twain *REACT*, Inc.

Jerry Pulley – Jerry was a reservist and was not with us at all times but we enjoyed it when he was and he worked well with the Team. He has spent some time in Iraq as medic when he passed away from cancer.

Mary Ann Lowery – April 16, 1934 – November 8, 2008 – Mary Ann had been with the Team for 5 years and passed away due to complications from diabetes, she had no relatives. She will be missed by all.

Larry Robert Ruckman – April 5, 1948 – December 11, 2008 – known to the Team as Robert. What a worker he was. Drove bus for the handicapped children of the area for several years but when the Team needed him as soon as he dropped his children home he was ready to work. The Team was his honorary escort at his funeral. He is survived by his lovely wife Helen and two grandchildren.

Reyno Feltner – April 1924 – November 8, 2009 – Reyno was a founding member of Mark Twain *REACT*, Inc. and passed away from natural causes. He had no relatives but has left a huge hole in the Team. Reyno was laid to rest in the VFW Cemetery of Waynesville; he was a veteran of the Korean War.

It is with regret that Johnston County (NC) *REACT*, Inc. (Team #2804) announces the passing in April 2011 of long time Team member William Wilson. William was a Team fixture for decades, as his *REACT* Intl. member number 813 suggests. Our Team was represented in uniform for his funeral service. His family was greatly appreciative for our attendance, and all of his close friends confided to our attending members that William proudly talked about his *REACT* membership for much of his adult life.



CENTRAL OKLAHOMA REACT MOURNS LOSS of MEMBER'S SON



On April 16, 2011, 19 year-old Zackery Wells, son of Central Oklahoma REACT Team member Mike Weiss, was shot and killed while trying to protect a young lady at a party. Zack was leaving a party early that morning, after celebrating his acceptance into the ROTC program at the University of central Oklahoma, when he came upon a 15 year-old boy, who was trying to take advantage of a young lady. He asked the boy to leave the girl alone and started walking to his car. As he was walking, he could hear the boy once again trying to take advantage of the young lady. He walked back up on the porch, told the boy to leave her alone again and the 15 year-old pulled out a gun and shot Zack in the neck, killing him instantly.

Zack was a 2009 graduate of Crooked Oak High School and the first student from the district to be accepted into the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He received recommendations from then U.S. Representative Mary Fallin and U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe. But Zack left West Point to be closer to his friends and family. He went straight into basic training and advanced individual training last May with the Oklahoma Army National Guard. "Through the National Guard, he could still realize his dream," Weiss said. His dream was to be a military man and make it his career.

He was a lieutenant colonel in his high school junior Air Force ROTC and a private first class with the 120th engineering battalion of the Army National Guard, but was qualified to and was expected to receive the rank of specialist in the near future

The week before his death, he received his acceptance letter for the University of Central Oklahoma and their Reserve Officers' Training Corps program. He was set to start classes in the fall. In the meantime, he had taken a sales position with an Oklahoma City car dealership and had just purchased a vehicle to drive to class.

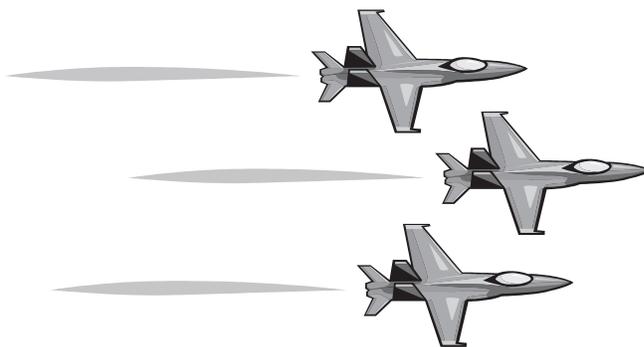
His mother, Cherry Price, said, "He had a pecking order. It was service, friends, family and his country.

In high school, Zack played football and soccer, wrestled, ran track and maintained a 3.5 grade-point average to keep his place in the National Honor Society. He graduated in the top 5% of his class.

"He touched people from all over his country, but that's because God knew he only had one-fourth of the time to touch them in," Price said.

In an interview in 2009, Zack told the local newspaper that his long-term goal was to become a general.

Zackery Wells will be missed greatly by his friends and family; our condolences to his family.





EVIE WHITE—Remember and Honor Her REACT International Earns Inaugural US President's Volunteer Action Award, 1982

Evie White. Remember and honor that name.

She is the lady REACTer whose report of the Flight 90 disaster earned REACT International the inaugural U.S. President's Volunteer Action Award in 1982. As our 50th Anniversary approaches, Evie White is a name every REACTer should remember, with much pride.

You can read the confirming account below, thanks to Cleveland County REACT, NC. Great detective work, Jay. How fitting that we should regain this important REACT history smack in the middle of REACT Month.

Now that we have Evie White's name again, can anyone give us information as to her REACT Team, her whereabouts now, etc.? Any information will be very welcome. Please send along anything you can recall or can determine from past REACT colleagues. Thanks for your help.

Public Information

Air Florida - 1982

Air Florida Flight 90, a twin-engine Boeing 737 jetliner carrying 83 passengers and crew, departed to the north on National Airport's main runway at 1600 hours on Jan. 13, 1982.

Seven inches of snow had fallen in the nation's capital that day. The ground temperature was 24 degrees. Visibility was limited. Ice had built up on the wings of the jetliner as it waited its turn to takeoff, preventing Flight 90 from gaining altitude. The aircraft shuddered.

Below, traffic on the 14th Street Bridge was heavy as the storm led to the early dismissal of federal workers. "With an awful metallic crack, a blue-and-white jet swept out of the swirling snow ... smacked against one of the bridge's spans, sheared through five cars like a machete, ripped through 50 feet of guard rail and plunged nose first into the frozen Potomac River," The Washington Post said.

Call for help

At 1605 hours, the Arlington County Emergency Communications Center received a telephone call from CB radio operator Evie White -- a member of REACT -- advising of trouble at the 14th Street Bridge, possibly an aircraft down. "One phone call," said Craig Allen, the ECC system manager. "That's what we had to go with." Cellular phones were for the future.

At 1606, ECC transmitted Box 7503, a full first alarm assignment consisting of Engines 75, 74, and 70; Trucks 74 and 79; Medics 75 and 76; and Chief 77.

"We didn't know what we had," said Capt. Howard Plansky, then a private assigned to Engine 75, in a recent interview. "We thought it was a small plane."

It was much worse. Of the 83 people on the aircraft, only a few had survived the crash into the Potomac. They were struggling in the freezing river amid ice chunks, debris, luggage, seat cushions and jet fuel. On the bridge, four people were dead or dying. Others were injured.

The District of Columbia Fire Department alarm office received word of the crash at 1607, and struck Box 417 for the 14th St Bridge. That brought Engines 13, 7, 16 and 2; Trucks 10 and 3; Rescue Squads 1, 2 and 3; Ambulances 6, 7 and 5; Medics 9 and 11; Battalion 6 and the citywide tour commander and a variety of special units.

Continued on page 16

REACT International Earns Inaugural US President's Volunteer

Responding to a call on the "crash phone" from the airport tower, the National Airport Fire Department sent two rigs – Red 373 and Red 397 -- to the end of the Runway 18. Two other rigs – Red 376 and Red 396 – headed north on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which runs parallel to the river, toward the bridge.

Treacherous highways

Getting to the scene was treacherous because of the snow and ice and the volume of commuter traffic on both sides of the river. Engine 75 stalled en route, and Piansky and the rest of the crew headed for the river on foot – arriving in time to help survivors brought ashore. Other fire companies were delayed in traffic on both sides of the river.

Subsequent alarms and special calls brought more help, including Medic 71, Medic 74, Chief 71 and Chief 73 from Arlington, Medic 62 from the airport, Medic 56 from Alexandria, a foam truck from Fort Myer, and the fireboat John Glenn from the district. Additionally, Fairfax County, Loudoun County and Montgomery County sent mutual aid. Dulles airport dispatched two crash rigs, Red 360 and Red 361.

Police played a crucial role. The U.S. Park Police helicopter Eagle 1 arrived over the river at 1620 to assist in the rescue effort, having lifted it off from its base five minutes earlier. Hovering over the river surface, the chopper plucked four survivors from the ice and carried them to the Virginia shoreline. On land, firefighters and paramedics wrapped the survivors in blankets and escorted them to ambulances.

Lenny Skutnik and others

There were other heroics. A passerby, Lenny Skutnik, 28, who worked at the Congressional Budget Office, dove into the river and rescued a woman who was too weak to hang onto a rescue line. "She was screaming 'Would somebody please help me!'" Skutnik told *The Post*.

Firefighter John Leck, of D.C. Truck 3, also went into the water. "Without hesitation and regard for his own safety, he secured a lifeline around his waist and entered the freezing water which was contaminated with jet fuel," according to his superior, Lt. Daniel O'Donnell. "He swam to the injured woman and kept her head above water until the members on the river bank pulled them to safety by means of the lifeline." O'Donnell's report was published in the newsletter of the International Association of Fire Fighters.

The last survivor of the crash – a balding, middle aged man - vanished in the river after passing the helicopter lifeline to the others, the greatest act of heroism that day. As the *Post* reported: "To the copter's two-man Park Police crew, he seemed the most alert. Life vests were dropped, then a flotation ball. The man passed them on to the others. On two occasions, the crew recalled ... he handed away a lifeline from the hovering machine that could have dragged him to safety."

That man was later identified as Arland Williams -- and one of the bridge's spans was named in his honor. An autopsy showed Williams was the only victim to drown. The others suffered traumatic injuries.

On the 14th Bridge itself, the members of Engine 74, Medic 75 and Medic 71 marked on the scene at 1615 and began treating casualties and working to free motorists from the wreckage of their vehicles. Medic 75 called for 10 additional medic units.



REACT International Earns Inaugural US President's Volunteer

'Like a battle zone'

Flight 90's landing gear crushed several cars and tipped a large truck. "It was like a battle zone," said retired Firefighter Chuck Satterfield, who was driving Engine 74's wagon. "They kept saying it was a small plane – a private plane."

Engine 74, under the command of Capt. Mike Dove, had just cleared a call for alarm bells in Rosslyn. Wanting to avoid heavy traffic on Wilson Boulevard, Satterfield and Dove decided to use a roundabout route to get back to their station in Clarendon. That decision helped put them on an almost clear course for the bridge when alarm was sounded.

Once on the bridge, Engine 74's crew tended to an Air Force captain pinned in a car. "He was alive but died later," Satterfield said.

Some of the other victims were obviously dead. Their bodies were covered with tarps and removed later. The expression of death on the face of one victim suggested he saw the plane descending toward the bridge.

Even though Arlington County firefighters were among the first on the bridge, a D.C. fire chief who arrived at 1630 requested that they leave because the river was within his jurisdiction, according to a task force report on the disaster.

Arlington Fire Chief Thomas Hawkins "directed that a staging area be set up on the GW Parkway," the task force report said.

At about the same time, police and firefighters started recovering the dead from the river. Within the first hour, two dozen bodies had been brought ashore. "It was an absolutely ghastly sight," said John Gamble, a volunteer firefighter quoted by the Post.

Recalling that surreal scene almost two decades later, Piansky said there was little left to do after the survivors had been pulled from the river and sent to hospitals.

Most of the passengers and crew died on impact, some still strapped to their seats in the submerged fuselage. "It was a helpless feeling," Piansky said.

In the hour or so after the airplane crashed, Arlington 911 received only one other fire or EMS call, Allen said. It was "an OB" – a woman had gone into labor in the far northeastern part of the county, he said. A new life was about to begin.

Metrorail accident downtown

Meantime, another deadly drama was unfolding in downtown Washington. At 1640, the D.C. fire alarm office transmitted Box 484 for a derailment in a subway tunnel between Federal Triangle and Smithsonian stations. That alarm brought out Engines 23, 3, 1 and 18; Trucks 1 and 2; Rescue Squad 4; Battalions 2 and 7; and the Salvage and Air Unit.

Metrorail personnel were attempting to reverse an eastbound train that had crossed over to the westbound track, when the lead car smashed into a concrete bulkhead – splitting the train open. Emergency lighting failed and plunged the train into darkness.

Transit police officer Terry Rylick, who was riding in the subway car that derailed, radioed the initial call for assistance.

As the magnitude of the accident became apparent, Engines 8 and 9, Truck 4, several medic units and ambulances, were sent to Box 484. In some cases, fire and EMS units were diverted from the 14th Street Bridge.

REACT International Earns Inaugural US President's Volunteer

Responding to a call for mutual aid, Prince George's County sent Rescue Squad 22, several ambulances and a medic unit.

The Metrorail accident claimed several lives and injured about two dozen people. In all 1,200 commuters were evacuated from the tunnel.

Eastern Airlines - 1949

Glen Tigner, 21, an air traffic controller on duty at the National Airport Tower on Nov. 1, 1949, sounded the crash alarm. ``Turn left! Turn left!" Tigner had radioed moments earlier as a Bolivian Air Force fighter on a practice run veered toward a commercial flight on approach to the airport from the south.

Eastern Airlines Flight 537, which originated in Boston and made a stopover in New York, carried 55 passengers and crew. The Bolivian aircraft, a single-seat P-38 Lockheed Lightning, had just been purchased from the U.S. government. Flight 537's final destination was supposed to be New Orleans. It never made it beyond Alexandria. At 1156 hours, the fighter slammed into the Douglas DC-4. The tail of the commercial airliner just missed the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, near Four Mile Run.

Everyone aboard Flight 537 died. The pilot of the Bolivian aircraft, Capt. Eric Rios Bridaux, 28, was seriously injured - but survived.

At the time, it was considered the nation's deadliest civilian aircraft accident. Among those on the DC-4 were George Bates, a congressman from Massachusetts, and Helen Hokinson, a cartoonist for the New Yorker magazine.

Grim scene

Retired Arlington firefighter Frank Higgins recalled the grisly recovery, with fire and ambulance crews removing victims from the river. Some were still strapped in their seats. Many were severely disfigured. ``Legs, a headless body," Higgins said, describing the gruesome inventory.

Others related similar stories. Firefighters also gathered personal effects from the knee-deep water and muck. ``The river was very shallow there," said Harold LeRoy, a veteran Arlington volunteer firefighter.

A quarter mile away, a crash boat from Bolling Air Force Base rescued the fighter pilot. ``The Bolivian ambassador, after visiting Captain Rios in the hospital, said the pilot told him he had been occupied with engine difficulties and apparently did not hear the final warning from the control tower," according to The New York Times.

Newspaper and wire service photos of the crash scene showed the shattered rear of the DC-4 resting on the Virginia shoreline, firefighters removing a victim's body from the shallow water on a stretcher and an airline pilot carrying a child's doll recovered from the river.

Upholstery salesman

J. Donald Mayor, a sales manager for Custom Upholstering Co, was driving on the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and witnessed the collision. The Falls Church resident stopped his car and waded into the river before firefighters arrived.

``I ripped off my coat jacket and took off my shoes," Mayor told The Washington Post. ``I saw a few fellows just standing there and I shouted `What's the matter? You cowards?' Two ran along with me. For some reason, I don't know why, but I rolled up my sleeves."

REACT International Earns Inaugural US President's Volunteer

Mayor and the others spotted a woman floating face down in the oily water. They dragged her ashore. She was bleeding from the mouth and mortally wounded. By that time, firefighters arrived and blanketed the wreckage with foam.

“Then I saw them open rescue holes in the plane with special equipment they had,” Mayor said. “Rescue workers got a woman’s body out of the wreckage first. She was about 70 at least, with gray hair and wrinkled skin, very heavy set. Looked like her nose had been ripped off. Then they brought out a young man, about 30 or so. He was in an Army jacket, I think. Next they got a heavy man.”

Soaked and shivering, Mayor got in his car and headed home to his family in Falls Church. “I saw I couldn’t do any more,” he said.

Twin disasters

Across the river, firefighters were clearing the scene of an earlier incident as the airport crash siren sounded.

A series of explosions heralded a fire on the top floors of the New Post Office Department building at 12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest. Twenty people were injured, including eight firefighters. The first alarm for was transmitted at 0958. A second alarm followed at 1012, and a third alarm was sounded at 1031.

In all, twelve engines, four ladders, a water tower and tender, two squads and six ambulances answered the series of alarms. D.C. Fire Chief Joseph Mayhew and three battalion chiefs directed the operation.

Aaron Trail, the building superintendent, was trapped in a room with barred windows on the eighth floor. A truck company extended an aerial ladder as far as it would go and then – in a rare and dramatic operation – two firefighters used a scaling ladder to reach the barred window and pass breathing apparatus to Trail.

Another crew of firefighters reached Trail from the inside and escorted him to safety. He was treated at Emergency Hospital for minor injuries.

Among the most seriously injured firefighters at the postal blaze was D.C. Fire Sergeant Joseph Mattare of Engine 13. Mattare was admitted to Emergency Hospital for smoke inhalation and a shoulder injury. The Washington Post published a photograph of the fire department physician, in full running gear, resuscitating the fallen firefighter. After recovering from his injuries, Mattare went on to serve as D.C. fire chief from 1971-1973.

<http://arlingtonfirejournal.blogspot.com/2005/02/days-of-disaster-1949-1982.html>





Setting the REACT Record Straight

By Ron McCracken

What are the chances?

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend an excellent seminar, "Lessons Learned" from recent disasters, in Hamilton, Ontario, as guest of the organizers. One of four speakers was from the Emergency Management Office in Arlington County, VA.

In outlining events of 9-11 at the nearby Pentagon, he mentioned what authorities had learned years earlier from the crash of Air Florida Flight 90 in February, 1982. He cited the only call his office received alerting them to the crash. The solitary call, of course, came from a REACT monitor but the speaker was unaware of that. Later, that call earned REACT the U.S. President's Volunteer Action Award.

In 1982, there was little co-operation among the several counties that surround Washington, DC. Response to the disaster was severely hampered by that fact. By 2001, much had improved and the six jurisdictions regularly assisted one another through a very effective mutual aid program.

However, their radios were still not compatible on 9-11. That posed obvious problems any REACTer would recognize immediately. That problem led to the push in Congress and elsewhere for radio 'interoperability' among emergency responders following 9-11.

Today, the six counties have those interoperable radios and any of the six can dispatch resources from their neighbours. Consequently, the closest fire hall will respond to your fire, or the closest ambulance to your emergency.

Following the presentation, I was able to update the speaker on the source of his one call regarding Flight 90. I was also able to tell him that the call led to REACT receiving the coveted U.S. President's Volunteer Action Award.

He had high praise for REACT Teams serving the DC area. I am sure he now holds them in even higher esteem, knowing that the one call about Flight 90 came from a lady REACTer.

Now what are the chances that the two of us should meet on this occasion to set the REACT record straight?





From the Desk of the Region 2 Director

By Norman Kaplan
Region 2 Director

In February 2011, I was appointed to fill out the remainder of Don Manlove's term as Region 2 Director. For those people who do not know me, I am married. I have a degree from American University and studied at Drexel Institute of Technology (now Drexel University) and the University of Maryland. I worked for the United States Government for 41 years, during which time I was on the District of Columbia Mayor's Special Events Committee for 10 years, I have been a member of *REACT* since February 1978 when I joined Montgomery County (Maryland) *REACT*, Inc. and National Capitol *REACT*, Inc. (NCRI) and a Life Member since 1987. I transferred to Federal City *REACT*, Inc. (Washington, D.C.) in 1990 and back to NCRI in 2003. During the 1990's I held both Secretary and Treasurer Positions in Federal City *REACT* and the Maryland State *REACT* Council. From 2004 through 2010, I held Treasurer and Assistant Secretary Positions with *REACT* International, Inc. along with helping Dora Wilbanks out at RI Headquarters.

When I joined *REACT*, it was strictly a Citizens Band and General Mobile Radio Service organization. At that time no cell phones, GPS or commercial satellite phones available for general use. The only two-way communications was by radio (CB, GMRS, marine and amateur radio bands) available to the general public. *REACT's* paradigm was to provide trained radio communicators and communications to the motoring public, emergency and disaster communications using CB and GMRS radios in general. Most radio communications were done by a *REACT*er sitting at home taking calls over the CB radio.

Today, with additional technological capabilities available, *REACT's* paradigm needs to be updated. The mission of disaster and emergency communications is still valid, but additional training is required for people who respond to the incidents. Communications using CB radio have dwindled because of cell phones. Directions and aiding motorists have decreased because of mobile GPS equipment. The need for trained professional communicators and communications is still around.

The latest buzzword is "interoperability." Basically, it means all people who need to have communications can actually talk to each other. *REACT* has been doing this for nearly 50 years. *REACT* now needs to gather its abilities, training and communication skills and work to offer them to the emergency community. In order to do this we need to expand our training to include the ICS and NIMS training from DHS/FEMA so we talk the same language and know where we fit in at emergency and disaster sites. We need to fill the niche in local emergency communications, such as FRS and extend our expertise in radio communications to the next generation. *REACT* falls within the last step of communicating with the general public.

As always, your thoughts on the direction *REACT* should go in the future are requested. You may reach me at n.kaplan@REACTintl.org.





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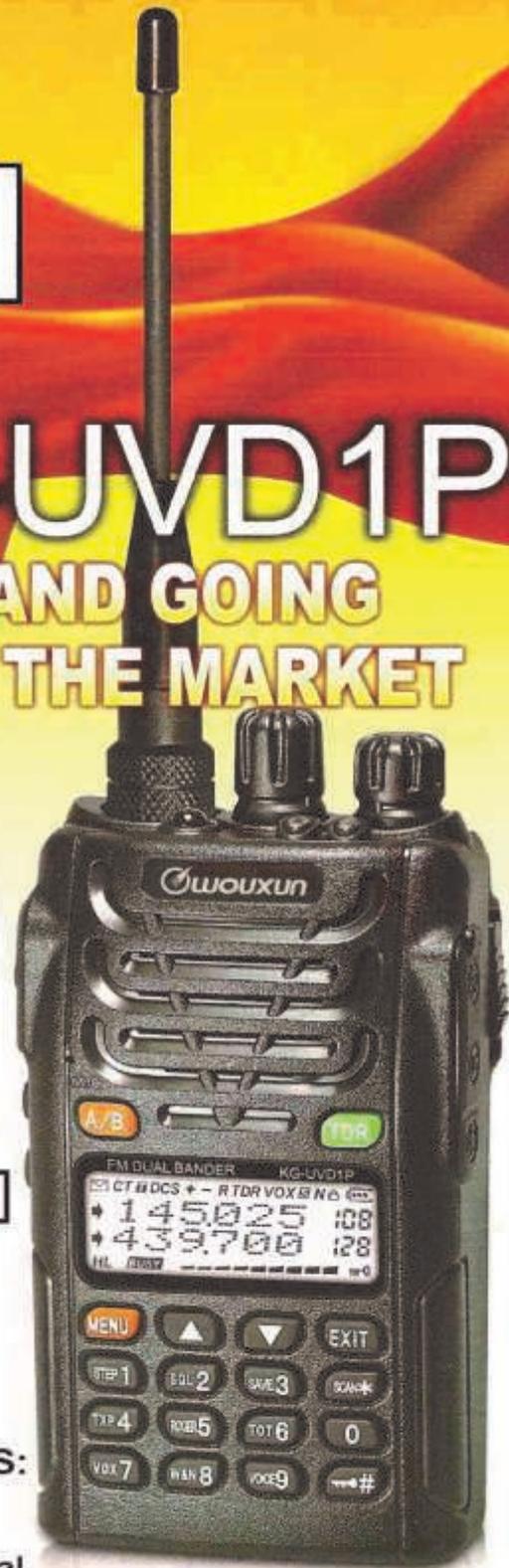
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