

THE SATERN RING

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Summer 2002

SATERN AT GROUND ZERO

BY STEVEN W. MERRILL KBIDIG & KIMBERLY L. MERRILL KBIGTR

We arrived at Salvation Army Headquarters in Lower Manhattan on Sunday, October 7, at 4 PM, walked into the building and went right to work. Jeff Schneller, N 2 H P O , SATERN liaison, greeted us. We were introduced to everyone and received our IDs and special passes. There was a large amount of information to review. The emphasis was placed on providing logistical support via Amateur Radio. The briefings lasted till 10 PM. With Jeff's help we adjusted our radio equipment and were ready for work the next day.

The operation was broken into several parts:

--A control operator at TSA Headquarters, 14th Street

--Field operators stationed at TSA canteens near the World Trade Center

--Mobile operators that performed mechanical sweeps and did spot checks of several locations throughout

Lower Manhattan

--Mobile supply transport operators that drove trucks for supplies warehoused near JFK Airport

Volunteer Amateur Radio Operators came to participate from all over the country. Our shifts ranged from 14 hours a day, in the first, to about 10 hours a day the second week. We all set our own pace. Time went quickly.

Kim spent the majority of the time at one of the canteens located at Ground Zero. This was nicknamed "The Florida Kitchen" because it came from Florida. She made sure that the personnel were well stocked with supplies. She utilized her VX-5R Yaesu HT with a 19-inch comet whip antenna and a microphone attachment. This was ideal because it enabled her to monitor radio operations and, in between transmissions, to assist in various activities of the

site. She served food to the many workers who came through the line, emptied trashcans, and helped out in various other clean-up/maintenance functions. It was a very humbling experience to be there. She tried to cheer up the people serving there and made several friends in the process. It was very spooky being there. There was so much devastation. The homeless rate has soared. We had the opportunity to attend a church service right at Ground Zero on Sunday, October 14.

Steve spent most of his time driving all over Lower Manhattan. Our little Mitsubishi pickup truck was well suited for the task. We used an FT-2500M Yaesu along with a Larson glass-mount antenna. This truck is so small that it was able to go everywhere and it did just that! It could keep up with the little 6-wheeled ATV vehicles called Gators that were darting around all

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By Major Patrick McPherson, WW9E

If you build it, they will come. I remember that phrase from a popular movie specifically related to a baseball field. That phrase accurately displays the effective potential of SATERN's interface with the amateur community. In numerous disaster responses since the inception of SATERN, we have found that when we prepare and have people on the field, even if just a bare minimum, the rest of the amateur world will invariably rally to our aid.

It happened at the Plainfield tornado in 1990. This devastating disaster destroyed sub-divisions of the town, leveled their modern high school, leveled a church and the parochial school next to it, substantially damaged a Jr. High

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IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

By MAJOR PATRICK MCPHERSON, WW9E

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School, and literally sucked off the top story of an apartment complex. Twenty-nine people perished and damage was estimated at \$200 million. Professor Fujita said that it was the most powerful tornado he had ever studied.

A week before this, Pat Duce, WZ9H, was appointed as the first SATERN Amateur Radio Liaison for Metro Division. Seven days later, she was scrambling to secure operators for The Salvation Army's sudden and immense need. We had a 16-mile area with all communications down. We were out of range of our UHF commercial repeater. We were out of range of the alphanumeric paging systems. Cell phones did not work in the area nor did regular land-lines. Pat immediately used the two-meter band to funnel operators to the disaster scene. 30 mobile feeding vehicles and four primary Salvation Army headquarters for the event all had communications via amateur radio operators. Every Salvation Army principal in the response had an amateur-radio shadow. The Incident Commander had communication with and control over the entire disaster area.

We had just begun to build the SATERN network; yet when needed, they came from all over, from various organizations, including local radio clubs, ARRL, ARES, REACT, MARS etc. Many amateur operators afterward became part of our regular SATERN contingent. They saw how their skills could be used well to help those victimized by tragedy. We saw the reality of SATERN, namely, if you build it, t h e y w i l l c o m e .

I have seen that scenario played out a number of times in the last dec-

ade--during the Quad Cities response to the 93 Mississippi River flooding; at the Rose Lawn, Indiana, Air Crash of 94; and at the Grand Forks Red River Flooding of 97, to name just three. In each of these cases, volunteers came to assist the SATERN endeavor. Again, I note that we had principals in place to harness that potential. The same phenomenon holds true in huge offshore catastrophes, such as Hurricane Mitch. At times like these, hams from several areas and nations help to relay messages and generally expedite the functioning of the ongoing emergency HF network. If you build it, they will come.

At the World Trade Center, Amateur Liaison Jeffrey Schneller, N2HPO, had a SATERN team in place. As events unfolded, he also relied on ARES, ARRL, REACT, and other dedicated amateurs to secure the ongoing communications and logistics needs of the catastrophe. It was a much more complex disaster scene than any ever experienced before but the crew succeeded because they got key leaders on the field and connected with the rest of the amateur community. If you build it, t h e y w i l l c o m e .

In Colorado, Incident Commander Jon Wallace, KC5OEB, took advantage of Denver-area amateurs and repeaters to provide canteen communications and to supply vehicles to meet the needs of the area's raging wildfires. SATERN veterans--Gene McGahey, AL7GQ; Jim Adams, WA0LSB; Tony Stephens, KE6JZF, from California; and Mike Gelski, KB0PVD; all did yeomen's duty. The dynamic of the event, however, was that the entire area provided the critically needed amateurs because we had the principals in place. If you build it, they will come.

In Arizona, a state not known for its disaster occurrences, a major wildfire erupted this year. Warren Andreasen, K7CWA, SATERN Coordinator for the Western Territory, gives dramatic details of this event elsewhere in this issue of *The Ring*. Again, we see amateur volunteers coming to assist the SATERN point hams when the need is great. In case you've forgotten, let me repeat: if you build it, they will come.

Particularly now when emergency response has high impact, we hams need to think of a new type of evangelism. We know people want to help! The role of The Army is to help those in need; the role of SATERN members is to be available for use by The Army in its disaster response. SATERN members and leaders need to build that interface with The Army. If we do our part, volunteer manpower will come to the fore. Indeed, if we build it, they will come.

RADIO ETIQUETTE

These tips will help you improve your radio communications, every day as well as in emergencies. For more information, see www.satern.net/

=Use plain English - No "QSL-codes"

=Know what you want to say before you key the mike.

=Keep it short and simple.

=Pause for breaks every now and then.

=Remember the whole world is listening.

=Talk across the mike, not into it.

=Don't shout. Speak clearly instead.

=For the Command Post guys, DON'T read everything back!

=To be really sure you're getting through to the right person, a radio message should include who you're calling and who you are.

Amateur Radio Response to Arizona Fires

By Warren Andreasen, K7CWA

I used to say that it is hard to hold together a disaster team here in Arizona because nothing ever happens. I cannot say that anymore.

In June, the attention of the nation was drawn to the huge fire in Colorado. Of course the Southwest Division of The Salvation Army wanted to help, so we sent them one of our few canteens. A few days later a lost hiker trying to draw attention to herself started a second fire. The signal fire quickly grew out of control spreading like, shall I say, "wildfire."

Conditions were so hot and dry that what developed has been described as "the perfect fire." Everything came together to join the two fires and to burn in a manner that defied even experienced firefighters. Whole towns were in extreme danger and had to be evacuated and at the peak it is estimated there were at least 30,000 people evacuated to shelters and other towns.

On Sunday morning, June 23, SATERN joined the campaign. John Griffith, N7OKN, and I determined what we'd need to establish field communications. John would operate from Southwest Divisional Headquarters (DHQ) and I'd run from my van, which is fully equipped to roll into a disaster area providing instant communications on any band or frequency legal to use. The local Ham Radio Outlet store manager was contacted and he came right away to the store and allowed us in to stock up on material we would likely need.

My first stop was the Salvation Army site in Eagar Arizona, where many of the evacuated people were going. I quickly had a radio station on the air. Very soon other hams opened up additional sites and soon we had operating radio stations in at least six locations. Before long, we had every

Salvation Army response site in constant contact. During the day the 40-Meter band was used and at night 75-Meters did the trick.

As we've found in so many other disasters, telephone service was limited. Radio was needed because the few available telephones were always busy. People stood in line to use the telephone, and I am meaning our workers, not the general public. Leaders in Phoenix were frustrated because they could rarely get past the busy signal to reach field people. Cellular telephone usage was limited because coverage was spotty with many weak or uncovered areas, and of course the batteries would go dead, having to spend many hours on a charger to recover.

Amidst the confusion and frustration, the system began to discover what Amateur Radio can do. The call would go out; "where is so and so" and we could quickly locate the person and relay a message, even when that person was on the run. We radioed needs lists and statistics. We even held an on-the-air conference call that included every site leader as well as critical people at DHQ. In one 15-minute net everyone saw the scope of the entire operation, understood all established procedures, and resolved difficulties. John Berglund, the Incident Commander for The Salvation Army, was "blown away" by how effective this was!

As usual, volunteer hams were great! All participants had to be self-contained. The site could provide no equipment and no housing. In Eagar, for example, we slept in sleeping bags, more or less under the stars—and smoke. Our canteens served good food so eating was not a problem!

All in all, everybody learned valuable lessons. The special news is that the previously untested Arizona SATERN organization was able come through

with an effort that leaves us all proud. SATERN provided the framework and volunteering amateur radio operators filled the ranks.



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over place. Sometimes it squeezed down narrow walkways along the back of the WTC. It moved in and around excavating equipment—almost any place you could think of, Steve and our little truck could get there. Steve also used another VX-5R HT, comet whip antenna and a external mic when he was out of the truck. He was in constant contact with the Control Operator at TSA Headquarters.

Steve logged roughly 300 miles of travel. He spent time just talking to people and cheering them up as well as delivering supplies and transporting people. Our truck was washed with fire hoses twice each time it drove out of the disaster area. This was to remove some of the contamination from the tires.

We were fortunate to serve during the transition from frantic conditions to a more relaxed pace. At first, the RF interference was terrible. Communications by 2-meters were difficult but manageable. NEXTEL and cell phones were subject to intermittent lockup or failure.

To sum things up, we both have reached a feeling of resolve. We lived a lifetime in a few short days in NYC. SATERN is to be commended. They were more than nice to us. We felt like a part of a family!

METRO HAZMAT, HEAT, FIRE
CREATE COMPLEX DAY

It's safe to say no one finds participating in SATERN boring! Certainly not in the Chicago Metro division! Fires, tornadoes, hazmat situations, aviation disasters—these are routine events for these hams.

Last summer, for instance, one day SATERN responded to requests from Illinois State Patrol, Chicago Police and Fire Departments and Chicago Department of Human Services to assist with an incident on the Dan Ryan Expressway, just south of the Loop. The incident involved an overturned semi-truck carrying 2000 gallons of hazardous, flammable material. This immediately escalated into a 2-11 fire and a Level-III Hazmat situation.

Area buildings were evacuated due to toxic fumes. The extremely hot temperatures made essential rehydration for the emergency responders.

Salvation Army units. Captain Jim Spencer, KC8NAL, Incident Commander, supervised the deployment of canteens and SATERN personnel. SATERN personnel were especially important as the commercial repeater normally used in these situations was inoperative.

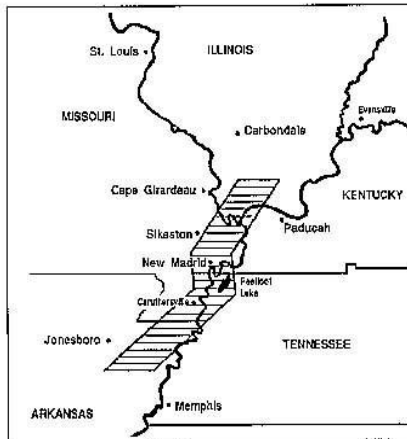
At the same time, the Metro Division responded to a commercial-building fire in nearby Lake County, Indiana.

As if this were not enough, all Metro Disaster units were on special alert because of the extreme heat and humidity. All Salvation Army Corps, Community Centers, and other institutions were available as cooling centers during his multi-faceted crisis. Indeed, there's always something interesting going on for SATERN volunteers!



NEW MADRID FAULT

BY EMMETT HOHENSEE, KCOJGJ



Midland Division's SATERN was proud to participate in a well planned, realistic simulation of a response to 6.6 magnitude rupture of the New Madrid fault. Experts agree that it's a question of *when* not *if* we get a replay of the historic 1811-1812 catastrophe.

The simulation continued for 24 hours. In fact, the drill started without much warning or advance preparation. In that respect, it was very realistic. In fact, it was too realistic, as the area actually experienced a 2.8 magnitude seismic event during the simulation!

Because the drill was not widely publicized in advance, we were able to monitor the effective readiness of our SATERN personnel. Not surprisingly, we met the challenge.

According to the scenario, HF radio was the only reliable means of long-range communications in and out of the disaster area. Although some local VHF/UHF radio systems were operating on battery and generator power, inter-agency communications were supposed to be unreliable, even almost non-existent.

We established effective sites for the reception and transmission of communications traffic throughout the exercise.

SOMEONE HAD TO DO IT

BY PEGGY MCNARY, N9QRM

On June 11, 2001, after a month's delay, Timothy McVeigh, Oklahoma City bomber, was executed at the federal penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana. Anticipating possible terrorist activity, virtually every form of crowd control and law enforcement was enlisted for duty at that venue. FBI, state police in SWAT garb, sheriff's police, ATF personnel, National Guard, and state Emergency Management folk were present. A Command Center was established at the local YMCA near the Wabash River, where air boats watched the waterway, and helicopters flew overhead to provide security to the community and the nation.

Major Jerold Forney of the Terre Haute Salvation Army Corps, was asked to provide meals and drinks to the hundreds of peacekeepers called into duty. SATERN responded, as requested, to provide communications for the Army's operation. It was Indiana SATERN's first call-up, and we were ready for 24-hour duty, with "a little help from our friends." Local ARES and ARC amateurs graciously allowed use of their repeater, and gave of their time and assistance, as well. The occasion passed without anticipated incidents from the public.

(From column on left)

We also gained valuable experience working with other emergency responders, such as the Civil Air Patrol. Of course we hope we never have to do "the real thing," but if we do, we believe we are reasonably well prepared.

THROUGHOUT THE NATION, SATERN RESPONDED TO 9/11 IN MANY WAYS

BY ERIC HEGERLE, N3VOC

When rumors of a commercial plane going down in South Western Pennsylvania starting coming into our E.D. S. office, our team activated an all-personnel call-out for a major deployment. By 11:00 AM, we had dispatched three canteens as well as personnel from our Johnstown Corps office to the site.

Also enroute from Pittsburgh was the SATERN team. Before we even arrived, an emergency net was declared. Three repeaters were linked, forming a direct radio connection from Pittsburgh headquarters to the crash site 80 miles away. Amateur radio operators from the Somerset County area also became active, assisting the SATERN team shadowing Salvation Army personnel and assisting canteen operations.

Simultaneously, in Pittsburgh, we were gearing up for 20 commercial flights expected to be diverted to Pittsburgh, with the potential of thousands of travelers stranded for an indefinite time. They would need to be fed and sheltered—and reassured. Messages would have to be passed from them, too.

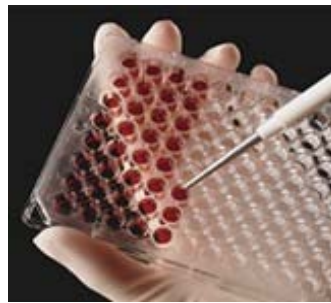
For some time, SATERN was the *only* established direct communications link between the Allegheny County EOC and the Somerset County crash site. We provided crucial information to Robert Full, Chief of Allegheny County Emergency Services, and to other key personnel.

The team also prepared and served meals and maintained an 18-foot mobile warehouse trailer.

BY JIM RICH, N6SZQ

The California Blood Bank Society's Amateur Radio Net could not have communicated with the Eastern blood banks without the help of SATERN on September 11.

The 14.265 net that was quickly established after the terrorist attacks was a lifeline for the blood banks. More than a dozen SATERN volunteers helped pass emergency traffic between the Sacramento Blood Center, the New York Blood Bank in Manhattan, and Blood Centers of America Headquarters in Warwick, Rhode Island.



SATERN volunteers even dropped what they were doing and took messages and their radios to those two crucial sites.

The tragic events of September 11 illustrate just how vulnerable our telephone system still is to major disasters and why blood banks in California and throughout the country still need organized Amateur Radio volunteers for emergency communications. As we enter what will probably be a prolonged war on terrorism, the need for advanced preparations for effective emergency communications has never been more apparent.

BY HARRY GILLING, W9IB

When the need arises, SATERN rises to the occasion. This was true the morning of Tuesday, September 11. Not surprisingly early that day, Major David Dahlberg called Major Pat. He said he wanted an HF station installed in the hallway outside his THQ office. He was not receptive to any other location. He is on the second floor of an equivalent 8 story building. So, our local SATERN team sprang into action, though perhaps "spring" is not quite the right verb.

Almost all of us have serious physical limitations, but that didn't deter us! Bill Davidson, KA9SWW (leg problems); Bill Shillington, W9ZCL, (back problems), Greg Buttmer, N9SA The seminar begins at 6 p.m. Friday with dinner and concludes Sunday after the noon meal.; Pat McPherson, WW9E (knee problems), and I (leg problems) installed a G5RV on the roof of the 8-story building. We had to climb a steep ladder to reach the roof. You should have seen the cripples in action! Then we had to snake 300 feet of coax inside the building from the roof to the second floor. What a team!

By late afternoon the connector was soldered on the coax outside Major Dahlberg's office. I brought along one of my radios, TS530SP, from home. We got lucky when we checked the SWR on 20 meters. It was below 1.5 to 1 so we did not have to use the external antenna tuner. We checked into the net and received good reports on signal strength. I guess our experience and determination overcame our physical limitations!

SIXTH SAN BERNARDINO SEMINAR

BY ART GOODDARD, W6XD

The Sixth Annual SATERN Seminar, January 26, at the San Bernardino Corps, featured a variety of interesting and informative presentations. About 60 people participated.

Jack Peterson, K6DMM, described his and Tony Stephen's, KE6JZF, experiences at Ground Zero with The Salvation Army. They couldn't actually use their radios in that environment but there were many other worthy tasks to do. They worked 12-hour days for two weeks in a hydration tent serving police, firefighters and other rescue crew members with various drinks, health bars, socks and shoes, and other necessary items.

Seminar participants learned about the environment confronting the rescue workers--shoe soles melting from the hot ground, gloves sticking to their hands from the hot items they extracted while digging for survivors, and cumbersome respirators to protect them from the ever-present dust. It was clearly an emotional experience and certainly a most emotional presentation.

James Hodder, K6DSN, of the Jet Propulsion Lab, talked to us about deep-space probes. This is an ongoing effort that often doesn't get too much attention. Because of the enormous time-lag between when the vehicles is launched and when it arrives at its far-off destination deep in outer space. The vehicles are tracked by three very large 100-meter parabolic antennae positioned 120 degrees apart around the earth. This allows at least one antenna to be in touch with any vehicle at all times. There are currently two probes in space and the setup can handle up to a total of six.

Bob Turner, Scoutmaster of Perris Troop 428, gave a presentation on TRIAGE, The Race Against Time.

He mentioned the "golden hour," the sixty minutes that can make the difference between life and death for a victim in an extreme emergency. With multiple victims it is necessary to sort the seriously injured and the dead, if any, from the walking wounded. This enables those who will most benefit from treatment to get it quickly.

Tony Petrone, WB6QHB, owner of the repeater SATERN currently uses, gave a presentation on repeaters. He described three types of repeaters. He also described systems with multiple antennae and voting systems. He also mentioned some of the requirements for a repeater license, permits for the antenna, and details about frequency coordination.

These annual Seminars are not only a time for us to become better acquainted with each other but also provide us with current, usable information. In addition, we enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by Troop 428.

SATERN Nets & Websites

The 20-Meter SB net is on the air weekdays at 1400 UTC on 14.265 MHz.

On Saturdays, there is a 40-Meter SSB net at 1630 UTC on 7.265 MHz.

SATERN members are welcome on SAROF nets. These are held Saturdays on 14.265 at 1430 UTC and on 7.265 at 1530 UTC.

Check with your local SATERN coordinator for details on local nets and meetings.

Also, SATERN is on-line at <http://satern.org>

Visit the site regularly for the latest updates on what SATERN is doing throughout the world, across the nation, and in your community.

SCHNELLER RECEIVES AWARD

BY STEVE HIRSCHBERG,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, EDS-TSA, GREATER
NEW YORK

Jeff Schneller, N2HPO, SATERN liaison for Greater New York City, received this year's Annual Mayor's Volunteer Service Award.

Jeff was recognized for his outstanding service and performance during the many weeks immediately following the WTC attack as well as for his additional contribution during the crash of American Airlines flight 587 in November.

Jeff consistently and effectively coordinates SATERN responses, which greatly enhance communications during so many emergencies. In addition to these two high-profile responses this past year, he also provided extended services from his residence, acting as a base station on several occasions. His actions were particularly appreciated during the difficult and prolonged operations during the Brooklyn State Street collapse as well as during the tragic Father's Day, 2001, explosion and fire in Astoria, Queens.

While we are proud of all SATERN volunteers for the service you have given time and time again all year long, Jeff's service in the past year went beyond any and all expectations. Thank you all, thank you Jeff!

The SATERN Ring

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SATERN DOES DAYTON

BY PEGGY MCNARY, N9QT

FLASH! SATERN was there!

Among the pilgrims to the ham radio Mecca—AKA the Dayton Hamvention-- were SATERN operators and Salvation Army leadership. Thanks to the efforts of SATERN's "Ohio Connection," Tony Dacres, AA8EI, SATERN had a stronger presence this year than ever before. In addition to the traditional booth space was a scheduled, first-ever forum. As expected, SATERN's emphasis this year was on its multi-faceted response to the September 11 tragedies.

The SATERN booth had a professional appearance, thanks to the display board that Bill Feist, WB8BZH, contributed. Rounding out the impression was the EDS Immediate Response Communications Vehicle from Minnesota's twin cities that he parked inside Hara Arena near the SATERN booth. Attending the booth for the duration were Mary Dacres, KB8BAX, Peg McNary, N9QT, Tony Dacres, and of course Major Pat McPherson, WW9E.

Major McPherson opened the Sunday-morning forum. Emceed by Tony Dacres, the presentation featured first-line radio responders to the WTC disaster: Jeff Schneller, N2HPO, Carlos Varon, K2LCV, Kim and Steve Merrill, respectively KB1GTR and KB1DIG, and Lt. Col. (Dr.) Peter Schneider, WA1PHS. Bill Feist presented a narrated slide show of TSA's New York response. As one SATERN ham put it, "There wasn't a dry eye in the place when these speakers were finished." It was obvious to all who listened that those who served in New York had given not only of their time but of their hearts as well.

Visitors to the SATERN booth included Rick Lindquist, N1RL, ARRL news editor, and many others who sought information and membership applications. A number of visitors stopped by the booth to express thanks to The Salvation Army for its help to the nation in this trying time.

SATERN at Dayton was a success in 2002. See you there next year!

COLORADO ON FIRE

BY JON R. WALLACE, KC5OEB

With the help of hundreds of amateur radio operators and ARES/RACES teams from around the state of Colorado and under the leadership of The Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN), The Salvation Army's Intermountain Division carried out extensive disaster relief activities in Colorado. The seminar begins at 6 p.m. Friday with dinner and concludes Sunday after the noon meal during the summer of 2002 while monitoring and providing assistance elsewhere in the states of Utah, Montana, and Wyoming. This was in response to the worse fire season on record.

Gene McGahey, AL7GQ, of Denver, and Tony Stephen, KE6JZF, from Chino, California, provided The Salvation Army State Incident Commander (and Divisional SATERN Coordinator) Jon Wallace, KC5OEB, shadow communications at all times. Dave Baysinger, WG0N, provided technical and repeater expertise and his YL, Rita, N0UEW, served as the South Hayman fire regional coordinator. National Net Director Jim Adams, WA0LSB, assisted with equipment, networking contacts, and coordination of volunteer efforts.

Following the Big Elk fire near Estes Park, Colorado, amateur radio operators provided 4x4 vehicles, volunteers, and communications for an extensive pastoral care outreach. More than two hundred families were provided with communications through the mobile units maintained in this difficult mountain terrain.

Hundreds of volunteer hours were provided to keep eleven emergency canteens and a Texas Baptist kitchen operating at seven simultaneous fires. Salvation Army personnel and equipment were dispatched from across the United States and SATERN units in Kansas, California, Nebraska, and Texas were placed on standby. SATERN National Headquarters in Chicago provided vital contact assistance and consultation.

TEXAS UNDERWATER

BY MEL GOODWIN, KI5WT

Everyone knows things are big in Texas, and our disasters are no exceptions! In early July, the Guadalupe, Medina, Nueches, San Antonio and other rivers in the Hill Country, began to rise and overflow their banks. Waters flowed downstream and spread the flooding toward the Gulf Coast. The situation was changing rapidly, deteriorating steadily. The Salvation Army dispatched Canteens to feed displaced persons and relief workers. Quickly Canteen Coordinator Major Ernie Branscum realized ham radio operators were needed too as cell phones did not provide dependable communications to all of the affected areas. ARRL and React leadership worked with SATERN to provide hams in all the canteens.

Local hams turned out to help, bringing their own equipment and antennas. Gordon Dial, K5SUZ, set up a base station operation at The Salvation Army Building in San Antonio that served as the Command Center. A secondary base station was set up in a school near Sequin, Texas. Jerry Jennison, N5OKQ, operated that station with the assistance of Gill Mathas, AA5XH.

The FCC declared 7.285.0 to be an emergency traffic frequency. Weather and flood conditions were reported minute by minute on this net. Major solar flares made HF communications difficult so the "Saltgrass Link System," a UHF Repeater system, was made available. It provided better coverage over the large affected area. It worked very well everywhere except for the valley communities. Thus it was essential to have HF communications as well as several of these areas did not have any kind of telephone coverage for many days.

At one point, the only way to communicate with the community of Utopia was by HF radio. The Canteen in Utopia was operating at a fixed location near the ambulance station, using an inverted "V" HF antenna. A relief worker was injured and a Lifelight Helicopter was requested via HF to air lift him to a hospital in San Antonio. Without this key communications link, it would have been necessary to transport the injured person over 84 flood-damaged miles.

The forecast rainfall for the third week turned out to be less than expected and the operation began to wind down. The hams were released from duty and thanked for a job well done.

CAMP WONDERLAND SEMINAR SET FOR OCTOBER 11-13

If you've read through this issue of *The SATERN Ring*, or even just glanced at the various headlines, you can probably predict the theme of this year's Camp Wonderland Emergency Disaster Services Seminar—"Emergency Disaster Services in the Post-9/11 World. The conference will be held Oct. 11-13 at the beautiful camp in southern Wisconsin.

Major David Dahlberg, TSA National Disaster Services Coordinator, will give an overview of The Army's varied and effective response. Tom Zimmerman of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency will report on the Ill. Task Force on Terrorism. Other sessions will cover TSA and SATERN responses at the Pentagon, at Ground Zero, and at the crash site in Pennsylvania. As usual, there will also be a variety of workshops on topics of interest to both amateur radio operators and emergency responders. VE testing at all levels will be available.

To register, please visit the website at <http://www.salvos.com/DesPlainesII/EDS02.htm> or telephone 847/725-1100. The registration fee is \$50.00 per person. This nominal charge includes all conference materials, two nights lodging at spectacular Camp Wonderland and all meals. The seminar begins with registration at 6 p.m. Friday and concludes Sunday after the noon meal. There will be a special-event station running throughout the weekend.