



Southwestern REACTer



DECEMBER 2025





**SOUTHWESTERN
REACT, Inc.**

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www.swreact.com

OFFICERS

President: Roger McCollough
SWR 098

Vice-President: John Wright
SWR 042

Secretary: Mike Bailey,
SWR 092

Treasurer: June McCollough
SWR 054

Director-At-Large:
Per Martin, SWR 053

SWR's mission is to prepare for communications during emergencies and disasters. This preparation is accomplished through working community events such as: The Lakeside Western Days, and North Park Toyland parades, the Midnight Madness Bicycle Ride and Fiesta Island Time Trials, the Silver Strand Half-Marathon, the San Diego International Triathlon and the Descanso Endurance Horse Ride

The Southwestern REACT board meeting is held the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM at the Alvarado Road Denny's Restaurant. Any member is welcome to attend. Contact us for the address.

The Southwestern REACT General Meeting is held the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM on the Zoom application. Contact us for the meeting link.

Reactive Team Net

See the website for net information.

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In The Stillness

Roger McCollough, SWR 098, President

The Quiet Of Year's End

Prologue

With the last event on November 9th; both the Silver Strand Half Marathon and the last FITT now in the books, we await the 2026 event requests to arrive. I am reminded that we were able to completely cover with the help on others stepping up to our request for additional radio operators. So the question, all too often asked is where were OUR missing members that had to be replaced by others? I don't wish this to be a rant, but rather a plea for your consideration. READ ON!

Our Situation and Duty.

I hate to state the obvious but here goes.

Simply and clearly we are not a club. From the beginning of REACT, we have been an organized, trained, and coordinated team with the purpose of supporting the community's safety needs and activities, using our talents in radio communications, and dealing with the public with our training, experience, and judgement. For a team to be successful, it is ESSENTIAL FOR ALL THE TEAM to be in the game,

Let's be clear about our priorities. We all have a life to live, a family to support with your presence and guidance, your work, and maybe some scheduled activities, such as our team. You may have other priorities, in a different order. GOT IT!

When we speak of training, our experience has shown that EVENT EXPERIENCE IS THE BEST TRAINING.

Limits? Of Course!

As discussed before, your priorities are for you to determine. You have already invested your time talent, and treasure to be considered capable in performing the unique activities we perform

including public relations, field command, situation reporting, and an event host reprehensive, to name a few.

Opportunities? You Judge,

"I didn't know" or "I forgot" or "?--?" about that event, training, or meeting. Or maybe "they don't need me. Someone else will do it. Someone will call if I'm needed." I hope those don't sound familiar. Every event is published in the REACTER and in the monthly agenda you got at the meeting (you were at the meeting...RIGHT?

Will You Make it so?

Hear my plea is for continued success of YOUR team.

Future Live General Meetings.

December 18. Live with added pot-luck and some time together. Have some fun, and sharing.

"Nuf said..."

let's GIT' ER DONE!!! ✨

Hell Freezes Over, Part 1

Article and Photos By John Wright, SWR 42

I have been know to use the phrase “institutional intransigence” to describe the reluctance of people to embrace change in organizations they belong to.

In all honesty, I’m not without sin when it comes to embracing change, particularly with my well-known disdain for Baofeng radios. Well, I can’t say that any longer because, indeed, Hell *has* frozen over. Why is this?

Because — *wait for it* — I bought a Baofeng. So, what brought about this paradigm change; this tear in the fabric of the Universe? Sit back, relax and I’ll tell you.

I happened to come across some Black Friday radio deals on Amazon. Two of the Baofengs, the DM-32 and the UV-32 caught my eye, mostly because of the form factor. They are a bit larger than the run-of-the-mill UV-5R and looked like they might fit in my big paws better. (Most of the HTs available today are pretty small.) Since I already have a DMR radio (AnyTone) I don’t use very often, I pulled the trigger on the UV-32 analog dual-band model in a package that included a plastic belt holster, two antennas, a charger and cradle, manual and a headset (in addition to the radio and battery.) All this for a cost of \$39.99.

When it arrived and I unboxed it, everything was in there as advertised. The radio has some good heft to it, coming in at 13 5/8 oz or 388 grams. This places it at third heaviest of all my handheld radios.



The contents of the box as shipped. Top, left to right: Charging cradle, charger, earphone, stock antenna, radio, battery. Bottom, left to right: Carrying holster, User’s Manual.

After unpacking everything, the first thing I did was to attach the battery and plug it in to ensure it was fully charged. Which brings me to the first feature, true

USB-C charging. The charging wall-wart comes with a USB-C connector and only outputs the normal 5V USB output. There is a USB-C connector on the charging cradle AND on the back of the battery. Either one will work for charging.

I did notice that the battery itself is actually rated at 7.4VDC and 2500-mAh, while the charger is rated for 5VDC at 1.0A output. This leads me to believe the bottom portion of the battery is actually a power booster to bring the 5V output of the charger high enough to charge the battery. This allows the radio to be charged with *any* 5V power source.



The USB-C charging port on the back of the battery.

Some of the useful features (Pros) of the radio are:

1. USB-C charging. This is true USB-C charging. None of that Power Delivery stuff that requires an additional power block and connector to achieve.
2. Higher transmit power. The radio is rated at 10W, but likely delivers closer to 7 or 8W.
3. Dual-Band functionality with 2 meters and 440 bands. It’s supposed to be locked to those two bands, but I discovered it will transmit on GMRS and higher frequencies.
4. The size and feel are better and the knobs are big enough to actually get a grip on.
5. The plastic drop-in holster is easier to place the radio in than trying to get a clip back on your belt.
6. The UV-32 is easier to hand program because the menu’s are written in understandable English rather than cryptic Chinese abbreviations.

Baofeng still hasn't hard-coded repeater offsets into their firmware like the Japanese, but the readable menus are a step in the right direction.

7. Here's a big one: There is an available app that allows programming the radio via Bluetooth from a cell phone. The app is free and is very easy to use.
8. Built-in GPS

Now for the negatives (Cons) I have noticed:

1. Computer programming is questionable with either Baofeng software or Chirp. I ended up fighting with it until I tried an older computer. I was able to download from the radio, but this is as far as I've gotten so far. More to come...
2. The battery slides onto the back of the radio and is secured by a metal screw. The only difficulty is it's a slotted screw. *"Seriously, Baofeng, it's 2025. You couldn't use a Phillips head screw?"* Also, the screw isn't retained in the battery, so it can fall out and get lost.
3. And then there's the manual. It's 4 x 5½ inches in size and printed in a font size that requires an electron microscope to read. Thank goodness for a PDF that can be printed on letter size paper.
4. An 18 inch long antenna was included, but I think that was an incentive thrown in by the vendor because it was jammed into the bottom of the box and now has a permanent curve in it.
5. No APRS (More on this later.)
6. And possible the biggest mistake in the design so far. The microphone opening is positioned at the bottom of the front of the radio where it's likely to get covered by the operator's hand.



The dark spot under the "0" key is the microphone port. Depending on how the radio is held, the port can be covered by the operator's hand. Use of a speaker microphone might be a solution.

So far, this covers everything I've noticed about the radio. Frankly, I'm impressed at how much better this radio is than the average UV-5R. The next installment of this saga will be devoted to programming and performance in the field. Stay tuned... ✈

After Action Report, Fiesta Island Time Trial, November 9, 2025

Michael J. Bailey, SWR #92

Event Position: Coordinator/Start-Finish.

Observations:

This event ran concurrently with Silver Strand Half Marathon thus requiring the available team members to be split between two events. With the addition of a 'Friend of REACT', Alex Garcia, we were able to man almost all of our usual positions on the island. Team members attending included John Wright, Larry Bierma, Dan Willan, Richard Miller and Mike Bailey.

Initially, there was a low marine layer that limited visibility, fogged cyclists' visors, and left the pavement wet. While this cleared halfway through the event, it

did create for a slick road surface. This appears to have led to 2 accidents on the course.

A major San Diego Bicycle Club event took place in Borrego Springs the day before which was thought to have resulted in a substantial drop in attendance with a 20-30% reduction in participants.

Notable Occurrences:

There were two cyclists that crashed on the course. Both went down in separate events at the southwest corner of the island on the downhill, sharp left turn. Both were traveling at elevated speeds (32mph for one cyclist) and hit the slick, sandy area on the outside of

the curve. Luckily, injuries were minor, consisting of road rash and abrasions. Both were able to make it to the finish line under their own power. Both were evaluated by AMR paramedics and released without need for follow-up care.



What Didn't Work:

The street sweeper that goes around the island before the race should focus more on the Southwestern corner. While the sweeper did clean the inside/left side of the street, one pass was not enough to adequately clean the entire street. Thus, the sweeper may need to back up and clean the outside/right side of the street to possibly prevent cyclists from having their bikes slip out from under them.

Several potholes were identified on the west side of the course that surprised some cyclists and resulted in one destabilization. While no cyclists crashed, the potential for some significant crashes was present. Better visualization of the potholes by placing cones over them or by outlining them in orange spray.

Work-Arounds, Solutions:

After the 2nd crash, Alex (located at the sw Curve) was directed to warn cyclists of the outside curve and to stay to the left as they turned through the curve. He was able to do that and place a warning vest over a support and place a yellow flashing light at the location. This apparently worked as no further accidents occurred.

What Worked Well:

Co-location of the “Shadow” at Start-Finish with



ambulance personnel allowed the quick notification of downed cyclists to the AMR staff. Their location also made it the nearest point after the finish line where injured riders could be assessed.

Larry Bierma's placement of his large 2m/70cm antenna on the berm on the north side of the island resulted in excellent coverage throughout the island.

Knowing the staff shortage for this event, a request was put out to non-REACT hams during our REACT Team net on Thursdays as well as emailing Team members of our anticipated staffing shortfall. The team and "FRIENDS OF REACT" responded accordingly.

John Wright was net control for the event and did a

very nice job of summarizing and clarifying communications between the team members.

Suggestions for Next Time:

Encourage better street sweeping with a focus on the tight turns with accumulated sand.

Clarify with ride organizer how best to mark the location of significant potholes that could adversely impact riders.

Recommend staffing the Southwest Curve location with a medically-trained REACT member given the potential for accidents and injuries there. ✈ ww

After Action Report, Silver Strand Half Marathon

Per Martin, Unit 53, AJ6PJ

Due to SOUTHWESTERN REACT having two events on the morning of November 9, we had some concerns about reduced staffing. This required additional planning prior to the events. I met with our contact person for this event, Jennifer Stephens, and discussed communication issues and found out what was most important to her. She later provided course maps and a timeline.

Don raised some concerns about the turn around point from last year's race, and provided photos and maps. These were relayed to Jennifer with her thanks. During events, we usually have the best vantage points for monitoring progress and issues. It really helps that we note the issues and report them.

Due to the event not being close to an SW REACT meeting date, I elected to do the briefing via email (no ZOOM). I was able to provide the materials relayed from Jennifer, and my own summary our plan for the event. This seemed to eliminate the need to meet up before the event, but at the now optional meet up, most team members showed up. This gave us time to greet each other, answer any questions about the event plan, but also affirmed the positive vibes of the team and readiness to do this. Longtime Friend of React, Patrick Gooden, K6PFG, and a SOBARS member, Tom "Kikko" Kimmelman, K1KKO, also came out to help us with the event—we needed them and give them our thanks!

Our regional talk-in channel (React Otay) was also used by other SW REACT members heading to the other event (FITT). We were able to greet some of them as well via radio. Our primary event channel was the SOBARS 70cm repeater. From prior experience at an event along Pt

Loma, we have found that 2 meters does not work well in that urban environment. The 70cm repeater also ended up working well for this event. Our secondary channel was one of our encoded (PL tone) simplex channels. Since we usually use these for FITT and cross band repeating, we had to do some coordination before the two events to avoid stepping on each other. Our base station was set up in the parking lot at the Finish Line location with a 33 foot mast, close enough to the event organizer but uncomfortably close to the local rock band. Due to transitional issues the event, this station needed to monitor a third channel and was able to do this via HT. It should be noted that there may be a delay in responses from Net Control whenever multiple channels are being monitored. I have noticed this at other events, and the same thing happened here. Typically, Net Control will complete their exchange before shifting attention back to the other channel that had traffic, and usually will ask for a repeat of the missed traffic. However, it always helps the Net to prioritize critical traffic if the calling station mentions "urgent" or "priority" in their initial call. We should discuss this at a future REACT meeting.

This event has multiple races using different portions of the full course. One side of the highway is completely closed by road crews and staffed by law enforcement at every access point. There was a delay in completing the closure, which held up the start of the races. The 5K race started from the Finish line, but the other races started from the Start line. This resulted in runners on the middle of the course far sooner than the runners from the far away Start line. Using the provided timeline,

we were able to adjust our expectations of when runners would show up at each station along the course, which was helpful. It also gave us some idea when the last runner would be passing through. Of note, there are several “runners” who actually walk the longest distance, the half marathon. This seems to happen every year, and the duration of the highway closure actually accommodates this. However, it is an odd sight to see an ambulance, our sweeper vehicle, and other race vehicles following the last walker throughout the course at this very slow pace. The timeline provides one cut off time for the station closest to the cut off to the finish line. The walker passed through prior to this cut off, but turned around prior to reaching the turn around point on the south-most leg of the race. This helped us confirm a bit earlier that all runners were off the highway.

During the event, there were no major issues on the course. There was a bit of confusion at the cut off point about where our station operator can set up. We ended up having to move the station after the start but prior to runners arriving. Thus, we need to mark this on our map of the Cays location.

During the event, the finish line had two ambulances on standby. Out on the course, there was one ambulance following the last runner. As it turns out, there were three medical events requiring paramedics at the finish line. For the first, the ambulance out on the course was dispatched to the finish line with police

escort CODE THREE. Paramedics (via fire engine) were also dispatched. The on-site ambulance crews had already been working the issue. Unfortunately, one of the under-30 lead runners in the marathon could not be revived after having crossed the finish line and collapsing. This the first time I have heard of such at one of our events. This had little impact on our area of responsibility, but it is a good reminder than even the lead runners of a race can have issues. We need to remain alert and keep an eye out for anyone who seems to be struggling.

There were two more events in the area of the Finish Line, and paramedics responded each time. The event (booth) staff managed foot and vehicle traffic in the area around the emergency responders. It might have helped slightly for our team to be notified whenever there is a need for incoming emergency responders. We should consider this, and how coordination could be achieved. There is no direct communication between Net Control and the event staff, other than to walk away from the radio to go talk to them, or to use a cell phone. They are clearly very busy when an emergency occurs.

The day started out foggy but ended with warming sunshine. For most of the event participants, it was a wonderful event with lots of music and celebration. We affirm this ode of sweat to physical conditioning and perseverance.



Jennifer Stephens, center, and a couple of event workers.



Starting line under the typical San Diego marine layer.

Southwestern REACT Board Meeting, November 6, 2025

Mike Bailey, SWR 092

Call to Order: 1848 hrs.

Attending: June, Roger, Per, John, Mike. Quorum achieved.

Visitors Attending: Jim Patterson, Heather Wright

Secretary's Report: Minutes of Last Board Meeting was published in the REACTer. No changes. Motioned to approve by June, second by Per. M/S/C. No correspondence received.

Treasurer's Report: June.

Starting Balance as of September 30TH: \$2986.72

Ending Balance as of October 31st: \$2966.73

Expenses: Go Daddy for website hosting: \$19.99

Webmaster: Per –holding off on switching over to WordPress until this year's events are over. He is working to increase the interactive ability of the website for the membership.

Unfinished Business:

Recruiting Strategies: Mike presented an outline of recruitment options. Target groups, messaging strategies and how to tap into underlying motivations were discussed.

New Business:

Election Nominations – June to send out an email to the membership requesting nominations. Per will give up the Member-at-Large Board position at the end of his term. The following board members agreed to continue:

President: Roger

Vice-President: John

Treasurer: June

Secretary: Mike

December/Year End General Meeting: Publicize via email.

Thanksgiving, Christmas fall on Thursdays in which our net is held. New Year's Day also falls on a Thursday which conflicts with the scheduled Board meeting. The Board elected to move the Board meeting to Jan. 15th, prior to the General meeting via Zoom.

Thank you notes. It was recommended to send thank you notes to our event organizers. Mike to develop the text, circulate it to the board and, once approved, John to print it out on high-quality paper.

Upcoming Training Moments: Several options for future meetings were proposed:

How to complete an AAR. Template is on the website. - John

Training Manual Review - John

Perhaps covering a segment with a test similar to how training was conducted using the ham license test questions. John to take this for action.

Upcoming Events:

SilverStrand Half Marathon: Per to coordinate. Scheduled for November 9th.

FITT: Mike to coordinate. Scheduled for November 9th.

Adjourned: 2015 hrs. ✨

Southwestern REACT General Meeting, November 20, 2025

Mike Bailey, SWR 092

Call to order at 1835 hrs.

Present: Roger McCollough, Per Martin, June McCollough, Larry Bierma, George KG6SD, Carl Jensen, Marilyn Jensen, Per Martin, John Wright, & Mike Bailey. Quorum met.

Visitors/General Members: None.

Comms Challenge: John Wright presented on how to program your handheld radio in the field--an interactive exercise going through the steps needed to enter in frequencies into memory.

Recent Radio Updates by Members: None.

Training Moment: None.

Secretary's Report: No new correspondence or reports submitted. Minutes of the last General Meeting are in the REACTER. Last Board Meeting minutes will be sent to the Board tonight. No new pertinent correspondence received.

Treasurer's Report: June.

Starting balance as of September 30: \$2986.72

Ending balance as of October 31 is \$2966.73

Only expense was renewal of Go Daddy account for the website: \$19.99

Election Update: June.

Current Candidates:

President: Roger McCollough & John Wright

Vice President: John Wright and Roger McCollough

Secretary: Mike Bailey

Treasurer: June McCollough

Member at Large: Larry Bierma

Tyler will set up the online voting system. Per was nominated to oversee the election process.

REACTER Editor: No Report. REACTER out.

Webmaster Report: Per – No update.

New Business:

Recruitment Strategy: Mike updated the team on the Recruiting Strategy document that was published in the REACTER. He updated the team on the recruiting presentation with John this weekend to a new ham class and testing session.

Dues for REACT International for 2026: Anticipated to be \$35 for next year.

John Wright has updated the Team Training Manual and sent a copy to the board. It includes the Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures will be added later.

Member Update:

Jim and his wife has been in and out of the hospital. He has been having difficulty with his computer which may be why he is not attending tonight.

Mckenzie sent an email to June updating her on her situation.

Tyler texted June noting that he could not attend tonight but will assist with the election.

Travis #48 could not attend tonight because he is working nights.

Upcoming Events:

No remaining public events for 2025.

Final General Team meeting for 2025 is next month, December 18th. John recommended an ugly sweater contest and may have some giveaways.

Meeting adjourned at 1944 hrs. ⚡

Editor's End-Of-The-Year Comments

John Wright, SWR 042

With 2025 wrapping up, I felt it was time for a review of just what is involved in producing a newsletter each month and what can be done to make it better.

Here are some guidelines to be observed when submitting articles to the Southwestern REACTER:

1. **Format:** Articles produced in Microsoft Word are preferred.
2. **Font:** Please submit articles in the **ARIAL** font, That's just plain Arial, not any of its sub-fonts or whatever your copy of Word happens to throw up as a default font.
3. Submit articles via e-mail as **ATTACHMENTS**. Do not place the article in the body of the e-mail.
4. Use good writing techniques and proofread articles before submission.
5. *Avoid the excessive use of quotation marks (“”)*
6. If photographs or other images are part of the article, do not place them within the article. Submit them as a separate attachment, with notes in the article indicating where in the article the photos or images should appear.
7. Please provide appropriate caption information for any photos, including the names of any recognizable individuals, their organizations and the name of the photographer.
8. **Deadline:** The normal deadline for articles in the First of each month. This will allow publication

of the REACTER prior to that month's board meeting.

9. Event Coordinators should be prepared to produce After-Action Reports for events they coordinate. These are necessary for maintaining the membership information base and give us insight into how to better serve our clients.
10. This issue is the last time the minutes of the board and general meetings will be published in the REACTER. Henceforth, the minutes will be published on the swreact.com website only.
11. And just so you are fully aware of the obstacles an editor faces, I leave you with this:

