



Southwestern REACTer



NOVEMBER 2025





SOUTHWESTERN REACT, Inc.

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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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Vice-President's Message

John Wright, SWR 042, Vice-President

Filling In For The Boss Again

The year is almost over and there is still a lot more to do. Of primary

importance are the two upcoming events. We have the last Fiesta Island Time Trial and the Silver Strand Half Marathon remaining on the event schedule.

These events are critical because they are occurring on the same day and time. At the time of this writing, that is **two days away**, on November 9th. If you have already signed up to work either of these, thank you. If you haven't then seriously consider participating in one or the other. The coordinators for the events are Michael Bailey for the FITT and Per Martin for the Silver Strand Half Marathon. You can contact them directly through e-mail.

By now you should have received notification of open nominations for positions on the Southwestern REACT Board of Directors. Please consider running for a position. One incumbent director is not running for re-election.

With our low membership numbers and half of our current members not participating in event support, we are rapidly approaching the point where we will be forced to tell our clients that we will be unable to support their events. We don't want to do this. We need to recruit more members to work events. To that end, Mike Bailey, SWR 092, came up with a list of suggested recruiting strategies. The list is published elsewhere in this issue.

Some of these strategies are already being implemented and others will be considered in the near future. Input from the membership at large is appreciated. If you have any ideas, please

send them to me or any other board member.

Because of the upcoming Holiday season, there are some changes in our schedule. There will be no REACT nets on November 27th (Thanksgiving) and on December 25th (Christmas.) The regularly scheduled board meeting on January 1 will be replaced by a Zoom board meeting before the January 15th Zoom general meeting. Further information will be sent later.

Finally, our last in-person meeting of the year is coming up on December 18th. This is the meeting we use for an annual get-together of the membership. We'd like to continue that tradition, so we're soliciting suggestions as to what kind of event we should have and who is interested in attending. Please send your suggestions to any board member. Thanks.

I think that about covers everything of note. The next general meeting will take place November 20th on Zoom. See you then! ✈

The Baofeng UV-5R Mini—A Review

Michael J. Bailey, Southwestern REACT

Released in August of this year, the Baofeng UV-5R Mini is the latest model from the Chinese manufacturer that has become synonymous with inexpensive handheld amateur radios. The original UV-5R was released in 2012 and revolutionized the radio market by providing a reliable radio at a surprisingly low cost to make ham radio affordable to more people. With the introduction of the UV-5R Mini, Baofeng has once again provided an exceptional value for a very low-cost radio with enhanced capabilities.

The Baofeng UV-5R Mini or the “Mini” barely resembles the original UV-5R and is packed with newer features that would arguably warrant its own model number rather than the “mini” appellation.



Since the name indicates a smaller unit, let's check out just how much smaller it is. On the Web, there are different dimensions listed for both units depending on whether the antennas are included in the measurements or not. While the original is only just slightly taller than the Mini, the biggest difference is in the width of the body of the radio. The UV-5R is 20% wider than the Mini and this creates a much different grip feel between the radios. Since the weight is essentially the same, the

Mini feels more dense or solid than the UV-5R. As you can see in the photo, the UV-5R comes with a wrist strap while the Mini comes with a lanyard that can fit around your neck. Because of the smaller size, it may be easier to carry it around your neck than use the belt clip and a separate plug-in microphone.

But while the name emphasizes the size difference, the Mini has expanded and new features that surpass the classic UV-5R. The Mini has a larger battery capacity with 2200 mAh compared to the 1800 with the original UV-5R. The nice battery feature is the USB-C plug on the back that allows direct charging with a cable rather than having to use a separate docking station to charge the battery. This is particularly useful feature in the field.

The larger display on the Mini is in color, brighter and has finer resolution resulting in an image that is much easier to read. The large pixel display of the old UV-5R now reminds me of the antiquated dot matrix printers and how they were replaced by ink jet and laser printers. Like the UV-5R, the mini displays 2 A/B frequencies at a time though it is easier to see which one is primary. Dual watch capability can be switched on and off.

The memory has been increased from 128 channels in the UV-5R to 999 in the Mini. Programming the radio channels manually is not difficult and gets easier with practice. However, the best part of this radio is that you can now program the radio from your phone!! The manual includes QR codes for the Android or Apple App stores so that you can download the OLA app that you can input all of your frequencies, repeater parameters, etc. Once in, it is a matter of connecting up your phone and Mini via Bluetooth and then transferring the information over to your handheld. Using your phone allows a back-up you are always as well as having the ability to easily re-program frequencies in the field.

Frequency coverage, both transmission and receive, between the two models is very similar though the Mini reportedly also has reception of the 350-380 MHz band.

Power output for the Mini is 2W on low and 5W on high that is verified in several YouTube videos.

Some interesting quirks with the Mini include:

- There are two PTT buttons on the left side of the unit, one for each A/B band. It will take some time to see if that becomes an issue and if one inadvertently keys up the wrong frequency

during a QSO.

- Using an external microphone or earphone headset automatically defaults to the “B” displayed frequency. So ensure that the frequency you want to use is displayed in the “B” screen.
- While there is a programming cable, this unit is not supported by CHIRP software. You can’t currently use CHIRP to program this unit with your favorite channels.
- While the phone programming program is very useful, it does not allow for inputting aviation frequencies so those had to be entered in manually.

The included manual is short but covers the basics. Its small size and print font makes it challenging to read. Luckily, there are online versions available for download so you can adjust the size of the font to make it more readable. Despite the recent release of this model, there are now several good YouTube videos out to demonstrate the features of the Mini and how to program it.

The audio quality is good while using the basic antenna for VHF or UHF transmissions though the FM broadcast reception is poor. Using the longer Abbree AR-771 antenna (included in one of the 2-pack versions) corrects the broadcast FM reception and improves the aviation frequency monitoring though it remains less than optimal.

While Amazon has the basic Mini for \$13.99, they also offer several 2-pack versions with additional antennas and headsets for \$44.99. Find a friend and split a 2-pack so that for \$22.50, you could get a decent radio, 3 antennas and a headset/earphone!

Given all the radios we accumulate over time, what is the niche for the Mini? Certainly, whatever you are using the UV-5R for, the Mini is capable of. The small size makes it ideal to carry in a backpack or EDC bag while retaining full capabilities. The small profile and utilization of a 1.75” stubby antenna with the earphone headset would allow for discrete/clandestine use under a jacket for short distance scenarios. Whatever you plan to use the Mini for, be reassured you are getting a great bang for your buck. ⚡



Southwestern REACT Recruitment Strategies

Compiled By Mike Bailey, SWR 092

Purpose: The number of SW REACT team members available for staffing events continues to fall. The two upcoming event on the same day have brought into focus just how short we are in staffing our commitments. Without infusion of new members, we will soon be able to staff only our most basic events. Active recruiting efforts are required to replenish our ranks.

Develop our Strategy

- **Engage all team members in recruiting:** To be effective, all team members should make recruiting a priority. We should make this a topic at the next general meeting.
- **Highlight the impact SW REACT makes:** Create a recruitment video, PowerPoint presentation or use compelling stories to show potential volunteers the difference they can make.
- **Set up a clear process:** Make it easy to apply to be member by having a straightforward online application and a well-defined application and interview process.

Leverage digital and online tools

- **Use Social Media:** To reach a younger generation, we must target the media that younger individuals frequent, such as TikTok, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.
- **Utilize volunteer platforms:** Post our recruitment opportunities on as many ham radio websites as possible.
- **Re-work the SW REACT website to emphasize recruitment:** Currently there is only an application that resides in the Forms section of the menu bar. To be effective, our recruitment message and application link should be on the home page to emphasize its importance.

Engage in-person and through your community

- **Attend Community events:** Set up a booth or give presentations at local fairs, festivals and any ham-related events. Having a monthly presentation to ham licensing classes and VE exam sites could be an excellent resource.
- **Partner with similar radio/disaster service groups:** Collaborate with organizations such as the Red Cross or CERT to recruit similarly trained and motivated personnel.
 - **East County CERT has agreed to REACT presenting to their team members at an upcoming general meeting.!**
- **Include recruitment activities at events we work:** At net control for the bike events, triathlons, etc., we should be quite visible and have recruitment brochures. Radio operations tend to draw interested spectators and an occasional ham.

Mobilize your current supporters:

- **Ask for referrals:** Ask our team members to reach out to people they know in their personal and professional networks who might be a good fit.
- **Provide recruiting tools to our team:** Provide current team members with “elevator pitches” and recruiting brochures they can use to talk to others about the organization.
- **Survey our inactive members on what can be done to re-engage them.** ✈

**Southwestern REACT Board Meeting
October 2, 2025**

Call to order at 1831 hrs.

Present: Roger McCollough, Per Martin, John Wright, June McCollough. Quorum met.

Visitors/General Members: Heather Wright.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the last Board and General Meeting are in the REACTer and on the Website. Last Board Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Correspondence List: Emails about MS Bay to Bay Event

Treasurer's Report: June reported Balance as of September 21 was \$2,986.72

REACTer Editor: REACTer not out yet for October 2025. .

Webmaster Report: Work is progressing.

Unfinished Business:

- Attendance or lack of it. – Recruitment; health issues, age and expense of hobby. Ideas ``
 1. Getting involved with Ham Radio Testing
 - 2. Get to use flashing lights
 - 3. Promote for off road vehicles
 - 4. Use for emergency prep people

New Business:

- MS Bay to Bay – Need 5 stations for Saturday and 6 stations for Sunday. Motion and second-ed to work event even though it is short notice. Motion carried.
- Budget present to Board. It will be presented to the General meeting.

Training Moment next General Meeting October 2025

- Mike #092 presenting information and response to Bicycle Head Injuries.
- Suggestions for other training moments – How to complete an AAR, Radio Memories arrangement Tips; Training Manual Review/test; and Home/Base station tips.

Completed Events:

- FITT 9-28-25 went well could have used a couple of more members

Upcoming Events:

- MS Bay to Bay --- Sat/Sun 10/18-19/2025 -- John #042
- Silver Strand Half Marathon ---Sun 11/09/2025 – Per #053
- FITT (Fiesta Island Time Trials –Sun 11/09/2025 – Mike #092

Good of the TEAM:

Need to requite help for the Silver Strand Half Marathon and FITT as both on same day.

Meeting adjourned at 2009hrs.

Respectfully submitted,

June McCollough #054 ✍

Southwestern REACT General Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2025

Call to order: 1841 hrs.

Attending: June McCollough, Roger McCollough, John Wright, Per Martin, George Reeves, Carl Jensen, Marilyn Jensen, Larry Bierma, Tyler Klein, Don Dodson, Mike Bailey. Eleven members present-quorum met.

No **Comms Challenge** this month.

Event Preparation for Silver Strand Half Marathon and FITT on 11/9/25

- Per contacted Jennifer to learn how to send information about participants during an event. Further information regarding Silver Strand, Water Stop #1 does not need volunteers. The critical points to be manned: Turn around, the Cays and sweep. Per will do a Zoom briefing the Thursday before rather than meet the day of event.
- One question asked by the membership, is it possible to do both events on November 9th? No, it is not feasible given the overlapping times and course access during the events.
- As both events are lacking volunteers to staff the courses completely, the only options are to recruit more members for both events and/or limit course coverage.

Training Moment: "Bicycle-Related Injuries" was presented by Mike Bailey.

Treasurer: June

- Starting Balance, August 31st was \$3006.71.
- Ending Balance, September 30 was \$2,986.72.
- Report motioned for approval by Tyler, Larry seconded, approved. M/S/C.

Vice President: REACTER went out. Update on MS Bay to Bay bicycle event to be discussed.

Webmaster: Per. Website changes are up to date.

Secretary – Mike. Draft minutes from the last General meeting were published in the REACTer. Motioned to approve by Carl, seconded by Per. M/S/C.

Other issues:

1. John Mahon, Regional Director of REACT – requested hams for MS Bay to Bay Bicycle event. Approved at board meeting in October, John Wright volunteered to be coordinator. During email conversations with John M., irreconcilable differences developed on how to manage and coordinate the event. The event coordinator for SW REACT and the Board decided to withdraw from the event. No communications have been received since from Mr. Mahon. John W. further recommends that all future event requests come from the organizers only.
2. Recruitment: Mike noted that we have lost 3 members this year and others have become less active. Without active recruitment, we will eventually be unable to support our events. Will explore recruitment opportunities at the next Board meeting. Budget: June presented the budget for 2026. As there are less expenses than in the past, the annual operating budget is anticipated to be \$530. Carl moved to approve, Per seconded. Approved by the membership. M/S/C.
3. Upcoming Elections: Roger noted elections are coming up and solicited the membership to run for a position on the Board. Per announced his wish to come off the board as the member-at-

large when his 1-year term expires.

4. Tyler has been in contact with June and is still interested in participating with the team but is now working nights and has moved to Arizona which makes it challenging to attend meetings and events.
5. Carl reports that he and Marilyn have health issues that may prevent participation in future events though still want to remain as members.

Meeting Adjourned: 2021 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Bailey, Secretary ✍