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Summer 2024

RSVP Volunteer Terry Smith Helps Community Through Amateur Radio



As a retired Naval medic, Terry Smith has volunteered through RSVP of Central Oklahoma since 2015, providing services to support disaster response, aid, and recovery efforts. One of the unique ways that Terry supports these efforts is through amateur radio, commonly called “ham radio.” RSVP staff joined Terry and his fellow ham radio enthusiasts from the Oklahoma City Autopatch Association (OCAPA), a local amateur radio club, for Field Day 2024, a national amateur radio emergency communications exercise sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), to learn more about ham radio and how Terry uses his passion to connect with others and serve in the community.

Terry Smith, RSVP volunteer, and Laura McRaniels, Executive Director of RSVP of Central Oklahoma, make contact with a ham operator in Texas via the GOTA Station at 2024 Field Day.

According to ARRL, use of radio communications began in the very early 1900’s, and in 1912, Congress passed the Radio Act, which required amateur radio operators to be licensed and which re-

stricted the wavelengths available for its use. Today, ham radio operators can be found the world over and can earn three levels of licenses through the FCC - Technician, General, and Extra - which build upon each other to allow use of additional radio frequencies, or bands.

Terry first earned his ham radio technician license in 2011, and since then, has continued to study to earn more advanced licenses. Along with other members of OCAPA, Terry has provided volunteer communications services for the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon, Liberty Fest, local

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Save the Date! RSVP Volunteer Recognition

When

Thursday, October 3, 2024

12:30—1:30 pm: RSVP Volunteer Fair

1:30—2:30 pm: Luncheon & Awards

Where

MetroTech Conference Center

1900 Springlake Dr.

Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Ham Radio cont'd

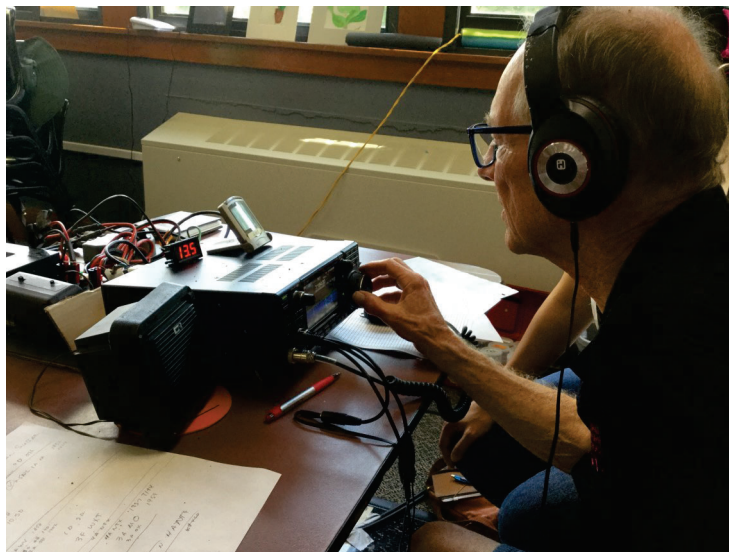
parades, and many other events. In addition, he and the group members provide backup communications support to emergency management personnel and storm spotters during and after local disasters. Terry has also served as the security and medical officer at OCAPA events and, at the 2024 Field Day exercise, ran the "Get On The Air" (GOTA) Station – a station for brand new and unlicensed operators to try out ham radio firsthand!

With Terry's coaching, Laura McRaniels, Executive Director of RSVP of Central Oklahoma, briefly went on the air via the GOTA Station. "It was such a treat to be invited and included in this space where so many people are engaging in something they find so rewarding! Their enthusiasm for this hobby-turned-passion was infectious, and it was truly amazing to learn all the different ways these skills can be applied to disaster aid and communications services. We are so lucky to have ham radio in our community!" Laura said.

Terry reported a popular quote among ham radio operators is, "When all else fails - amateur radio!"

To learn more about amateur radio and OCAPA, please contact Tom Webb, Public Information Officer for OCAPA, via email at wa9afm@arrl.net. OCAPA hosts meetings the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10 am at the Wickline United Methodist Church in Midwest City fellowship hall, and newcomers are welcome.

To learn more or get involved with volunteer opportunities to aid in disaster response and recovery, please contact RSVP of Central Oklahoma's Volunteer Coordinator, Jamie Williams, by calling 405-605-3110 or emailing jamie.williams@rsvpokc.org.



Terry Smith scans radio bands for activity at 2024 Field Day.

RSVP of Central Oklahoma Welcomes 2024-2025 Advisory Council Members

In July, RSVP of Central Oklahoma ushered in a new Advisory Council. The members who will be serving on the Advisory Council from 2024-2025 are as follows:

- ★ Chairperson **Karen Jacobs** helps guide the Advisory Council in its work to support the RSVP Volunteer Recruitment & Placement Program and the RSVP Volunteer Recognition. A retiree serving 45 years with the Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives at the OK Department of Human Services, Karen helps coordinate the NEOKC Community Collaborative and connected RSVP with their annual Holiday Food Drive.
- ★ **Carolyn Cummings** has served on the Advisory Council since 2022. She is part of the Well Preserved Advisory Group, is passionate about appreciating seniors in their community involvement, and enjoys helping share their stories.
- ★ **Betsy Fry**, a newcomer to the Advisory Council, has deep roots in the tradeshow business. Her company, Frypan Partners, produces and supports regional industry tradeshows. Betsy volunteers through RSVP with the Oklahoma Arts Council as part of the Capitol Docent Program.
- ★ **Doug Miesse** has served on the Advisory Council since 2021 and is a committed volunteer of both the Mid Del Food Pantry and the VITA program in Midwest City. A retiree of the OK Corporation Commission, Doug has been volunteering for 17 years.



Community Partner Spotlight: City Care

City Care, founded in 1996, offers several programs that provide preventative care, emergency relief, recovery, and ongoing support for community members experiencing or at risk of homelessness and related kinds of instability. These programs include Whiz Kids, which provides tutoring and mentoring to kids in first through fifth grades; Supportive Communities, which provides safe, affordable housing and stabilizing resources; Homeless Services, which provides free, year-round, low-barrier, pet-friendly emergency overnight shelter for families and individuals; and Mobile Outreach and Engagement, which offers two free shuttle routes between City Care, their partner agencies, and support services in the Oklahoma City metro.



Maggie Hudson, City Care's
Volunteer Coordinator

Maggie Hudson, Volunteer Coordinator at City Care, reported that they have provided over 143,500 nights of rest over the past three years, and have bandaged wounds, served meals, and celebrated guests' achievements and key life events, all while offering kindness, respect, clean clothes, and more. She says, "My favorite part [of working at City Care] is getting to know the people we serve. [...] We get to witness remarkable stories of transformation, and I hope I never take that for granted."

City Care's volunteers and partners generously give valuable time and resources to carry out City Care's mission of "inspiring those willing to look social injustice and extreme poverty in the face, and empowering them to do whatever it takes to create change." City Care continues to learn, adapt, and grow to meet local needs. Maggie states, "These are community issues that deserve a community response, and we have the best community."

- ★ **Susan Smith** has been a part of RSVP since 2016 and has been an active member of TRIAD S.A.L.T. (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) Council on the south side of OKC. She brings a wealth of experience as a former business analyst to help behind the scenes.
- ★ **Terry Smith** has been a member of RSVP since 2015 and has been an active member of TRIAD S.A.L.T. Council. Terry has worked extensively with ham radio in disaster services.
- ★ **Cecilia Taft** is new to the Advisory Council and brings a world of knowledge and expertise working with communities. Ms. Taft serves as City Clerk for the City of Spencer, Oklahoma, is former mayor of Luther, Oklahoma, and is a retiree from Langston University.
- ★ **Jim Watson's** background is in teaching and design. He volunteers at the City Care Night Shelter, and as RSVP's first volunteer in this role, is helping future volunteers connect with impactful opportunities to serve with folks experiencing homelessness. This is Jim's first year on the Advisory Council.

Did You Know?

Along with offering volunteer opportunities with Whiz Kids and at the City Care Night Shelter, City Care partners with RSVP's KnitServe program. Through KnitServe, crafters of all skill levels can create specific handmade knitted and crocheted items for guests at the Night Shelter and for individuals and families moving into permanent housing. This collaboration also provides opportunities for KnitServe to bring the joy of crafting together with City Care's Supportive Communities. ♥

Would you like to volunteer at City Care or support their mission & work through KnitServe? Call (405) 605-3110 or email jamie.williams@rsvpokc.org to learn more or get involved.



Thank you for the incredible commitment and service of the 2023-2024 RSVP Advisory Council and to outgoing members Wanda Patrick, Kim & Paul Sanders, and Beth & Kevin Young.

Letter from the Executive Director

As I reflect on the first half of 2024, I am filled with gratitude for all we've accomplished together so far. Thanks to the dedication and passion of our volunteers, staff, partners, donors, and friends, we have continued bringing our mission to life by connecting volunteers and the community in truly meaningful and rewarding ways.



One of our most notable achievements so far this year has been hosting our first full round of Neighborhood Connections in all seven identified sectors of Oklahoma County where our volunteers live and serve. The goal of this initiative is to strengthen bonds between our volunteers and to foster a spirit of reflection, learning, and collaboration in service. We look forward to what our next round will bring!

We also celebrated our first Community Partner Breakfast, generously sponsored by Whole Foods Market OKC and hosted by the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. This event provided an invaluable opportunity to build relationships, share ideas, and enhance the collective impact of all the amazing agencies who partner with RSVP.

Last but not least, we launched KnitServe, a program that offers a way for crafters to connect to community needs with intentionality and specificity. Through KnitServe, volunteers of all ages are learning new skills, meeting new people, and giving back. It has been so much fun!

As the year unfolds, I am excited about the possibilities ahead. Your support and enthusiasm continue to inspire us to reach new heights and to continue striving to make a difference in Central Oklahoma.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Together, we are building a stronger, more connected community.

With gratitude,

Laura McRaniels

RSVP KnitServe

Crafting & Caring in Central OK

Volunteer to thoughtfully knit & crochet handmade items for others!

RSVP of Central Oklahoma has launched a new program called **KnitServe**, through which adults interested in joining with others to knit or crochet specific items to support the work of local non-profits can learn and craft in community. Crafters of all skill levels are welcome to attend KnitServe Wednesdays, KnitServe workshops hosted at RSVP partner agencies, and other events; coaching and learning are encouraged. Participants may bring their own supplies, or, thanks to a grant from St. Matthew United Methodist Church in Midwest City, can receive supplies through RSVP to help get started. Thank you to the volunteers, partner agencies, and many others who are helping KnitServe grow!

Learn & craft with KnitServe volunteers
the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 10am-12pm

Registration is required! Register online at
<https://rsvpokc.org/knitserve>
or call the RSVP office at (405) 605-3110.



In Fond Remembrance

In loving memory of our volunteers whose generosity in service touched all our lives.

Loretta Jean Parks

Robert Prest

A proud partner of:



Congratulations to:

Dottie Overal

winner of the hours drawing.

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