

# Ramona Outback Amateur Radio Society (ROARS)

ROARS is a 501C3 non-profit association (club) of amateur radio operators in and around Ramona, CA. Our club call sign is N6ROR.

## **HISTORY:**

ROARS officially started on Dec 6, 1989 when the president of the Ramona Municipal Water District, the chief of the Ramona Fire Department the assistant chief and emergency preparedness officer for the Ramona Fire Department met to develop an emergency plan for Ramona and environs. The overriding concern was that Ramona (because of its isolation) could not rely on outside assistance during the first two hours of any emergency, or during the first two to six days of a major regional disaster.

The Ramona valley is dependent on regional radio repeaters, cell sites and the telephone system for communications, none of which can be relied upon during significant emergencies or power failures. This is a critical consideration, since direct "simplex" communications are limited due to the rugged back-country terrain. A local club of qualified Ham operators was desired to assist in an emergency with a wide range of generator or battery powered systems.

This was the original genesis of ROARS. The need continues today, perhaps with even greater intensity given more population in more areas, increasing road congestion and the new SDG&E policy to shut power grids down under windy or fire prone conditions.

## **TODAY:**

Today, because of ROARS commitment to share amateur radio benefits with the community and work to establish (and practice) perhaps the best emergency communications plan in the area, ROARS is widely recognized as one of the most vibrant and fastest growing amateur radio clubs in San Diego county.

ROARS is very proactive in many areas including establishing and continually improving an emergency communications plan for the Ramona area, building a self-contained, solar/battery powered communications trailer that will serve as a communications hub when needed, working with local scouts to gain amateur licenses, holding our Field Day event next to Cal Fire Station 82 to promote interaction, participation in public activities such as the Ramona Airshow, placing news articles in the local paper and more.

Existing ROARS Ramona repeater(s) in Ramona and Julian are capable of both analog and digital communications using the C4FM protocol. This modern digital communications capability allows clearer voice transmissions, automatic sharing of GPS locations, transmission of images and more. All this can be very useful to speed and improve situational awareness in an emergency.

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## ROARS ACTIVITIES:

- **Monthly meetings** open to all
- **Bi-Weekly VHF Nets** that practice emergency communications with and without the use of repeaters
- Participation in **Field Day**, a national event to practice continuous national and international communications in a simulated emergency environment. ROARS makes it a point to operate only on solar and battery power so we are trained to provide communications in the event of primary power failure.
- **Ramona Airport Open House** – ROARS sets up a public demonstration of our ability to communicate all around Ramona under all conditions
- Provide communications during the **Ramona 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks** show.
- **Jamboree on the Air (JOTA)** – An annual nationwide Scouting event held with amateur radio operators to get scouts on the air. ROARS hosts local scouts at operating stations for education and radio communications experience
- **Big Fires** – Offer spotter reporting of location and direction of fire movement from safe locations when we have visibility that first responders may not have.
- Some ROARS members are certified **NWS weather spotters**, have full weather stations at their homes, and conduct weather reporting on weekly nets and when called up during major weather events.
- Participation in the **San Diego Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES)** organization to establish and practice a fully coordinated emergency communications plan in Ramona and throughout San Diego county

## ROARS RADIO COVERAGE:

Using our High Frequency (HF) radio stations, we can talk anywhere in the world (although you have to negotiate with Mother Nature to determine when and where).

With our handheld, mobile or base Very High or Ultra High Frequency (VHF/UHF) radios and repeaters we can easily cover all of San Diego country reliably 24/7 – until primary power fails and repeaters begin to die. Then we fall back to radio to radio “simplex” communications. Even with simplex, we have demonstrated robust coverage all around Ramona and east to Julian, Ranchita and the Lagunas.

## CONTACTING ROARS:

The fastest way to find information on all ROARS activities is to visit our web site at [www.ROARS.net](http://www.ROARS.net). You will find almost everything you need on amateur radio in general and on ROARS activities specifically.

To meet ROARS folks personally, come to our **monthly club meetings** on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of almost every month starting at 7 PM at the Ramona Library Community Room, 1275 Main Street, Ramona CA 92065.