

EmComm Report

by Krissy KI7GJJ

During the month of March, I supported two marathons to sharpen my EmComm skills: The Old Pueblo Endurance Run and the XTERRA Black Canyon Trail Run. Club member Tim N7TDB also supported the Old Pueblo Endurance Run and did a great job filling the Net Control role. Read about his experience!

Don't forget to come to DeVry Hamfest on March 30th! You can find treasures there for your Ham Shack!

MCECG Upcoming Events:

Maricopa County Emergency Communications Group (MCECG) is looking for Ham Radio operators to support the events listed below. Go to Website: <https://www.mcecg.net/> to sign up and see more events. You will need to create a login to sign up for an event.

- Sat 04/13/24 – Pat's Run
- Sat 04/27/24 - Zane Grey 50 Mile Ultrarun

In addition to Race events to support, you will see opportunities to sign up for classes and exercises. Click on the "Detail" for any events of interest before signing up! These are good events for ham operators at every level to learn skills that can be applied to Emergency Communications.

Old Pueblo Endurance Run, 4 March

The Old Pueblo Endurance Run ([Old Pueblo](#)) is an established long-distance run through the Santa Rita mountains south of Tucson. Nominally 50 miles, some runners "only" do one loop (25 miles) and we had one runner who managed 3+ loops. As this was my first time participating in the communications network for this race, Krissy KI7GJJ asked me to report on my experiences.

Stepping back a moment, I got my ham license in 2021 after I retired. I joined [WVARC](#) and the [West Valley Ham Shack](#) and when I joined I remember Krissy being particularly welcoming and helpful. As I have an innate itch to serve, I started down the EmComm path, taking the standard [NIMS ICS 100/200/700/800 courses](#). To gain experience I have been volunteering at a number of the races around the valley, most organized through the Maricopa County Emergency Communication Group ([MCECG](#)).

What I enjoy most about the EmComm volunteering is a chance to practice wilderness camping, testing setting up portable radios in locations you may have never been and dealing with the inevitable "but this wasn't in the script!". Resilience. Be Prepared. Practice. Service to others. All good stuff.

The Old Pueblo race is in a particularly beautiful area, and we were blessed with mild weather. I'm pretty sure we didn't get below freezing. They tell me in years past weather has been "interesting", but that's parr for being a resilient EmComm ham. At most races I work at one of the aid stations, often paired with another ham. For Old Pueblo they asked me to be net control, so I had a chance to channel my inner Leonard AD7AS. (Leonard is net control for many of the races in the valley, and he has the perfect gravelly baritone for this). There must be a first time for everything, and I survived, as did all the runners and our crew.

Our role is to facilitate communication in an area with no infrastructure. The race director needs to know the locations of runners, and status when we have injuries or lost runners. The hams serve a useful role in these races, and it's practice for us as hams when we graduate to working fire responses and such.

While I'm not a runner of any stripe, I can recognize the joy these people have in accomplishing these runs. It's nice to see happy. I would like to inject a note of thanks to all the hams to helped make Old Pueblo a safe, fun event: Krissy KI7GJJ, John WB7RZY, Sean KE7FDK, Larry N7TUR, Sharron KB7SJN, and my mentor for this event Julie KD7UIP.

73

-tim

N7TDB