

KØBWH - Silent Key
Robert A. Buss (ex-KD6BWH)
1951 - 28 January 2009

Very sad news. Former club member and twice past club President Robert A. (Bob) Buss - KØBWH (ex-KD6BWH), 57, became a silent key (SK) on January 28th, 2009 at his home in Sheldon, North Dakota. The cause of death was not given; he was fighting colon cancer which was diagnosed late last year.



Bob often operated the Red Cross net from his mobile.

Bob held an interest in ham radio since he was in high school in Sheldon. Unfortunately, his small town had no Elmers to help him get started. In 1979 Bob moved to California after doing duty in the Army. Some years later, around 1990, he happened to visit the ham radio booth at the Orange County Fair. That was all he needed; with the help of a class and CW instruction from Cindy - KC6OPI and Frank - WA6VKZ, Bob became a radio amateur and a valuable asset to the hobby.

Bob joined the Orange County Amateur Radio Club around 1992 and quickly became an active member. He was club president in 1998 and again in 2001, and also held many other Board positions during his tenure with the club. He was very active at our Field Days and other club events. Bob was one of the participants when the Orange County Radio Club sponsored the Wouff Hong on the Queen Mary at the 1999 ARRL SWD Convention, taking on one of the primary roles in the ceremony.



Bob operates VHF at the 2003 Field Day from the back of his pickup.

Bob's interest in ham radio was focused towards public service and disaster communications. He was active in HD-SCS (Hospital Disaster Communications), Red Cross Communications, and Anaheim RACES. When there was an event that needed communications support, Bob was usually there. He was involved, first with Garden Grove police and later with Orange police, in supporting communications for the grueling 120 mile Baker-to-Vegas law-enforcement relay race that is run yearly. On Tuesday night February 3rd., at the 2009 City of Orange Baker-to-Vegas planning meet-

ing, Bob and his contributions to the event were remembered.



Bob accepts certificate recognizing his contributions to the Club from Ken - W6HHC.

Bob was a regular check-in on the OCARC Wednesday night nets. He broadcast the Amateur Radio News for the two-meter net - rarely missing a beat. After moving to Sheldon he still often participated in the nets over Skype. When he wasn't on Skype, he sometimes listened to the nets over a local Internet monitor system.

In 2005 Bob got an opportunity to buy a fuel distribution business in his hometown from a longtime friend. He, and his wife Linda - KØHQP (ex-KD6HQP) moved back, leaving warm Southern California for the frozen lands of North Dakota (or as Bob put it so brilliantly in his Skype Hello Message - *Hello from the land of Cool and Crisp.*) Shortly after the business got running, Bob and his wife Linda learned the only local grocery store in Sheldon was closing down. They bought the inventory and fixtures and a large contingent of the 200 Sheldon residents helped move the business

(literally overnight) to Bob's building that he now called "The Trading Post". You can hear Bob talk about this during a short video on our website (You'll need a QuickTime player plug-in):

http://www.w6ze.org/videos/bob_buss.mov

On August 30th of 2005, when Bob's departure to North Dakota was imminent, the club held a dinner at Marie Callenders to honor him and another member who was departing for the east coast. Ironically, the other member was Frank, WA6VKZ who helped Bob learn the code.



Bob's wife Linda - KØHQP and Bob - KØBWH at their farewell dinner before moving to North Dakota.

When Bob and Linda arrived in Sheldon, ND the ham population of Ransom County suddenly tripled to three. Unfortunately, with all the work of getting the business up and running, Bob never got his station set up to take advantage of operating from a rare county in one of the rarer states. Still, Bob could often be found on Skype; usually late at night after finishing fuel deliveries. Last fall he

got his web cam hooked up, and through video Skype was able to show some ND scenery.

Bob enjoyed gardening and since a lot of farming goes on in North Dakota, Bob had a small garden where he grew crops; that is 'small' in ND terms but still tens of acres and large to most of us. Crops were shared and traded in the small and close community. Bob and Linda also hosted the weekly Sunday coffee gathering of locals at the Trading Post.

Many Field Day participants remember Bob as a teacher who showed us how to roll up a long length of thick coax so it won't kink or tangle, and can be put back down without difficulty. He did it so gracefully; this author still has to think hard to do it right, but is amazed how well it works.

Bob still had interest in the Baker-to-Vegas races, even after moving to North Dakota. His first "how goes it?" phone call to the Pahrump, NV hotel room, where the team had an operations center, came as a pleasant surprise. Bob called us for status each following year. It was always good to hear his voice.

Even living as far away as North Dakota, Bob continued to make a valuable impact on the club. Bob we're going to miss you.

***73 to Bob Buss,
de W6ZE***